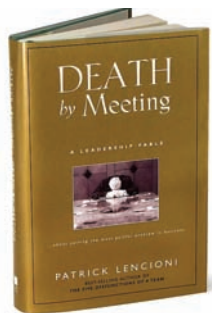


Patrick Lencioni: Your Meetings Are Boring Because They Lack Drama!

By Emily Odegard



“MEETINGS ARE NOT INHERENTLY BORING,” says Patrick Lencioni. “By definition, they are dynamic interactions involving groups of people discussing topics that are relevant to their livelihoods. So why are they so often dull? Because we eliminate the one element that is required to make any human activity interesting: conflict.”

In his book, *Death by Meeting*, Lencioni makes two foundational claims:

1. Meetings are boring because they lack drama.

According to Lencioni, conflict allows teams to resolve issues quickly and make better decisions. Conversely, the noble pursuit of avoiding tension and always ending meetings on time, results in stagnancy. Lencioni gives practical examples of how to dramatically introduce issues that engage employees and engender creative and timely solutions.

2. Meetings are ineffective because they lack contextual structure.

Like a bad stew with too many random ingredients, meetings that attempt to cover topics from potential mergers to employee recognition programs become bland and disengaging, not to mention ineffective. Lencioni’s “Four Meetings Model” proposes different meetings formatted for different purposes.

“The solution is not to stop having meetings, but rather to make them better,” writes Lencioni, “because when properly utilized, meetings are actually time savers.”

Patrick Lencioni's Four Meetings

Daily Check-In Meeting (5 minutes)

Weekly Tactical Meeting (45-90 minutes)

Monthly Strategic Meeting (2-4 hours)

Quarterly Off-site Review Meeting (1-2 days)

Patrick Lencioni, best-selling author, will be a keynote speaker at CMA Colorado 2006, March 13-16, in Denver. He is also on the faculty in the CEO track. For more information, visit thetablegroup.com.

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How Does Your Organization Communicate?

Zondervan's Monthly "Big Tent" Meeting Informs and Unites Employees

ONCE A MONTH, Zondervan gathers Grand Rapids-based employees together for a “Big Tent” meeting. The purpose: to educate and inform the team about their mission, shared values and commitments—and how those priorities are lived out in their products and people. Those not based in Grand Rapids are sent a video of the meeting. At this meeting they:

- > Welcome new employees
- > Honor employees who have been with Zondervan 5, 10, 15, 20 years and longer
- > Review financials
- > Provide updates on new products, initiatives and authors
- > Read customer letters

Mark Rice, vice president of corporate communications, reports that the letters from customers “are the most anticipated part of each meeting. Our CEO closes our meeting reading three to five letters from people whose lives have been changed by reading or using one of our products.

“The letters often bring laughter and tears, but most importantly remind us why we do what we do and keep us focused on our mission. Many employees have told Bruce the letters are the ‘non-negotiable’ part of our meetings.”

It's Sweet at Zondervan! 2005 Best Christian Places to Work Finalist Fosters a Culture of Innovation

By Emily Odegard

IN 2005, ZONDERVAN, Grand Rapids, Mich., achieved its 8th consecutive year of record profits, gained recognition from *Christianity Today* as one of America’s “40 Best Christian Places to Work,” and was named one of West Michigan’s “101 Best and Brightest Companies to Work For” by the Michigan Business and Professional Association.



To read the full article on Zondervan's innovative approach to ministry, go to CMAonline.org/mrc and click on “Christian Management Report.” Then click on “October 2005,” and click on this “CEOs” article.

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CEOs Section Resource Commission. For more resources on the CEO's role, go to CMA's Management Resource Center at CMAonline.org/mrc. Email or call the volunteer members of this Section Resource Commission, or contact:

Al Lopus, Section Leader (2004-2006)

CEOs

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