



# This Meeting Could Have Been a @#\$ing Email

How to get the most out of your time together!

A close-up portrait of Nic Taylor, a man with glasses, looking slightly to the right. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light blue and green.

# Nic Taylor

Executive Director of Alumni Relations  
SVSU

Personal Mission: "To think positively and without fear, speak honestly, act honorably in support of others, grow as an example to others, and not take myself very seriously."

Experienced Administrator with a demonstrated history of working across all sectors of the higher education spectrum. Specialized areas include marketing, CRM optimization, data analysis, communications directing, and public speaking. Depending on which group dynamic matrix you choose, I can be summed up best as an entertaining rebel who values results and relationships.

# Quick Ask! Please Share Your Worst ...



# How to decide if a meeting is worth it:



IS there a decision that needs to be made?

If yes or if its simply for team building and connection, then proceed!



Who is involved?

Are they available and WILLING participants?



How mush time is needed to accomplish said goal

Can it be done in 15, 30, or 60 minutes...



When does this NEED to happen

Priorities are a must... We will discuss that later ;)

# 6 Rules to Live By (according to MIT Sloan School of Management)



## Make the objective clear!

The purpose CANNOT be just to meet!



## Consider who is invited

Who is missing is just as important as who is there.



## Stick to the schedule

AGENDA, AGENDA, AGENDA...



## Take no hostages

Repeat after me: "We appreciate your contributions, but now we need input from others before making a decision."



## Start on time, end on time

You do this, and others will WANT to come to your future meetings!



## Follow up

Delegate and leave with at least two "Action Items" for the group.

# Parkinson's Law of Triviality



## The “Bike-Shed” Effect

- This law states that organizations spend the most time on trivial issues and the least time on the most important issues due to everyone’s “expertise” or perceived knowledge.
- The “Bike-Shed” story of a nuclear powerplant.
- Whatever the easier task is, usually gets the most attention.
- VERY common in software development.

## How do we fight this?

- Facilitate, facilitate, facilitate!
- Who is the owner of the dialogue?
- Have you outlined your desired outcome?
- Evil Bezos example (Can you sit in silence with your co workers for 15 minutes to get ready for a discussion?)

# How We Do it: SVSU Alumni Office Staff

## Office Staff

- 1 Director
- 2 Managers
- ½ Support Staff
- 5 Student Workers



# TWO Standing Office Meetings!

## The Dreaded 1 on 1 with the Boss

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This meeting is for that check up. What are we accomplishing? What obstacles stand in our way? How are you doing? We do these once a week toward the beginning of the week. 30 Mins MAX!

- 10 mins for last week accomplishments.
- 10 Mins for what is scheduled next week.
- 10 mins for Priorities and Professional Development.

## The Staff Meeting from Hell

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This is not an update the boss meeting! We strive to make sure that everyone is on the same page based on our priorities. We make time for brainstorming and outside business.

- NEVER longer than an hour.
- Agenda set by support staff receiving items from everyone over the course of the week.
- Save 5 mins at the end for a little “celebration”.



# The 1 on 1

## Why do we do this?

- Does the Director/Manager really know what's going on?
- Are they CONSTANTLY in your office for updates?
- 1 on 1 time is a chance to block out all the other noise of the office and concentrate solely on the person's accomplishments, goals, and needs.
- A prefilled-out form will always help.

## The "Form"

**Alumni Relations 1:1**

Name: [REDACTED]  
Title: [REDACTED]  
Date: [REDACTED]

**Previous Week (accomplishments, projects completed, updates)**

A) Old Business from previous 1:1 meetings (were the questions/hurdles completed)  
a. 3/4/24: Need all board members photos for alumni lounge. Did you follow up with Chris Purnell and Gordon Aiello last week?

B) Last weeks accomplishments  
a. Mailed golf outing postcards  
b. Memorial cup volunteering  
c. Working with Internal Research to get all info on legacy students for Alisha to start putting info in RE  
d. Finalized process for golf outing event in RE (Jenny will take the entire thing over)

**Upcoming Week (projects in progress, new events, new hurdles)**

A) New projects  
a. Connections plan on website  
b. June newsletters to 3 alumni groups (Dec23, May24, the rest)  
c. June analytics  
d. Content creation  
e. All caught up on nameplates and alumni swag requests  
f. Loons tickets were emailed to May '24 alums, and all were claimed ✓

B) New questions/hurdles  
a. When do we want to have the alumni celebration nomination go live? Original plan was Monday next week.  
b. Swag Requests  
i. Swack requested 5-10 door prizes for his fraternity golf outing (by the end of the week)  
ii. Mike Crowe wants an alumni giveaway basket for a drawing for FAFSA completion. Many offices are giving baskets (by the end of the week)  
c. Plan for Party on McCarty next week? Are we all still working? —  
d. Did you reactivate Carlo Cerroni and Lewitz emails? Put the note on your desk on 6/3 and 6/4. Lewitz wants a call once it is done ✓

C) Priorities  
a. Instagram/Facebook

# The Weekly Staff Meeting

## Why do we do this?

- Everybody can get on the same page!
- Ideas, decisions, and understanding are all encouraged and needed.
- Because we already had 1 on 1 time with the boss, there is no need for this to be an individual update, or a filibuster session by a high achiever.
- The AGENDA is sacred here...



# The PERFECT Meeting Agenda (according to Harvard Business Review)



## Define the meeting objective

Clearly state the purpose and desired outcomes!



## List agenda topics

Include specific topics of discussion and decision making. Assign a time frame for each topic.



## Assign roles

Identify who is going to lead each discussion and who is the “note taker”.



## Provide all background info

You got documentation... we better have it before we start the meeting!



## Set time limits on topics

Allocate the appropriate time on each item if possible. Therefore, that certain someone will know that they have gone on too long.



## Include review and action plan

Leave time to summarize key points, and assign the tasks and deadlines.

# The A.I. Effect

Don't be scared, it can help!

- Use AI to transcribe important meetings.
- We also will use it to take that transcription and send a summary statement to those who could not be there.
- GREAT for agenda building, but you still have to go through those six steps earlier!



**THANK YOU!**

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