When Staff Meetings Become Gripe Sessions

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Why do staff meetings morph into gripe sessions? Because leaders allow it!

If your meetings are characterized by griping and complaining, with little being accomplished, then it’s only because you’ve permitted employees to conduct themselves that way.

Gripe sessions waste valuable time. Gripe sessions are largely counterproductive—and rarely solve or advance anything. Gripe sessions lower morale to the cellar.

I’ve run into a number of managers who quit holding staff meetings because their meetings had become primarily gripe sessions. I’ve also discovered that managers may feel unequipped in handling griping and complaining from employees.

Here are five tips for preventing meetings from turning into gripe sessions:

- Know what you want to achieve with each meeting. Have clear meeting goals and always prepare an agenda.
- Get people focused on positives early in the meeting. Ask everyone to tell briefly what’s going on in their area that’s positive.
- Allow time in your discussions to dialogue about challenges or problems. But, and this is important, turn the discussions toward “solutions” as soon and as often as you need. *Tip:* *Some employees like “dogpiling” on other’s negativity, this spreads and others join in.* *Don’t allow it! People behave according to what you allow.*
- Ask employees to help make meetings productive by staying focused on solving issues versus running them in the ground. Ask them to bring some matters to you privately rather than share it openly.
- Set clear standards or ground rules for your meetings. If you don’t have specific, written meeting standards or ground rules, ask your people to take part in creating them.

The most productive meetings occur when we apply the right leadership techniques.

Source: [http://managemyemployees.com](http://managemyemployees.com)