

COACHING PARADIGM - How The Ritz Carlton & I Run Our Meetings: The Daily Huddle-

Rob Kelly April 29th, 2009 | Getting Things Done

The Daily Huddle has arguably been one of the greatest productivity and efficiency boosters I've personally experienced.

Since I started using it, I've run into numerous industry leaders (such as the Ritz Carlton and Johnson & Johnson) who benefit from the Daily Huddle.

Duhh, why didn't I begin this 20 years ago!



England huddle to celebrate victory over India in Mumbai, March 2006

I first read about the concept of the Daily Huddle in **Mastering the Rockefeller Habits**, which may be the best how-to book for small businesses that I've read. Its author Verne Harnish was inspired by the habits of business tycoon John D. Rockefeller and translates those for you to apply to business today.

I know, I sound pretty excited about this stuff — that's cuz I am!

So, what is the Daily Huddle? Well, for starters, I use the term "Daily Huddle" because I like the ring of it — you may have heard it called names like Daily Scrum, Daily Pulse, Daily Agile, Daily Lineup (Ritz Carlton) or Daily StandUp. The concept is what counts.

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Basics

Let me outline the basics first:

- Time of Day — It should be as early as possible (ideally in the morning).
- Length of Time — 5 to 15 minutes (depending on the size of the team).
- Number of Attendees — Teams of 7 or fewer people (if you have teams that are larger than 7, you probably have a team that needs to be split up).
- Who Attends — Every person in your company should be attending at least one Daily Huddle (but no person should attend more than two or three).
- Who Runs It — I recommend you pick the senior manager of the particular team to run it (unless he or she is not organized in which case pick the most senior organized person).
- Where Does it Take Place — It can be done in person or over the phone or on videoconferencing if you're lucky enough to have one of those.

Agenda

The agenda is the same every day. I recommend you first test out the Rockefeller Habits' suggested agenda. That's what I did and we didn't need to change a thing.

1. What's Up — The first section of the Daily Huddle should be about each of your team members sharing the What's Up of what they've accomplished since you all last met. Total Time: 3 to 5 minutes (Every participant should talk for no more than 30 seconds each).
2. The Numbers — The second section is about the numbers of your business. Here, you should cover the critical metrics that are most important to your team. For example, in my Sales Daily Huddle, we report on such vitals as total sales by brand from the previous day (with comparisons to prior periods) and percentage of our monthly sales goal we project. Total Time: 3 to 5 minutes
3. Roadblocks — This section focuses on the roadblocks (also called "bottlenecks") that the team members face. Total Time: 3 to 5 minutes.
4. Values & Ideology — This last section covers values-related items that don't fit nicely into the first 3 sections of the meeting. An example of Values or Ideology items might be praise that someone outside the group has earned or a personal item that someone outside the meeting is facing that is affecting their performance (for example, we just had a woman on our team whose neighborhood in Santa Barbara was on fire (from Wildfires); and one of our values is to make sure to take care of such people in need of assistance (by offering to pick up her slack and be extra supportive of her and her family).

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Bonus Tips

Here are some other things I've noticed from my experience with the Daily Huddle.

- Give it a Week — It will be tough for your people to adopt at first (the first one will be awkward when, for instance, you ask people “What’s Up?”) — But it will become easier as the team figures it out (give it a good week!)
- Don't Problem Solve — You should keep it focused on problem-identification and not problem-solving (if there's a problem that can't be solved with a “one-liner” by one of the group, then you should schedule to meet off-line).
- Start at Odd Time — Try scheduling it at a time other than the half-hour or hour (e.g. try 10:02am in the morning). Reason: People will remember it more and you'll find they show up at 10am to 10:01am (instead of being late!).
- It Helps The Rest of Your Day — The Daily Huddle will help you and your team better figure out how to spend the rest of their day.
- Start with Senior People — The most effective way to roll out the Daily Huddle is to have your organization's leaders do it first (secret: if leaders do it, it will trickle down through the rest of your business).

And please read **Mastering the Rockefeller Habits** — it's chock full of other valuable habits and ideas for businesses to grow.

You should comment below about your experience with the Daily Huddle — I really want to hear your opinion!