

How To Conduct An Effective Workshop

Gets you and your group or staff solving problems, owning the solution(s) they come up with, and implementing them enthusiastically.

This process is to be used anytime you have any problems or issues to be resolved or improvements you need to make in your group or company. It gets the group or your staff involved in the creation of the solutions and results in higher morale, enthusiasm and better and faster implementation.

NOTE: If you are a one-person company, take out a yellow legal pad and follow the same steps. If possible, try and find at least one other person to brainstorm with, but even if you can't, simply going through this exercise once a week with a new topic will drive your company forward, increase your revenue, and systematizing your business tremendously.

- 1. Put up on the board the topic to be solved.** E.G. "Things that are stopping my company from Growing" (NOTE: This should be the first workshop you do)
- 2. Now ask everyone in the group (if a large group split into groups of 3:-5 people) to write down the things they feel are stopping the company from growing.** This gets your people owning the ideas and allows everyone to benefit from your top performers and best thinkers.
- 3. Now write down everyone's idea on the whiteboard or flip chart.** (*You may end up with 10 to 15 after eliminating the duplicates*). Discuss the items as you put them up. Clarify anything that's not clear by asking questions. (*What exactly did you mean by that? How specifically would that be done? So, what you are saying is ... and so on.*)
- 4. Now get everyone to write down the top 3 ideas from the list on the board.** Take a clean sheet of paper and write these down in the order of importance from 1 to 3.
- 5. Go around the room and ask each person (or group) for their top 3 choices and rating.** Mark 3 slashes next to their # 1 choice on the board, 2 slashes for #2 and one slash for their #3 choice. Repeat this with each person or group. (*Your goal is to find the 3 solutions that everyone agrees are the best.*) Add up the slashes and come up with the overall # 1, #2 and #3 choices.
- 6. Each person should now think of an assignment/task to integrate the top 3 ideas into the next week's activities.** Write these down. The assignment is designed to get everyone to implement the idea that week. (*NEVER proceed to new tasks without first implementing.*)

7. Ask for the ideas on implementation and write them on the board. Ask the group to now take the top 3 ideas and rank them as before. (See #4 and #5 above). Select the top 3 assignments and implementation strategies and give them to the group to implement.

8. Write a memo. Include the top 3 problems, solutions and implementation strategies (*include the person responsible for any action relating to implementation*). Circulate this amongst all staff and yourself, the memo will be put in a 3-ring binder divided by tabs for workshops in each key area.

9. Next week's meeting. Review the action and results. Discuss the newly created material: What worked, what has not and how can the various policies and procedures be improved.

10. File the memo and the notes from your review. Keep these in a 3-ring binder to be covered again the next time you review this topic/problem.

This article was adapted from Chet Holmes of Chet Holmes International. Chet is the bestselling author of The Ultimate Sales Machine and an internationally know sales & marketing expert.

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