

Energize Your Meetings

Everyone has busy business schedules and in the business world meetings are a part of them. If you have to have a meeting, why not inject a little fun into your meeting? It might be just the right thing to encourage participation and creativity. Don't be afraid to change your meeting style up – variety is what keeps people interested. Unless the meeting is scheduled to deliver bad news, why not try a few of these ideas?

- ◆ **Hands on.** Most people learn by doing. Use hands-on activities, live demonstrations, games, role-playing, etc.
- ◆ **Friendly competition.** Organize contests to generate ideas and offer prizes to encourage participation. A little friendly competition can bring great results.
- ◆ **Annie up!** If your meetings tend to be dominated by a few people, try passing out five pennies to each meeting attendee. Attendees must "spend" a penny each time they talk. And no borrowing is allowed!
- ◆ **Who's the director?** Consider appointing a different director for each meeting. The Director will be responsible for coming up with ideas for activities. They can bring in additional interesting materials (videos, comic strips, articles) that relate to the meeting topic. This material will need to be reviewed and approved by management prior to the meeting.
- ◆ **Start out on a good note.** In the beginning of your meeting, recognize someone or a team for their outstanding job on a project. If it was a large success – give a plaque or a certificate of achievement.
- ◆ **Lunch and learn!** At your next meeting serve a lunch or snacks or meet at a restaurant. A meal for a few people is not that expensive and the atmosphere change could be just what they need to get them out of a rut and to be more productive.
- ◆ **Survivor Tickets.** If you are having difficulty getting your team to come up with creative solutions, hand out survivor tickets to anyone who comes up with creative original ideas or solutions to the existing problem at the meeting. You may want to play this game for a couple of meetings. There are two survivor winners in this game. The one with the most tickets and the one who comes up with the best idea or solution.
- ◆ **Getting to know you!** If your team is having difficulty working together, you may try a little game of "getting to know you". Make a list of accomplishments or personal information such as the month of their birthdate, favorite food, number of kids they have or their dog's name. Make sure the material is light & fun, not too sensitive. Include several items per person. Give each individual that attend the meeting the list and they have to figure out who's name belongs beside each item on the list. In order for them to do this they have to communicate with each other.