

Stop Having Pack Meetings

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So your pack meetings are dull? Having trouble thinking outside the box? Then reach over and find the little crank handle... Got it? Good... Now, turn it around in circles... No, the other way... Excellent! Keep going, the music is normal, but be prepared for a sudden, spring-like kick in the behind right around the "Pop goes the weasel" part, right about... NOW!

Hooray! Welcome to my world! OK, Jack, I'll give you a moment to re-orient yourself after that abrupt expulsion from the dull, cramped confines of that old tin container. Relax... Breathe in the fresh air... Look around you at all the pretty colors!

Beginning to get your bearings? Good! Now, and this is very important, you must remember one crucial thing:

YOU SHOULD NEVER, EVER, EVER ALLOW YOUR CUB SCOUTS TO ATTEND ANOTHER PACK MEETING AS LONG AS THEY LIVE!

But Sean, how can this be? What is this terrible thing you say? Did you forget your meds? **HAVE YOU GONE COMPLETELY MAD???**

Well, yes and yes, but that's beside the point. I know the ejection seat was a little disorienting, but try to stay on the subject.

First of all, I'm not advocating that you do away with the monthly gathering of Cub Scouts and their families. On the contrary! I'm just suggesting that you do away with pack *meetings*. It's the nomenclature that bothers me. Meeting. Yuck! What an ugly word!

Really, think about the word "meeting!" What does "meeting" mean to you? Use the word "meeting" and you conjure up images of long, dull, drawn out sessions in stuffy closets, where the air conditioning is either non-existent or set to rival a cryogenics lab, run by boring people whose names you can't remember, blabbering about something you could care less about, while you play Tetris on your Palm Pilot and wish that you could be at your desk playing Solitaire instead, because the left key on your Palm is stuck and you can't rotate those long pieces to fit in place and they stack up, and you suddenly realize that you really should have waited another 3 months because prices went down on the color ones and you could have gotten the next model up for the same price, just like Ted there across the table.

But I digress. We were talking about meetings, weren't we? What else can we say about meetings?

- Meetings usually take place at work.
- People don't pay attention at meetings.
- People try to get out of going to meetings.
- Meetings always run longer than they should.

- You're usually expected to take notes at meetings.
- The two most important reasons to hold meetings are to fire you, or give you more work because someone else was fired.
- Meetings mean more work, because the work you could have been doing while you were in a meeting needs to be made up somehow.

Now, if you've been paying attention at all, you've figured out that these are all bad things. This is not the subconscious thought process I want grinding away in Mom and Dad's head when they think about going to the monthly Cub Scouting event, or even what I want going on in my head as I'm planning it. (Heaven knows there's enough noise in there already without another set of voices!)

Don't believe that a word can alter your perceptions about something? What if I told you that I was sinister? You think immediately, "That Sean guy is really tightly wound, I bet he's got some kind of record." Your first thought is not that I'm left handed, but really, how would you ever guess? I use a quick drying font, and it rarely smears.

Of course, sinister comes from the Latin and means left, and eventually came to mean something threatening harm or malevolence only because people thought the left side of the body was "unlucky." Likewise, I believe that "meeting" started its life as a good word, and only came to be so evil because of superstition and misuse. Well that, or bad management. But I digress again. No, really, I'll digress again. See? But I've digressed from my digression...

So stop calling it a "meeting" and call it a "performance" instead. After all, that's what it should be! And who wants to miss a performance? A performance implies showmanship and entertainment and PHUN! What are some other advantages performances have over meetings?

- People that plan meetings are called middle management. People that plan performances are called directors.
- People that write the agendas for meetings are called dull, but only behind their backs. People that create the scripts of performances are called playwrights, composers and authors.
- People that go to meetings are called hostages. People that go to performances are called an audience.
- People that run meetings are either unwilling accomplices or hatchet men. People that run performances are musicians, actors, crew, and singers.
- Meetings take place in windowless rooms around coffee-stained tables. Performances take place in great halls, amphitheatres, parks and classic venues.
- People that take part in meetings are rewarded with an increased workload or pitiful severance check. People that take part in performances are invited to lavish gatherings of beautiful people, walk on red carpets, photographed for People magazine, and criticized for wearing that particular color of eye shadow with that dress.

Let's change our attitude and reinvent our vocabulary just a little bit. Of course, if you don't want to, I can always stuff your big plastic head back inside the cramped metal box...