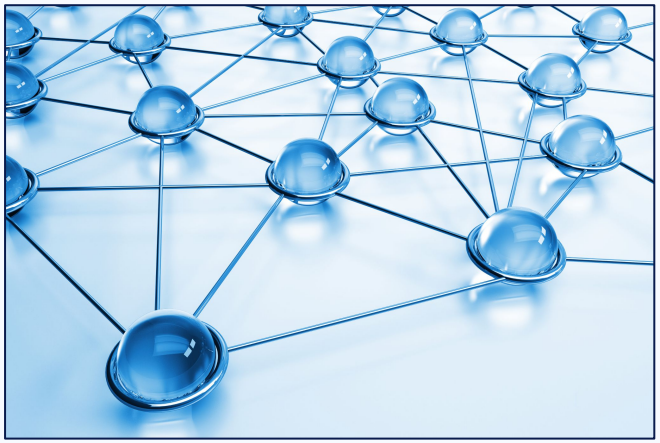


CASS College of Alberta School Superintendents

Meeting Up! System Strategies to Enhance Meetings

November 6, 2026 | 9:00 - 10:15 a.m.

Bertha Clark Jones (1922-2014)

- Athabasca
- Cree-Métis WWII veteran
- Corporal in our RCAF
- Overcame and ignored discrimination
- Worked tirelessly to empower Indigenous women in Canada to play leadership roles (e.g. school boards)
- Officer of Order of Canada (2003)

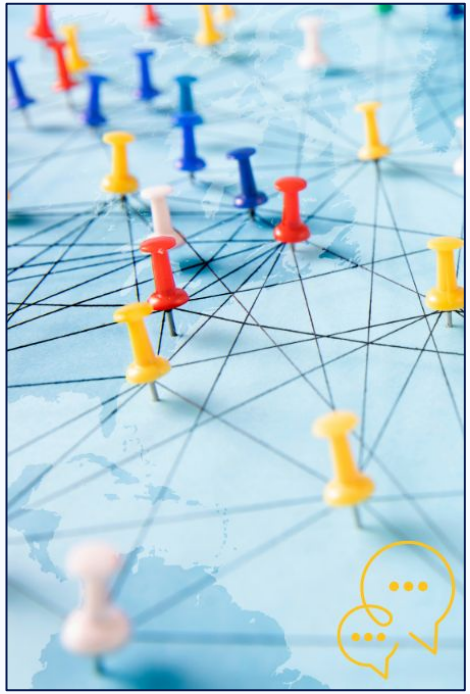


- Anthea's exciting news

9:03

Two Degrees of Separation

- Partner with someone you don’t know.
- Share common backgrounds to uncover how you are connected via two degrees of separation. (**that you just discovered**)
  - E.g. We both know Norman and Mildred Cameron from Consort, AB.
- Pick another pair to square off with…share the connections. Who has the best story?



9:05





What problem are we trying to solve?





Please share **common things** we complain about when it comes to meetings.

i.e. When you consider all your meetings in your life, what's one change you'd like to make.

9:15

Number of Meetings

Length of Meetings

Re-speaking to stuff that has been shared already

The simple fact that each day seems to fill up with meetings with little or no time to actually do the work.

Number of slides, handouts, links, documents & content that gets generated

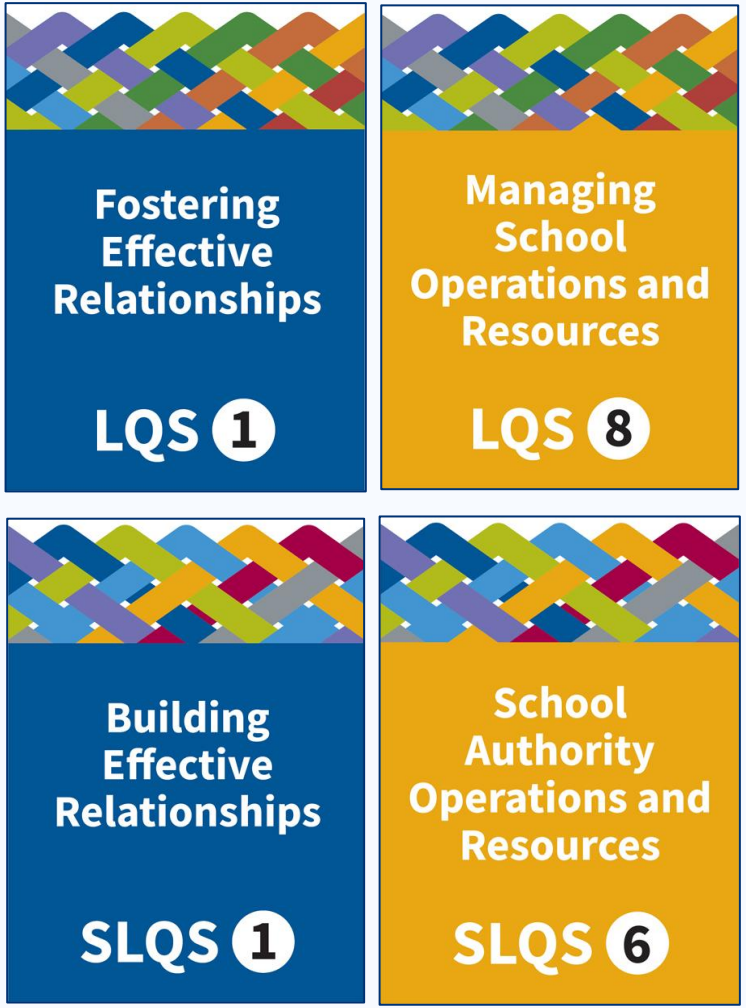
People talking too much

People not talking enough

The time that meetings take to schedule, prepare, facilitate, follow-up on, and review.

Our Norms

- **Honouring confidentiality** - we might be sharing stuff that we don't want leaving the room.
- **Equal talk time** - we designed this session to share the air & share ideas
- **Dialed in to each other** - we hope to have the room dialed in and engaged, and also trust with you emergencies.



Trust in Meetings: Norms Always Required




TED

At the end of today's session, we'll ask…

What's **one take-away** that you are leaving with today? It could be:



- Something you learned;
- A concept that you are thinking about;
- An idea worth borrowing;
- One question you still have;
- One action item you are looking forward to; or
- Just something that you'd like to share with the team.

Guessing Game - Meeting Up



According to a 2024 study* by Microsoft, how many hours do senior leaders from public sector & educational organizations (like Alberta school authorities), on average, spend in scheduled meetings each week?

* *Microsoft Work Trend Index Annual Report (2024). The Impact of Hybrid Communication on Executive Calendar Overload.*

9:25

The 4D & CEO Test: The Good

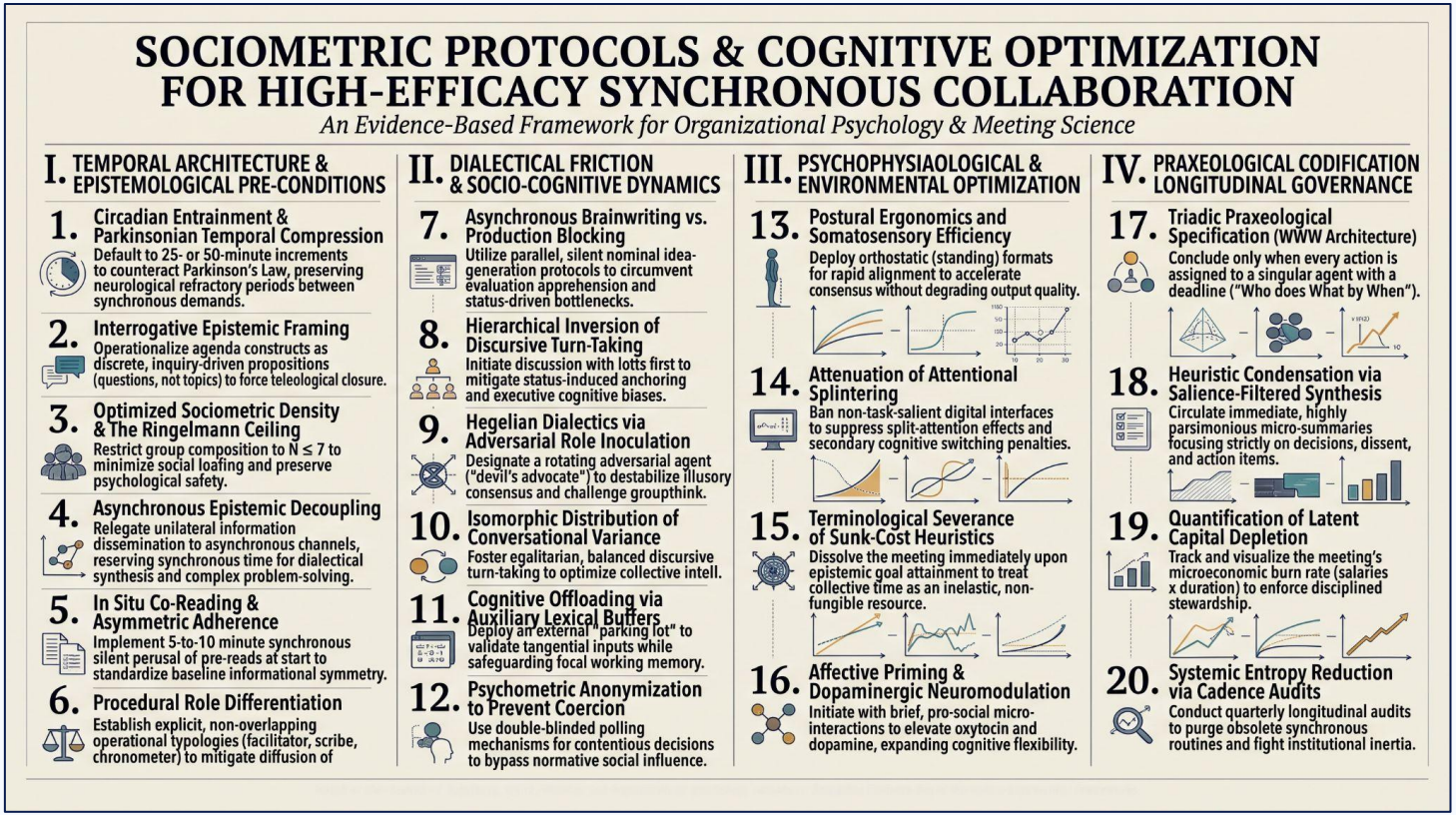



Ep 261 - feat. Rebecca Hinds
Make Meetings
MATTER

Too Little Empathy: The Bad



Stuff We Can't Read or Understand: The Ugly



SOCIOMETRIC PROTOCOLS & COGNITIVE OPTIMIZATION FOR HIGH-EFFICACY SYNCHRONOUS COLLABORATION

An Evidence-Based Framework for Organizational Psychology & Meeting Science

I. TEMPORAL ARCHITECTURE & EPISTEMOLOGICAL PRE-CONDITIONS

1. Circadian Entrainment & Parkinsonian Temporal Compression
Default to 25- or 50-minute increments to counteract Parkinson's Law, preserving neurological refractory periods between synchronous demands.

2. Interrogative Epistemic Framing
Operationalize agenda constructs as discrete, inquiry-driven propositions (questions, not topics) to force teleological closure.

3. Optimized Sociometric Density & The Ringelmann Ceiling
Restrict group composition to $N \leq 7$ to minimize social loafing and preserve psychological safety.

4. Asynchronous Epistemic Decoupling
Relegate unilateral information dissemination to asynchronous channels, reserving synchronous time for dialectical synthesis and complex problem-solving.

5. In Situ Co-Reading & Asymmetric Adherence
Implement 5-to-10 minute synchronous silent perusal of pre-reads at start to standardize baseline informational symmetry.

6. Procedural Role Differentiation
Establish explicit, non-overlapping operational typologies (facilitator, scribe, chronometer) to mitigate diffusion of

II. DIALECTICAL FRICTION & SOCIO-COGNITIVE DYNAMICS

7. Asynchronous Brainwriting vs. Production Blocking
Utilize parallel, silent nominal idea-generation protocols to circumvent evaluation apprehension and status-driven bottlenecks.

8. Hierarchical Inversion of Discursive Turn-Taking
Initiate discussion with lotts first to mitigate status-induced anchoring and executive cognitive biases.

9. Hegelian Dialectics via Adversarial Role Inoculation
Designate a rotating adversarial agent ("devil's advocate") to destabilize illusory consensus and challenge groupthink.

10. Isomorphic Distribution of Conversational Variance
Foster egalitarian, balanced discursive turn-taking to optimize collective intell.

11. Cognitive Offloading via Auxiliary Lexical Buffers
Deploy an external "parking lot" to validate tangential inputs while safeguarding focal working memory.

12. Psychometric Anonymization to Prevent Coercion
Use double-blinded polling mechanisms for contentious decisions to bypass normative social influence.

III. PSYCHOPHYSIAOLOGICAL & ENVIRONMENTAL OPTIMIZATION

13. Postural Ergonomics and Somatosensory Efficiency
Deploy orthostatic (standing) formats for rapid alignment to accelerate consensus without degrading output quality.

14. Attenuation of Attentional Splintering
Ban non-task-salient digital interfaces to suppress split-attention effects and secondary cognitive switching penalties.

15. Terminological Severance of Sunk-Cost Heuristics
Dissolve the meeting immediately upon epistemic goal attainment to treat collective time as an inelastic, non-fungible resource.

16. Affective Priming & Dopaminergic Neuromodulation
Initiate with brief, pro-social micro-interactions to elevate oxytocin and dopamine, expanding cognitive flexibility.

IV. PRAXEOLOGICAL CODIFICATION LONGITUDINAL GOVERNANCE

17. Triadic Praxeological Specification (WWW Architecture)
Conclude only when every action is assigned to a singular agent with a deadline ("Who does What by When").

18. Heuristic Condensation via Salience-Filtered Synthesis
Circulate immediate, highly parsimonious micro-summaries focusing strictly on decisions, dissent, and action items.

19. Quantification of Latent Capital Depletion
Track and visualize the meeting's microeconomic burn rate (salaries x duration) to enforce disciplined stewardship.

20. Systemic Entropy Reduction via Cadence Audits
Conduct quarterly longitudinal audits to purge obsolete synchronous routines and fight institutional inertia.

20 Practical Strategies for System Meetings

BOOKMARK

- Connect the room opener
- 2v2, 4v4, 8v8 idea sharing
- Walk back to your seats
- What's our problem?
- Perception checking
- Tuning protocol
- Stories & scenarios
- Books that change practice
- Take your best shot Q&A
- One takeaway | cue card 90
- Two facilitators
- Plan for seating
- Simple norms
- Guessing games
- Speed dating
- 3-min ED-talks
- Bento box
- Timers
- Prizes
- 60-sec video clips

20 Meeting Limiting Moves (MLMs)

BOOKMARK

- Starting with info or lectures
- Slides that can't be read
- Information items > 3%
- Lectures or ED talks > 9 min
- Open mic (with emotion)
- Devices on… for distractions
- No discussion time or crickets
- Trust falls & stick bridges
- Report-back & chart overload
- Too much homework
- Late start
- No facilitator
- No agenda
- Surprise agenda
- Sit & get > 30%
- No action items
- One voice only
- Row seating
- No time for items
- Finishing late

Meeting Planning Tips - Ray

- **4D**: Decide, Discuss, Develop, Debate
- **Year-at-a-glance** in April & e-calendars
- End at **random times** (e.g. :25 or :54)
- **One document** for all agendas in year
- Every agenda item has **estimated time** and a **simple linked document** (don't 'notify' in Google/Microsoft/email)
- End at **random times** (e.g. :25 or :54)
- **Sidebars** in agenda - noted at end
- Stand-up & **tailgate** meetings rock
- CEO: Complex, emotional, one-way door

A bad system will beat a good person every time.

- W. Edwards Deming

Meeting Planning Tips - Anthea

- **Culture** building
- Celebrations & **joy**
- Action items & **due date** - who what when
- **Schedule** it or it won't happen
- Strategies when you are put on the spot - many need **reflection time**
- Phones & screens & **distractions** - golden time

We do not rise to the level of our goals. We fall to the level of our systems.

- James Clear

Perception Checking Statements

5
strongly agree

4
agree

3
unsure

2
kinda disagree

1
Uhm…ya, I disagree

- For each of the following statements, please take **a moment to reflect** on the system or the work of your team.
- All of this is **without blame**. We are our best when we are curious, not judgmental.
- Give a '**sideways thumb**' if you aren't sure or if you'd like to pass.

9:35

Leadership, Team, or Departments Meetings

5
strongly
agree

4
agree

3
unsure

2
kinda
disagree

1
Uhm…ya, I
disagree

I love the way my regular ‘leadership, team or department’ meetings are scheduled, planned and facilitated. And I know everyone on my team finds them essential and energizing.

03:00

CASS College of Alberta School Superintendents

One-on-One Meetings

5
strongly agree

4
agree

3
unsure

2
kinda disagree

1
Uhm…ya, I disagree

I have one-on-one meetings scheduled and planned in my calendar for the year, both in schools and in division office. And I'm crystal clear on the questions I'll be asking.

03:00

CASS College of Alberta School Superintendents

Triad Tuning - Reflection (USSW)



02:00

Choose one meeting type you'd like to change, tweak, rebuild, eliminate, etc. Write down a few profound steps you'll take to make the change? It could be:

- Leadership team meetings
- Admin meetings or lead teacher meetings
- Your own department meetings
- One-to-one meetings
- Community or parent meetings
- School meetings to meet teams

9:40

Triad Tuning (4 min x 3 participants)



One meeting type you are thinking about, and the steps you'll take to improve them.

- Presentation (90 seconds)
  - *Presenter is the only speaker*
- Warm & cool feedback (90 seconds)
  - *"I really like…" & "I wonder…"*
- Reflection from the presenter (1 min)
  - *"I learned…"*

9:45

Fan Favourite: Take your best shot



Give 2 minutes reflection time for each participant to write down one question to ask the facilitators or the room.

Take 3 minutes to have each group share questions and **pick one** that the whole room needs to hear.



Fan Favourite: Speed Dating



- 8 people need to address different topics to a large group
- 8 people visit each table for **5 minutes**
- 1 minute for transition
- **48-minute speed dating activity**

* Avoids MLM where each person takes 20 minutes with the large group (untimed) for a total of **2.5-3.0 hours**

Fan Favourite: 90-Second Simple Survey



On the front of the cue card:

- **Today, I really liked…**

On the back of the cue card:

- **Next time, could we…**

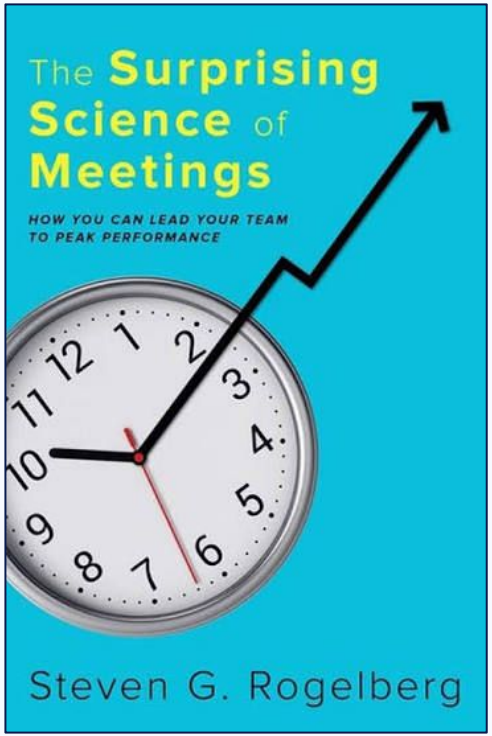
Your Best Meeting Ever



Hinds, R. (2026). **Your best meeting ever**: 7 principles for designing meetings that get things done. Simon Element.

- Overcoming Parkinson's Law
- **4-D Test:** Decide, Develop, Discuss or Debate
- **CEO Test:** Complex, Emotional or One-way door

The Surprising Science of Meetings



Rogelberg, S. G. (2019). **The surprising science of meetings**: How you can lead your team to peak performance. Oxford University Press.

- Overcoming Parkinson's Law
- Clear technology ground rules
- Standing up and walking
- Our meeting blind spots

Thirty Years of Meeting Science



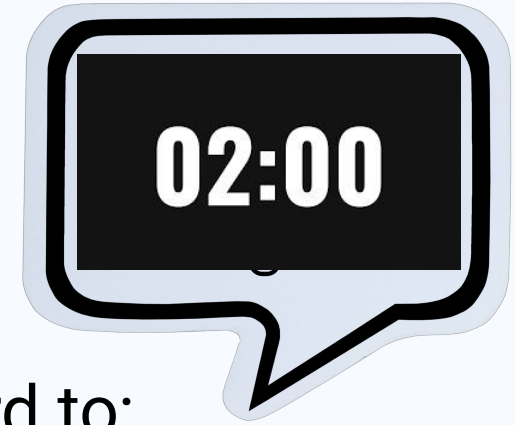
Rogelberg, S. G., Kreamer, L. M., & Gray, J. (2026). Thirty years of meeting science: Lessons learned and the road ahead. Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior, 13(1), 415–442.

- Pre-meeting connection, small, talk & humour play important roles
- Meetings as culture artifacts

Reflection - one take away - 20 second blurb

What's **one take-away** that you are leaving with today? It could be:

- Something you learned;
- A concept that you are thinking about;
- An idea worth borrowing;
- One question you still have;
- One action item you are looking forward to;
- Just something that you'd like to share with the team.



10:00


STAY
IN
THE
ZONE



Thank you!!

Questions or Follow-up:

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- Ray Hoppins (403-507-1617)
  - ray@hoppins.ca

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