



Walk and Talk: Tips for Holding Your Next Walking Meeting

What Are Walking Meetings?

- They are real meetings that take place while walking. Like regular meetings, they have a specific purpose and involve one or more people.
- They are not a break or a social gathering! They are an opportunity for employees to be physically active while conducting work.
- They are a good way for a city's/town's leader to model how to incorporate physical activity into the work day and indicate his/her commitment to active living.
- Municipal leaders can also use a walking meeting to offer citizens an opportunity to talk with them while walking (e.g. walk a "Mile with the Mayor")

Why Have Walking Meetings?

- To stimulate creativity by breaking the normal work routine and helping brains think differently.
- To facilitate problem solving (thinking on your feet) and minimize distractions (no phones, no email).
- To increase productivity and presenteeism. Presenteeism is the opposite of absenteeism, it refers to the productive time at work. Employees may be physically present, but not mentally present. Getting up for a walking meeting can help increase the time employees are present and productive.
- To improve morale through team-building and conducting meetings that feel more productive.
- To provide that much-needed surge of energy in the afternoon and serve as a deterrent from reaching for an afternoon sugary snack.
- To provide an opportunity for physical activity, which is beneficial not only for weight management and prevention of weight-related chronic diseases like diabetes, but is also correlated with decreased rates of breast and colon cancer, dementia and heart disease.

Conducting Walking Meetings

- Size of group: 4 or less; 2 is ideal
- Length: one hour or less
- You can have a destination or just walk around the block. Some cities have created walking trails around office buildings and disseminate maps to employees
- Permit wearing sneakers or comfortable shoes
- Remember to include employees/citizens who are in wheel chairs or using canes and walkers; accommodate their pace and make sure that the walking route includes enough space for everyone and is accessible
- Types of topics that are conducive to walking meetings: brainstorming, conflict resolution
- Start with a few people who you think may become champions of walking meetings

For more information:

<http://www.feetfirst.org/walk-and-maps/walking-meetings>

<https://hbr.org/2015/08/how-to-do-walking-meetings-right>

<http://www.inc.com/peter-economy/7-powerful-reasons-to-take-your-next-meeting-for-a-walk.html>

The HEAL Cities and Towns Campaign of the Mid-Atlantic provides free technical assistance to local government leaders to help them create healthy, prosperous communities by adopting policies and practices that improve their communities' physical activity and food environments. HEAL is a project of the Institute for Public Health Innovation, in partnership with the Maryland and Virginia Municipal Leagues, funded by Kaiser Permanente, founding partner. For more information, visit the HEAL website at www.healcitiesmidatlantic.org and contact HEAL staff at 202-747-3455 or jgroenfeldt@institutephi.org

