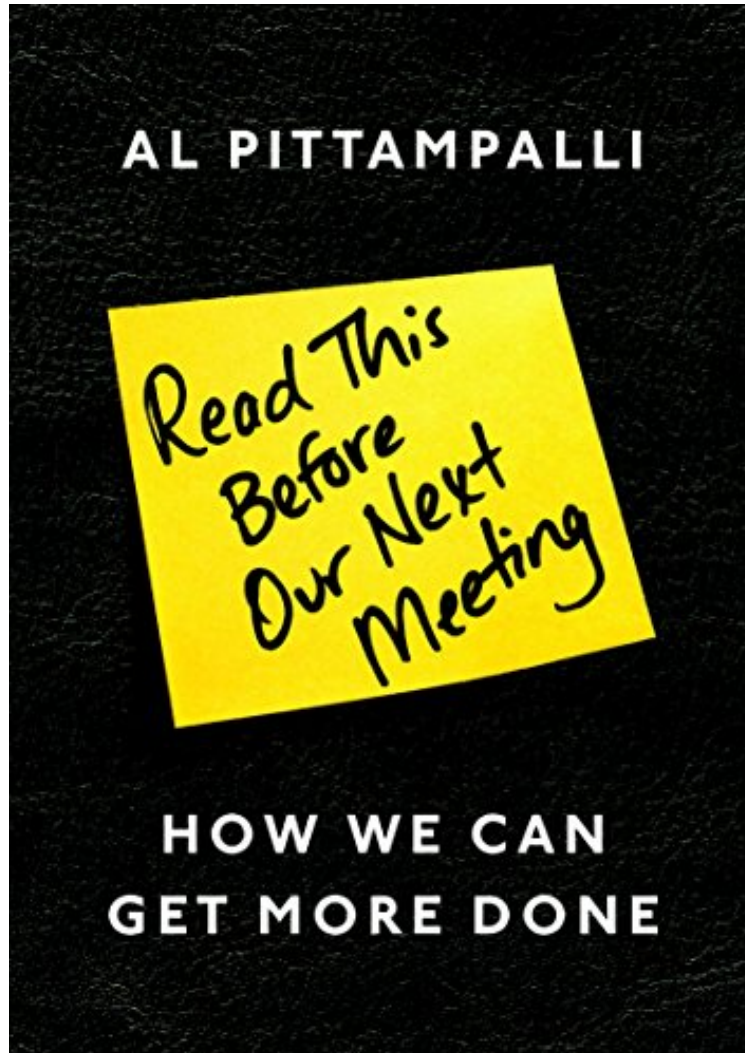


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Read This Before Our Next Meeting: How We Can Get More Done

Al Pittampalli

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Al Pittampalli : Read This Before Our Next Meeting: How We Can Get More Done before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Read This Before Our Next Meeting: How We Can Get More Done:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Sweeping Generalizations Incorrect On Important Topic By K. Leicester The author of "Read This Before Our Next Meeting" hits it dead on with his dissatisfaction with the meetings he's forced to endure. Few things are as important as the time we spend together in meetings. The reason I gave it a poor rating is because the author makes sweeping statements that simply aren't true, then builds the rest of his work on these false premises. The statements the author makes which I think are incorrect include: "Peter Drucker tells us that meetings are by definition a concession to deficient organization. We either meet or work. We can't do both at the

same time." I disagree with both Drucker and the author--not one of these statements is correct."Like all human beings, we're terrified of making decisions." No, all human beings are not terrified of making decisions."But a brainstorm is not a meeting." Yes, it is. A special type of meeting."Like war, meetings are a last resort." Neither war nor meetings are a last resort. They are two tools with which we solve problems.While meetings are indeed a disaster, the author's sweeping generalizations that fall short of reality tarnish the rest of his work.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. I think of this book often after useless meetings

By JustinHocaRead This Before Our Next Meeting by Al Pittampali; I got this when it was free for Kindle. It's really an essay and not a "book," by my definition-- it's not a Kindle Single either. It is a simple 80 page manifesto for changing how we do meetings. You can visit his website at ModernMeetingStandard.com. I work in a College of Business and I often joke to myself "How many MBAs does it take to run an efficient meeting?" The correct answer is either "zero" or "more MBAs than we have on faculty now." I lean toward "zero." It's amazing to me that we don't incorporate a class on how to hold meetings into curriculum. Pittampali's suggestions for creating the "Modern Meeting" are almost identical to my own when I ask myself what I would do differently if I ran things. My college violates just about every one of his tenets.

The author's Modern Meeting:

1. Supports a decision that has already been made.
2. Moves fast and ends on schedule.
3. Limits the number of attendees.
4. Rejects the unprepared.
5. Produces committed action plans.
6. Refuses to be informational. Reading memos is mandatory.
7. Works alongside a culture of brainstorming.

"The Modern Meeting focuses on the only two activities worth convening for: conflict and coordination" (l. 286). In other words, the Boss should have already made a decision and informed everyone of it long before, meeting with people individually if necessary. The meeting simply exists to implement the decision and openly resolve any conflicts about it. Concrete tasks will be assigned through the meeting: "If you don't receive an action plan from the meeting I invited you to attend, you have every right not to attend my next one" (l. 375). Numbers 3, 4, and 6 above are crucial for me. 90% of our meeting time is listening to someone give a report that is purely informational and could have been written in some bullet points emailed out earlier. This is unproductive and inefficient, wasting everyone's time. But no one wants to read memos before a meeting, just like students who never read textbooks before coming to class. Just like Sunday school Christians usually never read their lessons or study the text before Sunday or study about what their pastor is preaching on. We come wanting to be entertained, wanting new information. But that is not the job of the meeting, the job of the meeting is decision and action. But, we're a College of Business, we should be better. We demand our students be prepared, and so should we. "This is not high school; we strive to be a world-class organization. We can't tolerate your unpreparedness anymore. Unprepared participants are dead weight" (l. 365). Save the learning for your own time, a meeting is not a seminar. I recommend reading the book in your spare time, won't take you any longer than a long-form journal article. Then give it to someone who you wish would run meetings better...

11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Modern Meeting Standard Falls Short

By Fabio Marciano I have bought all the Domino Project books and have learned a great deal from all of them, so I jumped when this next installment was released. I should have skipped it. The title, the blurb and the promise of the book is enticing. We all could dramatically eliminate the number of meetings we have, but for me this book falls short of that promise - at least in terms of providing a realistic way for replacing the current meeting framework at most companies and organizations. The ideas are okay and some will come off as extreme to some readers. They did to me. Here are the 7 Principles of the Modern Meeting Standard

1. Meet only to support a decision that has already been made.
2. Move fast. End on schedule.
3. Limit the number of attendees.
4. Reject the unprepared.
5. Produce committed action plans.
6. Refuse to be informational. Read the memo, it's mandatory.
7. Work with brainstorms, not against them.

The premise of the book is centered on two truths that will have you smirking and nodding your head:

1. We have too many meetings.
2. We have too many bad meetings.

If we cut to the recommendation, Pittampali is recommending that we radically rethink what a meeting is and instead of status and informational updates, meetings will be to share decisions that have already been made and to create action plans. These two points are great in theory, but I think the execution and practicality falls flat. I love putting the onus on the meeting organizer to be the decision-maker, the true leader of their projects. We all want increased decision-making power in our organizations. With too much on our plates, it makes sense to push down decision-making to the front lines. However, think about this for a moment - decisions now will be made before the meeting. How does one go about gathering the data and information that normally would come from meeting attendees, the experts in their functional areas of expertise? If input is needed, the meeting organizer will need to get that input before the meeting....in a one-on-one meeting/conversation. I wonder what happens if you have a large decision to be made with multiple people and functional areas involved. Do you have 7 half hour long discussions? To me this is not practical. If it's practical to you, buy the book. The Modern Meeting refuses to be informational. Reading memos is now mandatory according to Pittampali. "In order to keep modern meetings strictly in support of decisions, informational meetings are cancelled. For this to be possible, managers will write memos instead, but everyone must commit to reading them. In a culture of reading, informational meetings are no longer necessary." Nice idea.

Practicality level? Low to 'not going to happen' on my scale. In a world where employees are already overwhelmed with email and doing more work (read two or three jobs) than in the past, who's going to have time to read more memos on topics? If you raised your hand, then great, this book and its methods are for you. I'm not banking on the

ability of everyone in the organization to provide 'to the point' memos that give me the right balance of information and next steps I need to get my head around key topics. Two more points that had me shaking my head:- Eliminate status meetings altogether by using BaseCamp or other technology tools.- Communicate bad news via a recorded video that you send out or hold office hours if people want to talk to you. The first idea sounds pretty cool - no more Monday morning status meetings with your boss. I still think that status meetings if done right are a great way to bond with team members, keep up on what's going on in the organization and get a feel for the next leaders in your organization. As for communicating bad news via a recorded message, seriously? I think that goes against HR 101, but if that's the kind of hands-off and hiding behind technology company you want to be part of, go for it. The book is not all bad. I love the intent and the inspirational aspect of it. One idea in particular is something I'm going to implement immediately: No Meeting Minutes, only Action Plans. There are no minutes coming out of the Modern Meeting, only Action Plans. This is a great idea as it focuses on 3 main components that are critical to moving things forward in an organization:- What actions are committing to?- Who is responsible for each action?- When will those actions be completed? This book is a pass for me, but it might work for you.

Traditional meetings are a weapon of mass interruption. Long live the Modern Meeting! The average American office worker spends eleven hours in meetings every week. Yet all that time sitting around a conference table hasn't made us more productive. If anything, meetings have made work worse. Traditional meetings reduce efficiency, kill urgency, and breed compromise and complacency. Worst of all, our dysfunctional meeting culture changes how we focus, what we focus on, and what decisions we make. But there is a solution, a way to have fewer, shorter, more purposeful meetings. It's called the Modern Meeting Standard. By following its eight simple but radical principles you may never have to attend a useless meeting again. Read *This Before Our Next Meeting* is the call to action you (and your boss) need. From the Hardcover edition.

.com Book Description: How many times have you dreaded going to a meeting either because you viewed it as a waste of time or because you weren't prepared. Dread no longer: Read *This Before Our Next Meeting* not only explains what's wrong with the meeting, and meeting culture, but suggests how to make meetings more effective, efficient, and worthy of attending. It assesses when it's necessary to skip the meeting and get right to work. Al Pittampalli shares examples of transforming workplaces by revamping the purpose of the meeting and a company's meeting culture. This book belongs on the shelf of any employee, employer and company looking to revolutionize what it means to do "work" all day and how to do it. Simply put: Stop wasting time. Read *This Before Our Next Meeting* is the call to action you (or your boss) needs to create the company that does the meaningful work it was created to do..com Russell Bishop's *Read This Before Our Next Meeting* Russell Bishop is the managing partner of Bishop Bishop, a consulting and coaching company helping executives and managers increase alignment and improve execution across the organization. The author of *Workarounds That Work*, he is a weekly columnist and senior editor at the Huffington Post. Read his review of Al Pittampalli's *Read This Before Our Next Meeting*: Al Pittampalli addresses a time worn challenge that all of us have experienced for which many of us are chief executioner: Death by Meeting. However, rather than simply adding to the chorus of complaints about time-sucking, energy-sapping, life force-killing meetings, Al actually proposes something useful--The Modern Meeting and its seven critical principles of effective meeting management. The single most powerful question to ask yourself or your co-workers when faced with a challenging situation is: What difference could you make that requires no one's permission other than your own? Al embraces this critical notion of personal responsibility in his counter-intuitive approach to getting senior management to adopt the modern meeting: you don't have to get everyone on board--you just need to start and let your success influence others to get on board. If you find yourself withering away in endless meetings, if your organization suffers from consensus constipation, if you can't seem to get a decision made this century, read this book now. Wait a minute--reading this book won't help any more than reading a prescription will get you better. Instead, apply the Seven Principles and let your creative productivity soar! --Russell Bishop "I dutifully avoid meetings whenever possible, which is pretty much always. If I was to go to meetings, though, I'd want Al to run them. And if that wasn't possible, I'd send this book to everyone else ahead of time and wait for them to cancel the meeting or run it exactly how this book describes." --Chris Guillebeau, *The Art of Non-Conformity* "Sucked dry, worn down, numbed out: pick your metaphor. Anyway you cut it, bad meetings are killing you and your organization. This book will be your shield and sword to get your life back. Now, we just need to sort out email." --Michael Bungay Stanier, *Do More Great Work* "There's a big difference between talking about doing something and actually doing it. If you've ever been in a meeting whose sole purpose was to plan for another meeting, you NEED this book." --Josh Kaufman, *The Personal MBA* "If you live meeting-to-meeting, this book will save your business life." --Tim Sanders, *Today We Are Rich* "The typical corporate meeting makes you feel like yours;re busy doing something. But as Al Pittampalli explains, meetings are a mess - an unproductive waste of time to validate the status quo. In his fascinating manifesto, Al presents a better way - the Modern Meeting - to actually move your business forward. If you want to create a culture of decisive action, get out of your nice comfortable meeting room and

read this book now." --David Meerman Scott, Real-Time Marketing PR "The majority of us have the same experience: at some point during the day, we lift our heads out of the haze of phone calls, emails and meetings and say, 'I need to go home so I can get some work done!' You can't get more counter-productive than that. The main reason is that meetings not only suck, but that meetings suck the life out of organizations. It doesn't have to be that way and it shouldn't. Finally, there's a shining light for all of us in Al Pittampalli's Read This Before Our Next Meeting. Unfortunately, the book was named poorly. It should be called, Read This Now! Please!" --Mitch Joel, President of Twist Image and author, Six Pixels of Separation