

Meetings 3: points of view

A Opening the meeting

Carla Eagleton, chief executive of Creative Advertising, is opening a meeting.

She could also have said:

It's about time we got started.

Let's begin, shall we?

Shall we make a start?

Let's make a start.

Let's get down to business.

OK, let's get started.

Then she says 'As you know, I've called this meeting to discuss the situation in the design department. The designers have a lot of freedom to work as they wish, but it seems that things are getting out of control ...'

She could also have said:

- As you are aware ...
- I've arranged this meeting to ...
- The purpose of this meeting is to ...
- The main objective is to ...

B Inviting people to speak

Carla then uses some of these expressions.

Inviting someone to start:

- Would you like to open the discussion, Greta?
- Greta, would you like to kick off?
- Perhaps you'd like to get the ball rolling, Greta.

Asking for one person's opinion:

- What about you, Keith?
- What do you think about this, Keith?
- What are your feelings on this, Keith?
- What are your views on this, Keith?

Asking for everyone's opinion:

- What's the general feeling on this?

C Making your point

The other participants use some of these expressions.

- a Head of human resources: I believe the design department needs a certain amount of freedom, but there are limits.
- b Head of design: As I see it, I can't run the design department as if it was the accounts department.
- c Chief financial officer: In my opinion, they're going much too far. I can't bear to think of the costs involved.
- d Senior designer: Of course, we are sensitive types and need to be given the freedom to work how we like.

Other ways of making your point include:

- The way I see it ...
- Personally, I think ...
- Obviously ...
- It's clear to me that ...
- It looks to me as if ...

Note: You use **Of course** and **Obviously** to introduce an idea, but also to show that you think other people will be aware of it already. Be careful, as this can sound rude.



Making your point

56.1 Which of these expressions from A opposite are correct? Correct the mistakes.

- 1 It's about time we get started.
- 2 Let's begin, let we?
- 3 Shall we make a start?
- 4 Let's do a start.
- 5 Let's get up to business.
- 6 I've call this meeting to ...
- 7 The purpose of this meeting is to ...
- 8 The main subject is to ...
- 9 As you are beware ...

56.2 Look at B opposite and make these invitations to speak less aggressive and more natural.

- 1 John, kick off.
- 2 Kay, open the discussion.
- 3 Len, get the ball rolling.
- 4 Monica, tell us what you think.
- 5 Nigel, give us your views.
- 6 Olive, what do you feel?

56.3 Match the sentence beginnings (1–5) with the correct endings (a–e). The sentences all contain expressions from C opposite.

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 1 The way | a I think that the prizes we win help us to attract and keep the best designers. |
| 2 Personally, | b as if the design people think of themselves as living on another planet. |
| 3 It looks to me | c I see it, you should be looking at what we produce, not at the time of day we produce it. |
| 4 It's clear to | d opinion, we have to think of the needs of each department. |
| 5 In my | e me that they set a very bad example to the other departments. |

Over to you



How freely can people express their feelings in your school or organization? Are people at all levels encouraged to say what they think? Are new employees asked for their opinions?