

## Take your meetings outdoors

“Walking is good for solving problems, it’s like the feet are little psychiatrists” - Pepper Giardino

Many people assume that serious conversations must take place within the confines of four walls. In reality, the most creative moments take place outside them. Call a walking meeting and you’ll get a change of scenery, boost your energy, get some fresh air and burn a few calories too.

## Why have a walking meeting?

Give yourself a break from being bleary eyed in meeting rooms and take your meeting outside. Walking meetings offer:

- A chance to fit some physical activity into your day
- Different environments to inspire new ideas
- A chance to get some fresh air and natural light
- A shift in group dynamics
- Improve the group’s physical and mental well-being
- An opportunity to re-energize

## What should you bear in mind?

You’ll quickly work out what types of people and meetings can go walkabout, but if you are a bit unsure, arrange to meet for coffee, suggest getting your drinks ‘to go’ and take it from there so everyone feels comfortable. Here’s a checklist for things to consider for successful walking meeting:

**Numbers.** For interactive meetings, we suggest you limit numbers to no more than 6 people. This will enable everyone to have a chance to hear and participate.

**Agenda.** Set an agenda beforehand and inform everyone of the discussion topics so they can arrive prepared.

**Noise.** Consider the environment you’ll be walking in--choose routes along quiet streets or in a nearby green space. Avoid busy roads that might make it challenging for everyone to hear.

**Pace.** Make sure the walking pace is comfortable for everyone.

**Clothing.** Give advance notice for walking meetings so that participants can bring appropriate shoes. Have some extra umbrellas available if rain is in the forecast.

**Involvement.** Make sure you talk to everyone. Try walking 2-3 abreast and make sure everyone can hear what is being discussed.

**Capturing actions.** Assign someone to scribe and take along a small notepad to jot down any actions. Be sure to recap and identify next steps and circulate these after your walking meeting.

**Evaluate.** After the first few walking meetings, it might be a good idea to ask participants for feedback on what can be improved for your next walking meeting.

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