

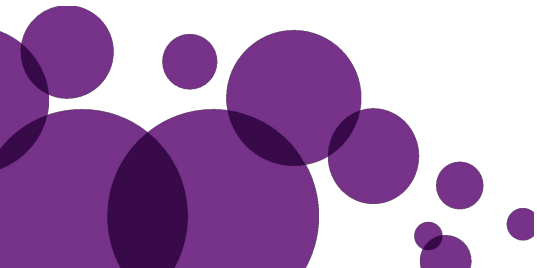
Increasing Your Confidence in Taking
Part in Informal Meetings in the
Workplace

ENABLE



Welcome!

Your facilitator for today is



Warm Up Task

What kind of informal meetings take place at work?

Create a spider diagram of your ideas as a group.

Aims of the Session

1. Describe the different types of informal meetings
2. Identify the purpose of informal meetings
3. Spot when an informal meeting is really formal
4. Discuss roles in formal meetings
5. Find ways to increase your confidence in formal meetings

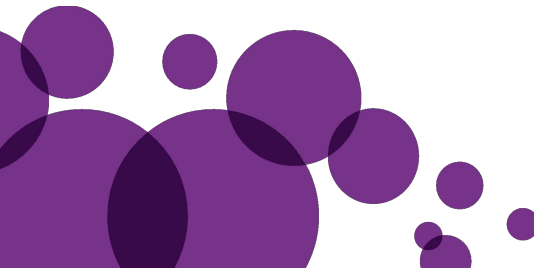
What's the Difference?

Informal Meeting	Formal Meeting
May be impromptu or informally planned	Set agenda
Might be for a few minutes or over an hour	Planned in advance
No formal records taken – notes may be taken	Specific people invited
The purpose may not be clear	Has a clear purpose
Usually no preparation is done	Usually at least 30 mins in length
Unlikely to have a presentation	Will have a formal record



Here are some examples of informal meetings that might take place

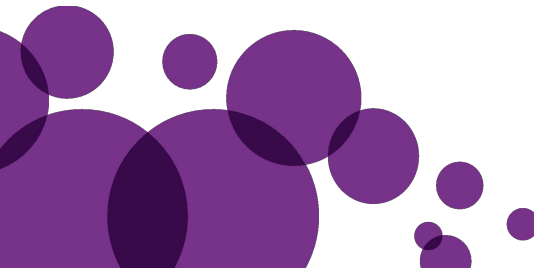
EXAMPLES



1. You and a colleague are discussing something you are working on. Another colleague walks by and you ask them for their opinion.
2. You are walking down the corridor and your manager stops and asks if you have five minutes.
3. You are invited out with a group of colleagues for a drink after work.
4. Colleagues arrange a catch up about something they are working on.
5. You get together as a team for a few minutes before you start your day for a quick discussion.
6. You have a quick chat about a job role that is coming up either in person or on the phone.
7. A group gets together to discuss ideas about a topic or project.

When is an Informal Meeting Really a Formal One?

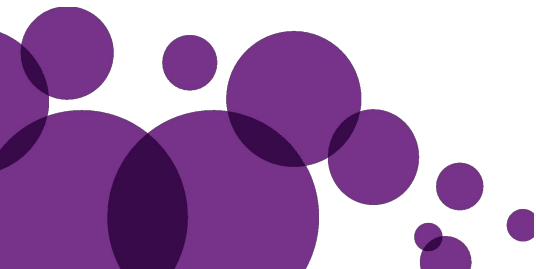
- Sometimes what first appears to be a quick informal chat is actually something much more formal.
- This might be because the person arranging it doesn't want people to prepare or make formal records.
- It might be that there wasn't time to plan something formal in.
- They might want to capture peoples' initial reactions or ideas without pre-planning.



Activity – Spotting the Signs

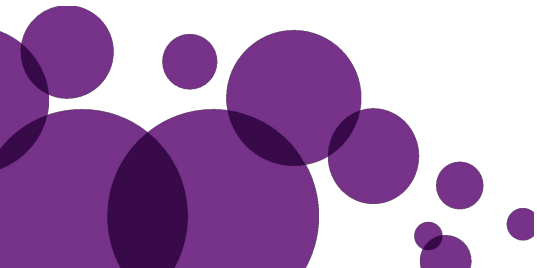
In pairs, try to come up with clues that might suggest an informal meeting is actually formal

Write each idea on a separate Post-It Note and stick to the board/flipchart

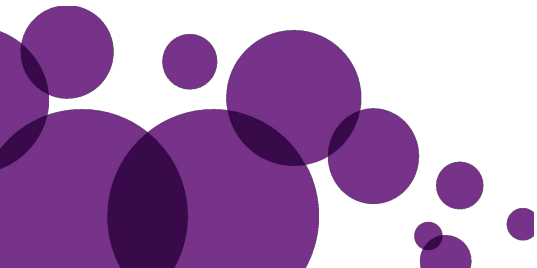


Top Signs

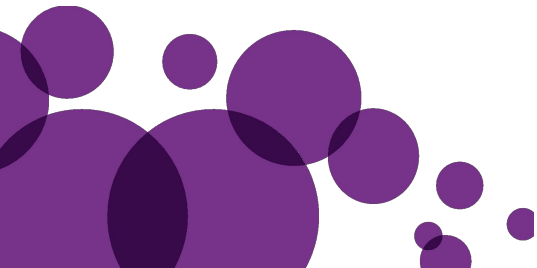
- Here are some of the things to look out for...



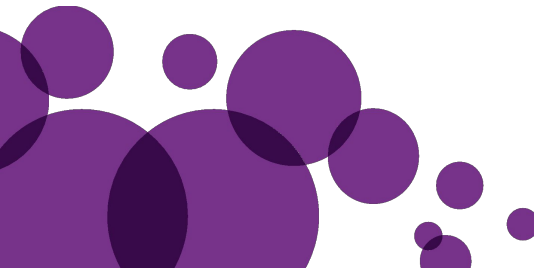
The other person carrying a notebook or laptop to make notes



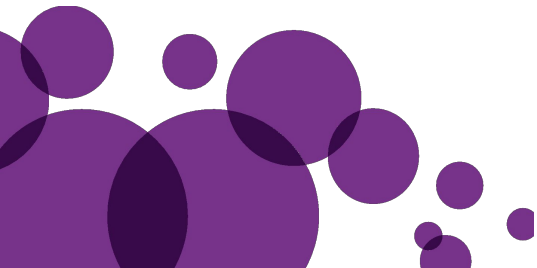
Someone has prepared a
PowerPoint or an agenda you
weren't given in advance



The meeting takes place in a boardroom/meeting room



You are invited to join a group
and find they are all sitting
formally in boardroom style



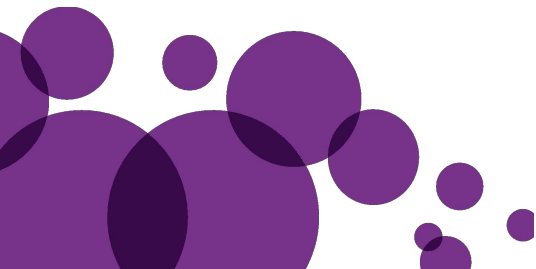
Activity – Informal Meetings

In pairs, choose a type of informal meeting from the spider diagram you created at the start

Create a guide for someone who might be taking part in that type of meeting for the first time

You might want to include ideas on what to say, do's and don'ts and what to look out for

Present your guide to the rest of the group



Skip Level Meetings

What is it? When someone two levels above you meets with you

Why do they take place? So that people can share ideas and challenges and get to know people they might not often speak to and improve general communication

Do contribute your thoughts and ideas

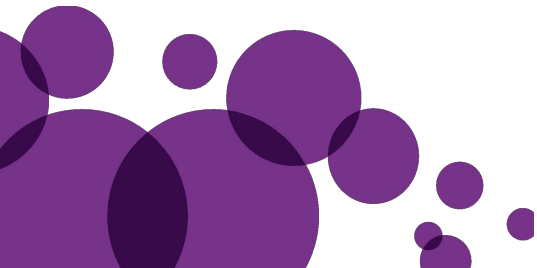
Don't sit in silence

Don't use it as a chance to complain about your manager or colleagues

Do ask if you can get back to them later if you don't have an answer immediately

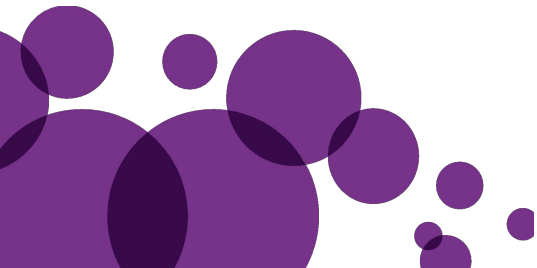
Do use positive body language

Do use it as an opportunity to showcase your skills and expertise where appropriate

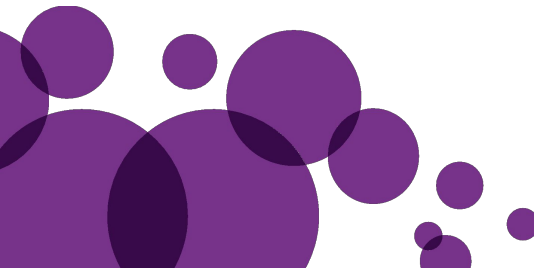


Top Signs

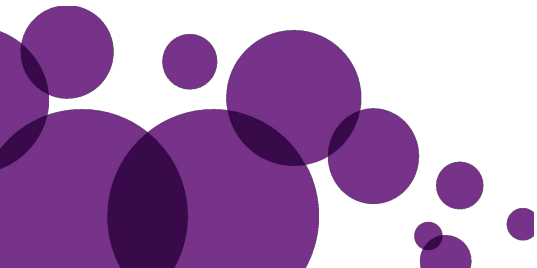
- Here are some top tips for taking part in informal meetings...



Always be present in the meeting
rather than focusing on what else
might be going on



Go in with an open mind – don't
have too many expectations in
advance



Make sure you put forward your ideas and thoughts

A way to indicate you want to speak is to make eye contact with the 'leader' and nod slightly or lean forward



In a more social setting – over
food or drink – be aware of
conventions

Who is paying?

Don't order too much

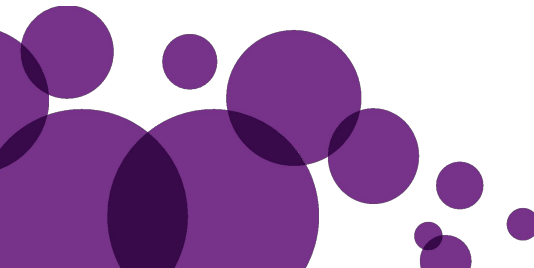
Is drinking alcohol appropriate (consider cultural
factors)?

Even if you are out of work time, if you are together as a work group what you say and do still reflects on the company and you can be held accountable

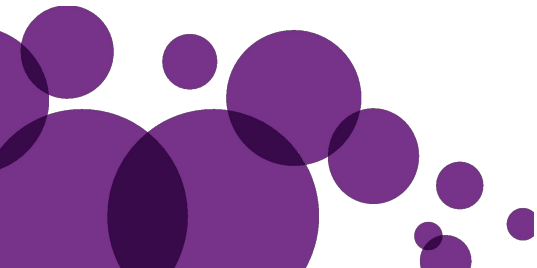
Remember to make use of body language even in informal meetings

Consider what impression you want to give

It is often a good idea to make some informal notes to help you remember any actions or comments



Do make sure you get the opportunity
to contribute – your ideas are just as
valuable as other peoples’



It is often designed for you to feel more relaxed and able to express your ideas and emotions

Don't let the meeting go off topic

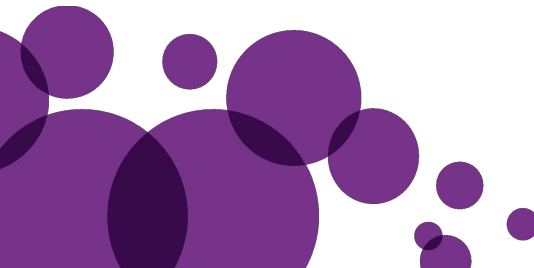
Without a formal agenda it is easy to get
distracted

Don't be the person who starts talking
about something different!

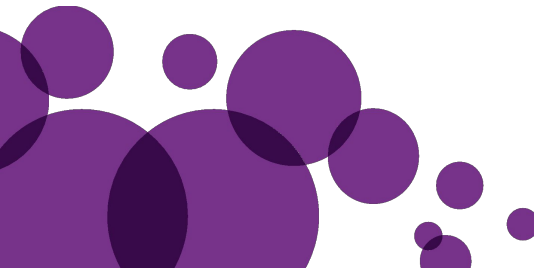
Give everyone the opportunity to
take part

Ask other people questions and
respond to their ideas

Don't dominate the conversation



Confirm any actions you need to take

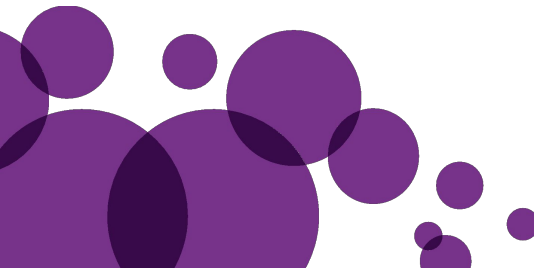


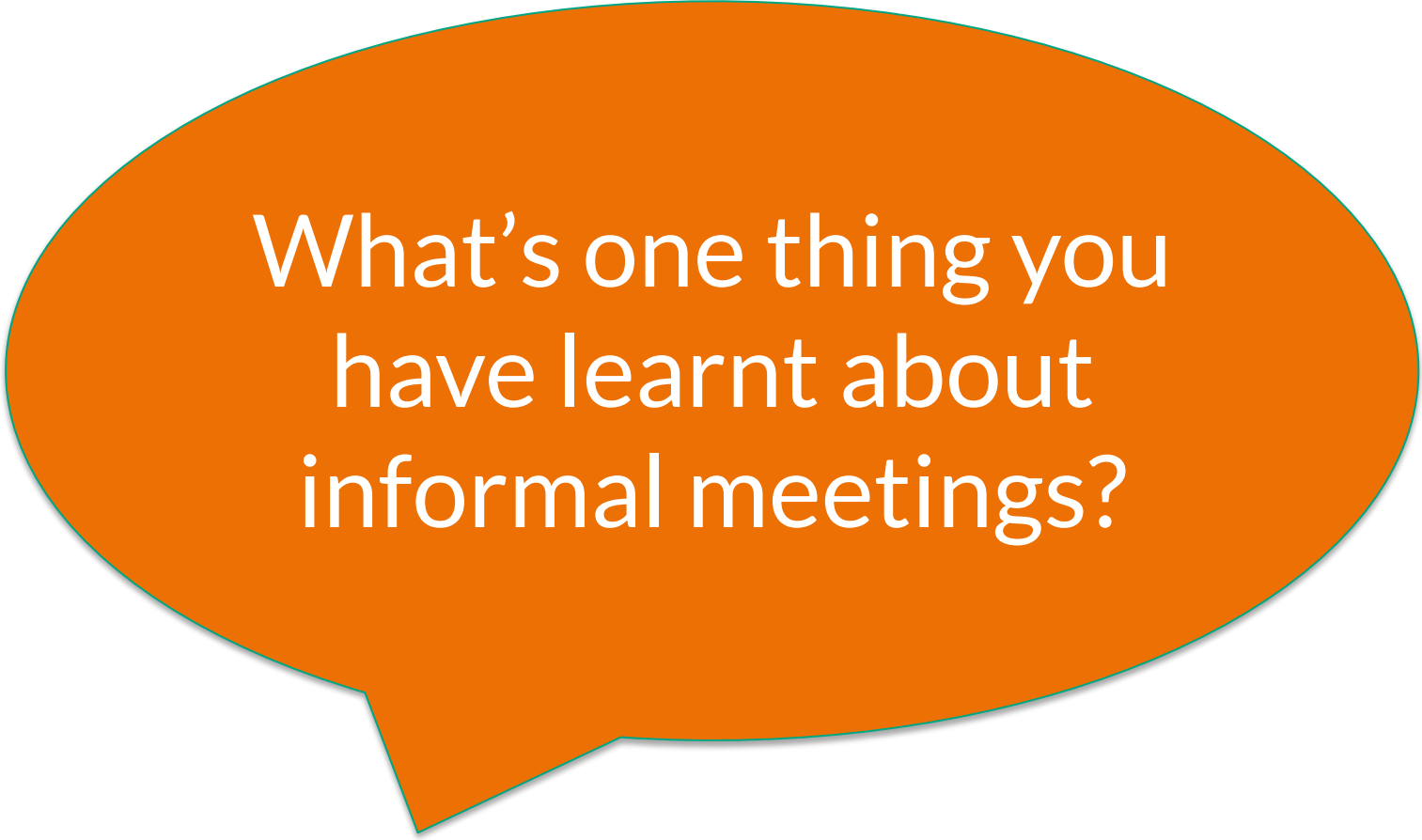
Try not to be pressured into making an instant decision

Ask if you can get back to them later if needed

Did We Achieve Our Aims?

1. Describe the different types of informal meetings
2. Identify the purpose of informal meetings
3. Spot when an informal meeting is really formal
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What's one thing you
have learnt about
informal meetings?

Thank you!

