

From here, you'll harness The Power of all Voices in meetings.

Why do inclusive meetings matter?

Inclusive meetings aren't just a "nice to have", they are essential to achieving **better business outcomes**. Research consistently shows that when people feel **safe and able to contribute**, teams share more ideas, challenge assumptions, identify risks earlier and make **stronger more informed decisions** overall.

This one-page guide outlines simple, practical ways to make your meetings more inclusive, ensuring **every voice is heard** and all employees are **empowered to contribute at their best**.

How to make your meetings inclusive

Brief people in advance

Give reflective thinkers, quieter voices and non-native speakers **time to process** content and a clear idea of what will be expected of them, before the meeting.

Structure for contribution

Use simple structures to make it **easier for anyone to speak up** or share a different point of view, for example by offering different ways to contribute.

Make it safe to speak up or disagree

Set the tone and model the behaviour by inviting and valuing challenge and by focusing disagreement on ideas, not people.

BEFORE THE MEETING



SMART5

Share the Smart5 in the **meeting invite** as early as possible.

- Goal:** The specific outcome the meeting is trying to achieve.
- Role:** What is expected from each participant (e.g. ideas, input, decision-making, update-sharing).
- Format:** The agenda, structure, and inclusive tools or techniques to be used.
- Dos & Don'ts:** Clear behavioural norms to encourage inclusion and respect.
- Preparation:** What participants need to do in advance to make the most of the session (e.g. read documents, give feedback, etc.).

Why is the Smart5 important?

The **Smart5** gives participants clarity before the meeting, ensuring they come prepared and able to contribute **effectively**. This maximises the meeting's **inclusivity** and **productivity**.

The **Smart5** benefits everyone, but is especially helpful for those who appreciate the time to process information before openly sharing their thoughts.

DURING THE MEETING



SET THE TONE AT THE START

- Open the meeting by explaining the purpose of the meeting and what you need participants to do.
- Give guidance on helpful contributions and behaviour



MODEL THE BEHAVIOUR

- Use your **authority as the meeting leader** to guide the conversation in a way that is fair and serves the goal.
- If the group is quiet, **ask basic, conversation-starting questions** to encourage participation.
- Appreciate all contributions out loud.**



ACTIVELY BALANCE VOICES

- Use **participation techniques** (i.e. Rounds, Brainwriting, Pair & Share) to help quieter contributors and manage dominant ones.
- Manage dominant voices or frequent interrupters by
 - Addressing interruptions **immediately**.
 - Pause and redirect** by politely but firmly saying 'Let's allow [speaker] to finish their point first'.
 - If interruptions persist, remind the group of the **behavioural norms**, for example, 'Remember we are giving everyone space to share their ideas fully'.

Technique Instructions

- Rounds:** Each participant takes turns speaking in a pre-determined order, to ensure equal contribution.
- Brainwriting:** Invite people to think and make notes silently before sharing them as a group.
- Pair & Share:** Break the group into pairs to discuss their thoughts before sharing them with the whole meeting.

Why is it important to address interruptions immediately?

Interruptions can discourage quieter contributors from participating, leading to feeling disengaged or sidelined.

AFTER THE MEETING



CAPTURE AND REFLECT

- Ask 'clean-up' questions:** Turn discussion into outcomes by capturing **decisions**, agreed follow-up **actions** and ownership, **parking lot** topics to come back to and **heads-up** topics to be aware of.
- SmartCapture:** Summarise the outcomes in a shared document, (i.e. Teams channel/ meeting chat, Whiteboard) (use **SmartCapture Canvas** template →).
- Reflect and improve:** Think about whether this was an inclusive meeting and gather feedback on what could be improved next time.

Decisions	Actions
Parking lot	Heads up