

Time is Ltd.

CONTENT

The Challenge: Useless Meetings, Frustrated Employees	03
Analyze & Act	04
The Truth About Meetings	05
The Road to Improvement	06
Improving Meetings at Every Level of the Organization	07
The Business Case for Employee Wellbeing	08

The Challenge: Useless Meetings, Frustrated Employees

Our collaboration started with a US-based Biotech company before the Covid-19 pandemic hit. The 13,000 employee company was experiencing rapid growth and was starting to notice issues with its meeting culture.

It was particularly challenging to manage the number of growing meetings per person before the pandemic, and the number of meetings skyrocketed as work-from-home (WFH) became the norm for office workers all over the world. The results of an employee engagement survey revealed that meeting culture was one of the key sources of frustration and stress for employees. They were especially frustrated at the number of meetings and their lack of effectiveness. For example, one in-house lawyer was frustrated that sales were involving them in too many meetings, which gave them zero value but allowed sales to create more authority in their customer meetings.

The executive team saw lower performance from the operations department, and, during a board meeting, the VP of Operations suggested that many cross-functional teams were pulling his department into redundant meetings just to get his department's approval.

The leadership team could see that they had issues across the organization and wanted to establish a data-driven approach to improving meeting culture.

Based on the data Time is Ltd. provided, the company sought to create a coaching program for all managers to improve meeting culture, and drive transparency around their efforts. **In the end, the company was able to save 244 years worth of work hours, translating to \$11m.**

Improve your meetings with Time is Limited!

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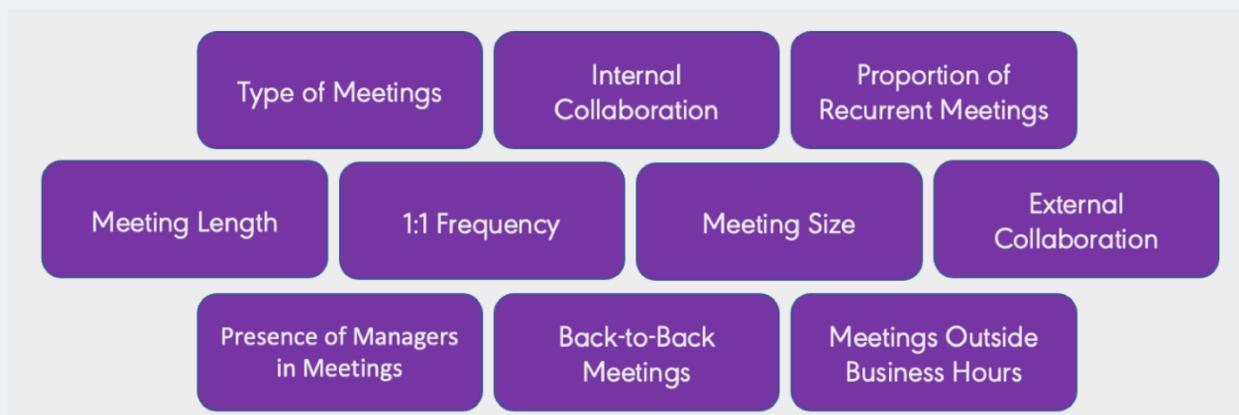


Analyze & Act

There were several things we needed to measure in order to understand the situation clearly. And, we wanted to look at pre-pandemic meeting data to see what changed when everyone began working from home.

Each manager would see their team's collaboration patterns and then generate relevant recommendations to improve their team's meeting culture at every level.

Here is an example of the key topics the company decided to start measuring and managing:

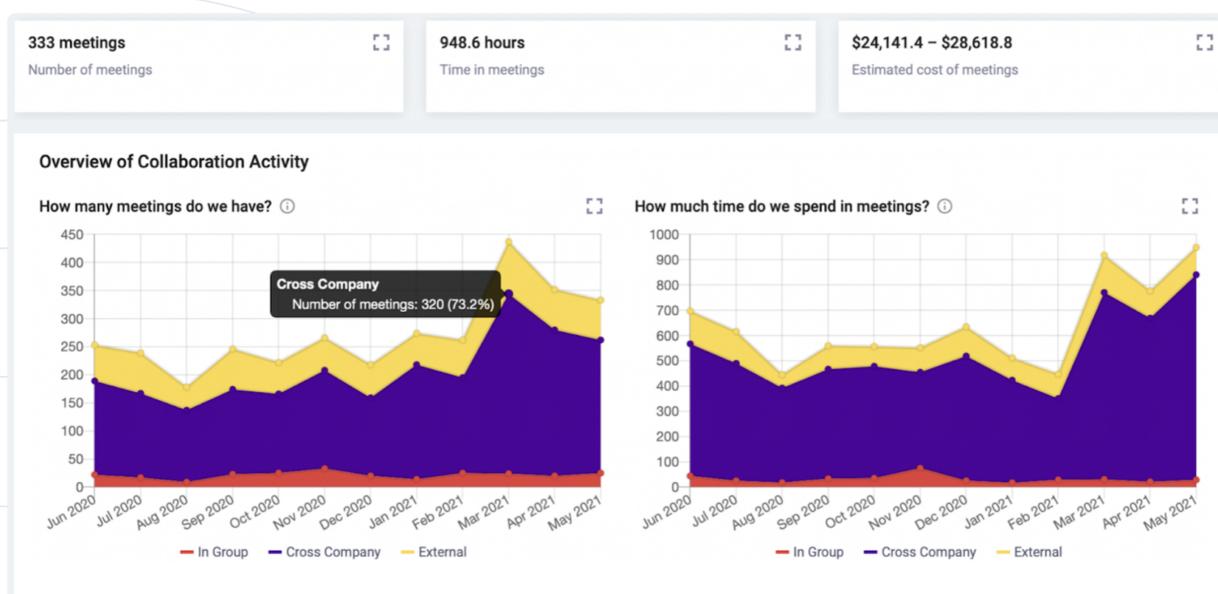


Key topics to measure and manage

The Truth About Meetings

Our deep-dive showed a culture of presenteeism where people called in to many meetings but had little time to focus on their core work. For example, one salesperson spent too much time with their peers sharing best practices that actually had little impact on his team's, or his own, quota achievement.

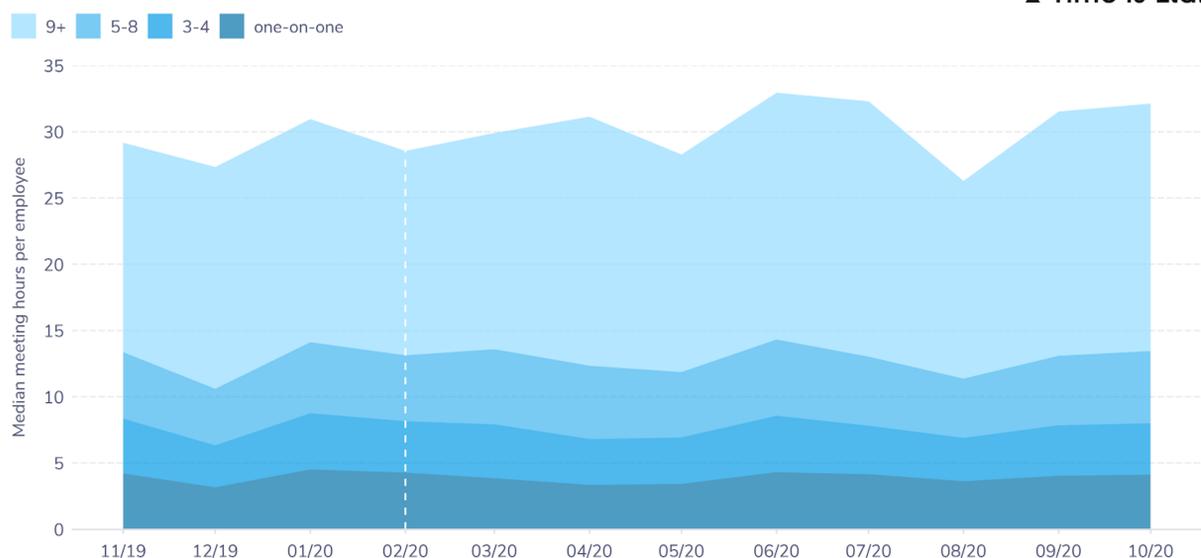
They also discovered that some employees spent up to 75% of their time in meetings, the average meeting took 74 minutes, and the average attendee count was 9.



The view a department director received to get an overview of their team's meeting culture

This tracks with other research we've done at Time is Ltd. that shows just how time-consuming meetings with 9 or more attendees can be. Think of it in terms of working hours spent – a one hour meeting with 10 people is 100 hours on the books.

Typical meetings hours per employee by meeting size



Sample: Median number of 4666 employees and 26412 unique calendar events per month aggregated across 5 mid-sized companies based in the CEE region.

Results of research conducted by Time is Ltd. on meeting size and hours consumed by them.

The Road to Improvement

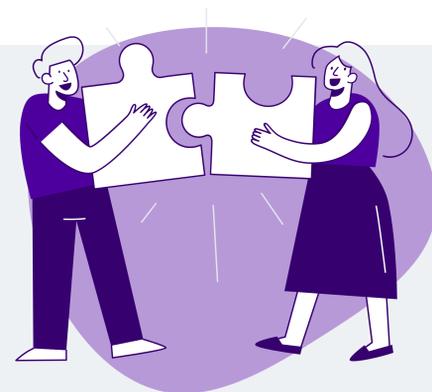
A healthy meeting culture means **employees are not spending more than 30% of their time in meetings**. Most of this comes down to good meeting management – effective meetings tend to have an agenda and action items, 8 or fewer participants, and take no longer than an hour.

The company we worked with realized many meetings were inefficient right from the start, as many started with no agenda and no action items. Those 5-10 minute delays add up to dozens or hundreds of hours lost over the course of weeks and months, not to mention the frustration caused by unpreparedness and open-agenda meetings with too many people.

One key employee survey insight was that more meeting participants meant longer meetings. Combined with an overabundance of redundant meetings, employees were increasingly separated from their actual, value-creating work.

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Improving Meetings at Every Level of the Organization

Managers tracked their team's progress over time, keying in on specific metrics and solutions. The VP of Operations learned that he was not devoting enough time to 1:1 meetings with his subordinates, and one outcome of that was the very presentee-ism that was recognized as an initial issue. Many employees were unsure what they should be doing, and were attending unproductive meetings led by other departments simply to feel and appear productive.

Increasing the number of 1:1 meetings with each of his team members to once a week, the VP of Operations was able to focus his people and give them the time and space to do the work they were hired to do. There were immediate results – employees were happier and more engaged, and felt empowered to decline meetings that weren't relevant to them.

Meeting length



Meeting size



Time is Ltd. For Teams

The Business Case for Employee Wellbeing

The end result was an 11% reduction in internal meetings attended per employee, which saved an average of 5 hrs per week, per employee. The company limited the number of people who could be invited to meetings, which reduced the size of meetings by 20%. And, they saw an increase in meetings with both an agenda and follow-up items.

The program was made more successful by the team members' active participation in the process and the setting of achievable goals. After setting clear rules for future meeting agendas and follow-ups, the company leadership saw stronger alignment between managers and their teams, and greater focus across the company. The company saved 244 year's worth of meeting time, and saw a 23% increase in employee satisfaction.

That's what it's all about.

Right-sizing peoples' work days in a data-driven, collaborative way pays dividends across the business. Meetings can be – and should be – productive. When they aren't, it can cost untold amounts of money and employee goodwill. Wasting real-world money on irrelevant meetings is one thing, but those costs increase exponentially when put in terms of talent acquisition and retention.

Time is Ltd. is here to help your organization do the same. **Get in touch with our solutions@timeisltd.com to discuss how improving your meeting culture** can transform your organization, and what we can do to get you started.

Improve your meetings with Time is Limited!

Get in touch

