What is the Meetings Clinic?

Whatever problems you encounter in your meetings, it is almost certain that others have faced the issue before you, and that at least one person has already developed a practical tool or strategy to deal with the issue. The Meetings Clinic is a resource which enables you to quickly review those tools and strategies, based on the issue, and to identify the one which is most appropriate for your situation.

The Meetings Clinic exists in two forms:

1. A methodical form, hosted within the Inspirometer tool itself;
2. Free form resources, hosted on an open platform: http://clinic.inspirometer.com

For those with their own Inspirometer account, we recommend option 1 since it provides a more focused approach to identifying the most relevant tools and strategies, and then uses this to identify (and link) the most appropriate resources within option 2.

Structure of the Meetings Clinic

The Meetings Clinic is broken down into 10 areas, which collectively reflect the qualities which are required to ensure an effective meeting. These are:

- **Clarity of purpose/process**: Ensuring a commonly understood goal and an agreed means/agenda to pursue that goal
- **Attendance / participation**: Ensuring the right people are engaged to fulfil the goal of the meeting, and that they efficiently contribute their skills and knowledge
- **Progress since last meeting**: Ensuring that actions agreed within the meeting are fulfilled in the manner that has been agreed
- **Facilitation / leadership**: Ensuring that people feel sufficiently guided and engaged in the process of the meeting without feeling constrained or coerced
Exploring creative options  Ensuring that possibilities and opportunities are not limited to established patterns and obvious solutions

Use of tools & techniques  Ensuring that, where appropriate, best practice approaches are used to engage people’s thinking and contributions

Involvement / Listening  Ensuring that everyone is engaged in contributing to the meeting, and feeling that those contributions are understood and appreciated

Commitment to outcomes  Ensuring that the conclusions of the meeting have the necessary support to ensure their efficient delivery

Efficiency of time/resource  Ensuring that the design and operation of the meeting is the most efficient way to utilise people’s time in delivering the goals

Quality of facilities/support  Ensuring that the facilities and infrastructure required to conduct the meeting are a positive influence on its performance

The Clinic contains a wealth of useful, and sometimes innovative, resources which can help to ensure these requirements are fulfilled, but in many cases all that is required is that people are mindful of the need to ensure these things. They are not rocket-science, and sometimes simple well-timed questions around these areas can make a massive impact on the effectiveness of a meeting.

To assist with this, the clinic also includes a checklist based on these 10 qualities to help the organiser think through whether they have put things in place to ensure them.

The Clinic then becomes useful when the organiser is either struggling to know how they might do these things, or is finding that their current strategies are not having sufficient impact.

Using the Clinic from within Inspirometer

The Clinic is best accessed from the meeting stats page (Analysis > Meeting Stats) where it exists in one of two forms: A drop-down list of areas for improvement (shown on the right); or a spider diagram of those areas based on an analysis of your meeting feedback.

In either event, clicking on one of the 10 qualities presented (either on the drop-down list, or on a leg of the spider diagram) takes you to the Meetings Clinic itself, and configures the Clinic content to focus on strategies which most impact improvement of the quality selected.

The 10 qualities are described in the previous section.
When the Meetings Clinic opens on an area (say Involvement / Listening) it looks like the picture below.

The header is actually a drop down list which enables you to move easily to other areas within the Clinic. Below this is some introductory text which explains the perspective Inspirometer is taking on this topic.

The ‘Filter by focus’ section enables you to look for strategies and tools which take a particular angle on improving meetings in this area:

- **Administrative options** looks at strategies that can be taken around the meeting
- **Providing structure** looks at the choices made in setting up the meeting and how it works
- **Engaging participation** looks at strategies designed to get the best out of people
- **Providing leadership** looks at strategies to do with guidance and direction
- **Working with people** looks primarily at dealing with the culture around meetings
- **Tools and techniques** looks at methods which can be adopted within the meeting

Clicking one or more of these options sets the focus for the strategies which are presented – the colours relate to the heading colour on the various boxes shown underneath.

Clicking on any of the boxes presented opens a pop-up panel which looks like the image on the right. The coloured icons on the top of the panel can be used to move between pages in the panel, and to understand (briefly and succinctly) the strategy proposed:
Using the Meetings Clinic on the open platform

The Resources link, almost exclusively, to the open version of the Meetings Clinic, where it is possible to find a whole range of resources to support you in improving different areas of your meetings.

The open version of the Clinic can be found here: [http://clinic.inspirometer.com](http://clinic.inspirometer.com) and is essentially a blog where the strategies are included as blog posts, and people are invited to comment on their own observations, experiences, and wisdom out of using the tools.

The open Clinic is best accessed through the focus provided by the Inspirometer tool, but its resources can also be accessed by means of a range of tools which can be found in the right-hand margin of the clinic (reproduced on the right of this page). There are three main mechanisms to do this:

1. Using the drop-down list under ‘symptom areas’ list blog items connected to the different ‘qualities’ of meetings we are trying to assure
2. The search box enables you to search for a tool directly
3. The word-cloud under prescription types enables you to list blog items of that nature

Each ‘resource’ is typically around one page long, and provides straightforward practical guidance which we hope can be implemented with the minimum of fuss.

There are masses of such resources within the clinic, but any attempts to apply them willy-nilly should be avoided.

As it states clearly in the second box down in the right-hand margin shown on the previous page: Understand your improvement goals. And always track your progress to confirm prescriptions are working effectively.

How did we do?

Please rate the usefulness of this guide to you
All it takes is one simple click ...