

Capital One's Meeting Revolution

By Mike Song, co-author, *The Hamster Revolution for Meetings* (Berrett-Koehler, 2009)

This case study underscores the value of implementing Hamster Revolution meeting insights across an organization. This case study and others like it can be found at www.getcontrol.net

I. SUMMARY

Challenge: [Capital One](#) is an enterprise that constantly strives to maximize productivity. When internal surveys revealed that meeting overload was a growing productivity challenge for associates, Capital One's Productivity team took action.

Solution: The Capital One Productivity team partnered with GetControl.net to develop a ground-breaking meeting efficiency workshop. The program was based on GetControl.net's **Get Control! of Meetings seminar**. The training session delivered insights that reduced meeting time dramatically, saving over nine days a year per associate. Over 8,000 associates have since taken the training.

II. SITUATION

Capital One Financial (COF) has earned a sterling reputation for innovation, customer service, and leadership in the diversified financial services sector. Capital One manages over \$100 billion in assets for 50 million customers worldwide.

Capital One's Productivity team isolated meetings as a major opportunity to increase productivity. Associates reported that low-value meetings were consuming more than 36 percent of their workday. Internal surveys reflected serious concerns about the quality and quantity of meetings.

III. ACTIONS

Capital One's Productivity team, led by Matt Koch, made the bold decision to design a meeting productivity training solution with the following principles in mind:

1. **Base the plan in data:** Partnering with GetControl.net, Capital One gathered as much information as possible via focus groups, surveys, external research, observation, etc.
2. **Customize and target the solution:** The workshop objectives were carefully tailored to reflect the exact needs of Capital One associates. Capital One survey data was incorporated into the workshop to gain added buy-in from participants.
3. **Fit the solution to the culture:** Capital One has a corporate culture that expects excellence while always doing the right thing by the customer, the associate, and the company. The workshop was designed to resonate with these core values.
4. **Apply intellectual rigor:** Actual results were measured carefully against workshop goals and a pre-intervention baseline survey in order to validate participants' 1.5-hour time investment in the meeting productivity workshop. Eighteen hundred surveys containing over 100,000 individual question responses were collected and analyzed during 2004–2005.

IV. RESULTS

Post-60-Day Survey Metrics: An analysis of post-60-day survey responses documented significant improvements in the value of meetings at Capital One. An average of nine days a year was saved by participants.

- **Meeting volume dropped by 13 percent:** Participants reported a reduction in meeting time of 13 percent. Reductions in email volume provided participants with the opportunity to reallocate 5 percent of their time to more productive activities.
- **Meeting quality improved by 38 percent:** Participants documented an impressive 38 percent increase in meeting quality. There was a 41 percent increase in the number of associates agreeing that most of the meetings they attend are efficiently run.
- **Leadership gains:** The workshop helped to empower associates to take control of the meeting environment via a new style of information coaching. Sixty days after training, the percentage of associates comfortable with meeting coaching had risen by 24 percent, to a total of 85 percent.

Post-One-Year Follow-Up Metrics: Capital One and GetControl.net conducted a one-year post-training survey to determine if results could be sustained over time. The findings were extremely positive:

- 88 percent continued to leverage workshop best practices.
- 83 percent would recommend the workshop to all associates.
- 80 percent believed that the workshop made them more productive.
- 77 percent indicated that they continued to apply the coaching principles learned in the workshop.

V. CONCLUSION

The Capital One Productivity team did an excellent job of diagnosing and addressing two growing productivity challenges: ineffective meetings and meeting overload. They implemented a highly effective, breakthrough learning experience that resulted in major time savings, improved productivity, and a better work/life balance for associates. Results were sustained over one full year.

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