



# Take a stand and make

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**G**et up, stand up: stand up for your rights!" Bob Marley & The Wailers had a point in their hit *Get Up, Stand Up*.

Every workplace experiences issues with communication. Try adopting the following method of a fast, short meeting to have the communication flowing and get your team focused, achieve great results and create a positive workplace culture.

When giving presentations I notice that people in the audience pick up their pens and start scribbling whenever I talk about weekly "stand up" meetings. I first got the idea from a seminar conducted by Verne Harnish, the self-styled "growth guy" from the US. Harnish promotes a highly structured approach to managing high-growth companies that includes an emphasis on regular, well-structured and facilitated meetings.

When I was CEO at Brumby's we adapted the approach to suit

our Australian circumstances, in particular our geographically dispersed group of 15 TEAM (Together Everyone Achieves More) members spread over three states. While we held meetings each quarter, we realised we needed more frequent updates. The weekly stand up meetings therefore were designed to keep all the key players on track and accountable.

Team members either attended in person or phoned in to a conference call that was fixed at 8.39am every Tuesday. The rules for the meeting were

## your meetings effective

simple: no sitting down, two minutes maximum per point each person, each question, just answer the following:

1. What's up – what's on the top of your mind?
2. Focus – what's your focus for the following week and what do you hope to achieve?
3. Blockages or bottlenecks – identify any obstacles that are going to stop you from achieving your weekly focus (and who else in the TEAM can assist)?
4. Market intelligence/ideas – have you heard any rumours or intelligence that are important

to the business or do you have any ideas to increase revenue and drive down expenses?

5. How do you feel? Your sign off.

Each TEAM member would answer each question in turn or "pass" if they had nothing to contribute. TEAM members kept their own notes and "to do" lists but there were no official minutes. With everyone standing up we found that this created a more dynamic environment in which there was no waffling and a more succinct, focused summary.

If a big issue or blockage

emerged that had to be addressed it was taken off-line. The maximum time was 30 minutes. The TEAM developed a certain "rhythm" to their meetings and it worked a treat.

If your workplace is experiencing communication accountability problems with your TEAM, try adapting the above process to your business – you will be surprised what a difference it makes.

**Michael Sherlock is conducting a Franchise Masterclass at Griffith University on December 5**

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