Virtual Meetings

Mishari Saad Alabdullatif

Abstract: In this article I explain how to manage virtual meetings and how to make individuals comfortable when they engage together. How to overcome any difficulties that might occur among team members. The contribution of using new technologies in order make this kind of meeting success.

Virtual meetings are real-time events that take place via the internet whereby people are able to communicate from different locations through audio or video conferencing. They enable people to share ideas and opinions without having to travel to physical meetings. Virtual meetings are capable of being held from any location of the globe with the only fundamental requirement being internet and sound transfer gadgets. Individuals are able to see and hear each other and share facts and figures through the computer as if they were in the same room. Virtual meetings create a conducive environment for open discussions especially for formal meetings where some people speak while others listen. Taking this into account, this paper will focus strictly on virtual meetings and the impacts they provide. In addition, this document will examine the positive and negative aspects in virtual meetings.

Indeed the fast growth and development in technology sector has played a great role in creating virtual meetings. According to Henkel (2007), evidently there have been many advantages that have risen from virtual meetings or telecommuting. Firstly, it has provided an efficient and effective ways of holding meetings without paying for huge travel expenses in order to conduct meetings and discuss issues. For members of a particular entity living in different locations of the world, virtual meeting has proven to be resourceful and beneficial. Secondly, shareholders and managers are able to share files and documents and still edit them successfully through the computer. Thirdly, virtual meetings have created a platform where people can share meetings at the comfort of their homes with less regard or concern on what to wear. Fourthly, virtual meetings provide a podium for less paper work material and allow for soft copies and in the process save for such expenses that would have been used in a physical present meeting. Clearly, virtual meetings are fundamental and have provided immense positive impacts to the entire world.

According to Edwards and Wilson (2004), despite the creative innovations that have led to positive impacts, virtual meetings also have their disadvantages or drawbacks; firstly, in order to hold a virtual meeting you have to be literate and competent enough to understand how the technology works. As such, the technique is unsuitable for illiterate people and not convenient to all people. Secondly, holding a virtual meeting is an expensive strategy because you have to acquire the computers and all the gadgets needed to telecommunicate. Ideally, it would not be available to all people. Holding virtual meetings is not a secure method because these gadgets can be hacked and information may fall in the hands of wrong people and may prove to be fatal. Managers need to use non-verbal cues while illustrating and presenting documents, a technique that may not be convenient in virtual meetings. Also, holding meetings online may result to some members being unproductive and giving less or no attention to the relevancy of the meeting. Evidently, virtual meeting may not be an effective process after all.

Though there are enormous advantages accrued with virtual meetings, at different times it necessitates the need to physically meet. Such times include when you are signing hefty agreements or finalizing business deals, agreements and partnerships with essential clients. High stake deals demand personal physical meetings taking into account money is a sensitive factor in all business deals. Virtual meetings are however proficient and resourceful for departmental staff and business

partners when dealing with important matters regarding their occupational sectors.

Referencing

Edwards, A., & Wilson, J. R. (2004). *Implementing virtual teams: A guide to organizational and human factors*. Aldershot [u.a.: Gower.

Henkel, S. L. (2007). *Successful meetings: How to plan, prepare, and execute top-notch business meetings*. Ocala, Fla: Atlantic Pub. Group.

IJSER