



## Walking Meetings

### What is a Walking Meeting?

A walking meeting is simply that: a meeting that takes place during a walk instead of in an office, boardroom, or coffee shop where meetings are commonly held.

### What are the benefits of a walking meeting?

#### Health Benefits

1. Reduces the risk of dementia, diabetes, colon and breast cancer and heart disease and strengthens bones.
3. Walking gives energy, improves memory, increases your sociability and above all, you will be in a better mood.
4. Practicing moderate exercise for 15 minutes a day can increase life expectancy up to three years.
5. Replace only 1 traditional sitting meeting per week and you will see, this will positively impact your health.

#### Other benefits

1. All types of exercise promote the release of endorphin 'the happiness hormone' – **enjoy going to meetings.**
2. **Improves your efficiency at work** - Walking meetings increase productivity, improve time management, mental performance, ability to meet deadlines and help to be more focused on work.
3. **Develops team spirit** - Walking develops and strengthens interpersonal relationships and teamwork. People are more socially comfortable and spontaneously when they move.
4. **Facilitates decision-making** - Walking improves interactions and helps to find solutions quickly. People are more relaxed and talk more easily.

5. **Fosters Inspiration and Innovation** - Nature and changes of scenery trigger new neuro pathways in our brains which yield new ideas, and new solutions to problems.

### **Dos and Don'ts for successful walking meetings**

- Meeting up with colleagues/clients and walking together tend to be the most successful walking meetings.
- Choose quieter locations such as public footpaths etc rather than a busy main road to reduce background noise.
- If walking by yourself, choose meetings that don't require participation only listening – Morning Huddles, All Staff events.
- Make sure your phone is fully charged.
- Test the technology ahead of the meeting.
- Not all meetings should be held as walking meetings – always consider what will be discussed – confidential, sensitive information are not the correct meetings to be held as walking.

### **FAQs**

I am worried colleagues will think I am not working hard enough if I'm walking during a meeting?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Feedback suggests that walking during a meeting has a positive effect on productivity.</li><li>• There are no distractions from the meeting such as incoming emails.</li><li>• Studies show walking makes you more effective as it increases your focus.</li><li>• Workplace culture and behaviour change takes time to embed.</li><li>• Try walking during your meetings, and then share the benefits you are finding with your colleagues.</li><li>• Start with meetings that require no interaction only listening such as webinars or team huddles.</li></ul>
I am nervous suggesting a walking meeting to a colleague in case they don't like the idea?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Walking meetings can be virtual or physical.</li><li>• You can walk by your self by logging into a meeting virtually or you can suggest a socially distanced meeting in person. (these are best with only a couple of people).</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make the suggestion! You would be surprised the amount of people who will be open to the idea.</li> </ul> <p><b>Top tip – consider the topic of the meeting and decide if it is a suitable subject for a walking meeting.</b></p>
As a manager, how can I encourage a walking meeting culture in my team?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead by example.</li> <li>• Discuss and promote the idea within your team.</li> <li>• Finish meetings 10 minutes early and encourage staff to use the ten minutes for a walk.</li> <li>• Involve your team in the planning, get their ideas and thoughts.</li> <li>• Consider a walking challenge within the team.</li> <li>• Set aside regular time to discuss as a team feedback regarding the walking meetings – for example what benefits are individuals finding from incorporating more walking into their day.</li> </ul>
My local area is too noisy with traffic to walk outside.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make use of public footpaths, bridlepaths.</li> <li>• Check out some local walk routes that take you away from the main road.</li> <li>• Plan ahead if it will take you 10 minutes to get to a quieter area start your walk 10 mins before the meeting is due to start.</li> <li>• Invest in some good headphones.</li> <li>• Walk in your garden or walk around your house instead of outside.</li> </ul>
I don't want my team to walk during meetings?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why not? Consider your reservations and the reasons for them.</li> <li>• Walking during meetings has multiple benefits for your team, both health and wellbeing and productivity.</li> <li>• Discuss your reservations with your team and come up with solutions. For example. Set clear</li> </ul>

	<p>guidelines, only walking while listening to webinars to begin with. Clearly set out what meetings cannot be a walking meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get your team involved, ask for their suggestions.</li> <li>• Do a one-month trial period – measure the success, gain feedback and lessons learned to make sure walking meetings works for you and your team.</li> </ul>
Can I do walking meetings with external colleagues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes!</li> <li>• Walking meetings can be virtual, either with one person or all logging in virtually or can be a physical, socially distanced meeting.</li> </ul> <p><b>Top tip – consider the topic of the meeting and decide if it is a suitable subject for a walking meeting.</b></p>
What technology and equipment do I need for walking meetings?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teams or zoom or whatever platform meeting is on.</li> <li>• Earphones.</li> <li>• Trainers.</li> <li>• Bottle of water.</li> </ul> <p><b>Top tip – make sure your phone is fully charged and check you can connect to the meeting ahead of time.</b></p>
Teams won't let me make a call.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure you have the latest version uploaded.</li> <li>• Check if the app needs updated.</li> <li>• Get support from ICT.</li> </ul>

**Remember walking is not a break from your work. It is only a different way of holding a meeting that would have taken place in the office or virtually from home.**