



Tips

There's no need to have the whole meeting on the go. You might like to have a walk to discuss a few ideas, then continue your meeting in the office to work out further plans and details afterwards.

Map and share the best routes for your walking meetings on www.walkingmaps.com.au



Take walking meetings

Walking meetings are great for creative discussions, problem solving or reflection rather than detailed analysis or paperwork. As physical activity stimulates people and increases alertness, walking meetings are perfect for breaking up planning days, long discussions, or in the late afternoon when energy levels subside.

- 1 Walking meetings work best in smaller groups (up to 6 people).
- 2 Let participants know about the walking meeting in advance so they come prepared (comfortable shoes, a hat, etc.).
- 3 Pick a suitable walking route. Use quieter streets, a local park, perhaps include a coffee stop.
- 4 Inform participants of the agenda before setting off.
- 5 Bring a notebook to jot down ideas.
- 6 Walk at a comfortable pace so that everyone is included and can hear each other; or break into smaller groups.
- 7 At the end of the meeting, note contents of discussion and follow-up actions.

"All truly great thoughts are conceived while walking".
~Friedrich Nietzsche



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Walking meeting examples

At a recent all day meeting, we scheduled an afternoon group discussion for 20 minutes to be held as a walking meeting. We found the activity helped energise the group and we were still able to maintain the focus of the afternoon session on a work related issue.

~ Mal Healy, Executive Officer, YMCA Victoria



Walking meetings boost morale, help staff feel more connected to the organisation as well as to the local neighbourhood, and it gives your body a great workout at work.

Philip Moran was the CEO of Merri Community Health Services (MCHS) between 1996 and 2010. Like most people working in an office environment, he often spent more than 8 hours a day sitting (in his office, in meetings, and in traffic traveling to and from work and meetings).

In 2004, Philip decided to become healthier and more physically active. He changed his diet and started exercising more. He wore a pedometer and walked 10,000 steps a day. He decided to start taking walking meetings as well.

Philip used walking meetings for supervision meetings and catch-up discussions. These half hour walks became a welcome opportunity to get some fresh air and exercise, and a chance to have real and open conversations.

Philip found that meetings with staff in the office tended to be more formal and focused on Key Performance Indicators and targets; whereas walking meetings tended to be what business analyst and consultant Colin Pidd describes as 'below the line' discussions - allowing for a genuine conversation about 'what's really going on' for the person and the organisation.

In addition, "going out for a walk is a really good way for us to remain connected to the local neighbourhood and to be in contact with what's happening around us". Given that prevention is a strong focus of MCHS' work, walking at work is consistent with the values of the organisation. "It is easy to do. All you need is a pair of good shoes and a bit of conscious planning".

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