

Meetings

- Meetings are the proper place to show off that latest Brooks Brother's suit you just bought and if at all possible have a tie made with a replica of your five-year pin running across it in a striped pattern. Wearing your best dress/skirt/pants and jacket with the perennially well admired string of pearls is the woman's dress of choice (if you have an expensive bag with a recognized designer name embossed on it, plainly visible once you lay this on the table top, use it. Be sure that your laptop fits inside so it has a decidedly business purpose for being with you, and keep the meeting notes and files blending in as well.
- A fun thing to do if somebody falls asleep in a meeting.

Have everyone leave the room. Then collect a group of total strangers, from right off the street, and have them sit around the sleeping person and stare at him until he wakes up. Then have one of them say to him, in a very somber voice, "Bob, your plan is very, very, risky- but you've given us no choice but to try it. I only hope, for your sake, that you know what the hell you're getting yourself into." Then they should file quietly from the room.

- These are the occasions that present an opportunity to bond with your cohorts, impress your superiors, and most importantly stay out of the line of fire at all costs!
- It is recommended that you come armed with at least 12 file folders, legal size preferred; two should be red in color. It really doesn't matter too terribly much what each folder says or what's in it, just have them, shuffle them regularly (at two minute intervals preferably), and look intensely in one of them when you are questioned about any of the following:
 - Your budget(s),
 - Goals tracking and/or project scheduling,
 - New product/market ideas,
 - Personnel or verbal issues (see below under the heading marked 'The Fade Out').

If the discussion gets heated, proceed to plan B (see below) or progress directly to Plan C (also outlined below).

- Meetings Plan B-Start talking about CPM (Critical Path method) and Scheduling; talk fast as this material could cause the analytical type to wake up and want to prove their smarts by taking your data apart bit by bit-considering it is tied together rather loosely you could be in a threatening position.
- Meetings Plan C-Use another worker's name and state affirmatively, "the basis for that program is detailed in the task _____title that _____is working on which will be summarized at the _____meeting. (Be sure to name some far off date, try

to avoid Saturdays and Sundays). A good approach is to whip out your day timer and grab your pen and make a mark near the date – an innocuous mark will do as it is unlikely that anyone will question you once you begin the actions to revise your calendar. What you hope for- if you’ve timed it just right-is that the rest of the group gets bored waiting for you (guaranteed to happen the higher up the corporate ladder the meeting is attended by) and they move the discussion right along past you.

If all else fails (they nail you to the wall) turn to someone else in the room seemingly related to the subject area and state “_____ (name) do you have anything to add to this?” Make sure you say nothing – not a word after this- and look intently at the poor sucker you have just passed the hot potato to.

- The Fade Out:

Words that invoke the 5th amendment right to free speech should remind you of the famous saying, *Silence is Golden*.

When and if a meeting discussion extends to topics including SG & A, Overhead, P&L Statements, hire for growth; now is the time to apply your very best listening skills and keep your mouth shut. Nothing you can add at this point will keep you from having to defend the number of people you have working for you. At a few intervals, nod your head, give a meaningful look and say “I’ll look into that,” and make some sort of mark in your day timer. Or grab one of the red file folders.