

## *Tips and Techniques from Zipline*

### ***10 Training Tips to Add Some ‘Zip!’ to Your Business Meetings***

*Many business meetings are actually training sessions in disguise. In fact, the principles of adult learning used in classroom training also can be valuable in meetings. To help attendees get the most out of your next meeting, try some of these suggestions:*

- 1. Give them a reason!** Attendees need to understand *why* they must learn something before they can learn it. So tell them why, and exactly how it will personally affect each of them. Achieving early “buy in” increases motivation and keeps attendees focused.
- 2. Find out what they know!** Before launching into the meeting, find out how much the attendees already know about the topics you’re about to cover. Inquire about their current knowledge and experiences. Doing this will make the meeting seem more relevant to them.
- 3. Define your terms!** Whether you intend to get technical or not, provide a list of important terms you’ll be using and explain what they mean. Be sure to ask if everyone understands them. To ensure success, you can’t afford for some attendees to be confused.
- 4. Enhance the slides!** If your slide presentation is just one series of bullet points after another, you’ve lost most of your audience. Whenever possible, add photos, Flash animations, clip art, WordArt, SmartArt, or other graphics to spice up the slides and keep attendees interested.
- 5. Enhance the agenda!** Instead of providing a list of topics or a detailed agenda, include a number of learning objectives as an initial PowerPoint slide. Then, toward the end of the meeting, review these objectives, ask questions about them, or distribute a quiz.
- 6. Vary your approach!** Instead of relying solely on your slides and note cards, find ways to integrate media, a group exercise, or an actual sample to pass around. You’ll not only help attendees remain mentally in the room—you’ll help them remember longer.
- 7. Get them involved!** Expect attendees to do more than listen and take notes; get them to become active *participants* by frequently asking them questions, asking for questions, seeking examples, and providing ways for them to share their knowledge with others in the room.

**8. Demonstrate the policy!** If a new policy seeks to change existing employee behavior, add a short role-playing or simulation exercise that illustrates the new way of doing things. When attendees return to their desks, they'll understand the new policy better.

**9. Give time to reflect!** Instead of ending the meeting abruptly after providing your summary, give attendees a few minutes of silence to understand what was covered and how to use what they've learned; their performance will improve as a result of this period of reflection.

**10. Reinforce the learning!** To further their knowledge after the meeting, provide reference materials and web links that add supporting information and self-paced learning. (To save paper, place the materials on your intranet instead of printing out a copy for everyone.)