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## **Have a Great Meeting**

*By John Chapin*

Steps to a great meeting:

### **Be prepared.**

Make sure you've done all your homework on the company and the individuals. Visualize the meeting ahead of time, and be ready to provide something meaningful.

### **Make a good impression.**

Be sure you're dressed for the part, neatly groomed, confident. Make good eye contact. Give a firm handshake, and otherwise carry yourself well. Be conversant, not only in their business and industry, but also in current events and general knowledge subjects.

### **Show your intelligence in a smart way.**

- Let them know you've done your homework and that you know them as individuals and as a company. Show that you know their industry and have thought intelligently about how you can save them time, money, effort, and/or energy to make their lives easier.
- Careful not to come across as a "know-it-all" or leave the impression that you know more than they do. Rather, think peer relationship where you are on equal footing, putting your heads together in order to solve a problem or make the situation noticeably better.
- **Ask** good questions and **listen** twice as much as you speak. Be sure you understand them, their situation and how you fit in. Cite examples of similar situations, how you've been successfully involved, and then if applicable, prescribe a solution.

### **Close on the next step in the process.**

It may be a proposal; it may be a follow-up meeting; it may be a commitment to follow-up in some other way, at some other time. Whatever it is, make sure you leave the meeting with a commitment as to what will happen next and when.

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