Twitter Thread by Darren Chait

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Most meetings are a waste of time.

But there's an easy fix.

The 10% rule––how it changed my company and will change yours too:

So what's the 10% rule?

It's simple.

In a 40-hour week, you're allowed to block off no more than four hours for internal meetings.

10%

This is how you move FAST.

I know, I know...

At first, it seems like an impossible task—but stick with me.

Plenty of people have closer to four hours of non-meeting time in the week from 9-5.

In fact, I bet you're peeking at your calendar right now saying, "But I have four hours of meetings TODAY?!?"

You're not alone.

Businesses love meetings.

You know what I love?

I love how fast an organization can move when you're not carving up every day with check-ins and sync-ups.

I love Progress.

I love getting stuff done.

If fewer meetings sound good to you, here are 5 simple ways you can cut down on meetings—that any organization can do:

1. Share updates in advance:

One of the most common words in any meeting agenda is "Update."

Let's think about that.

An update should be a concise explanation of where something is at and what's changed.

So why do we waste so much time on them?

There's a social reason why live updates take so much longer than updates in meeting notes.

If you can explain your progress in 20 seconds, your work looks unimportant.

Whether intentional or not, people tend to include unnecessary levels of detail.

Save three minutes of updates with three written bullet points instead.

Is your entire meeting nothing but updates?

Skip the meeting!

Have everyone share their bullet points and read each other's notes.

Only then, if something surfaces to discuss, should you have a meeting.

2. Make a video:

Sometimes it seems easier to have a meeting because it seems more efficient.

It takes less time to explain something in person than to write it all down.

But when you make a habit of this, every transfer of information starts to default to yet another meeting.

When you make a video instead of having a meeting, your information is available on demand.

We call this asynchronous communication.

Your team can absorb the information on their own schedule, without distraction, and get back to you with a plan to move forward.

3. Just don’t go to the meeting

If you’re in a cross-functional or managerial role, you may feel obliged to go to a lot of meetings.

You need to stay up-to-date on everything.

It’s not that you’re a necessary presenter; you’re worried that you might miss an important detail.

But sitting through endless meetings is a waste of your time.

What you need is good, high-level meeting notes, consistently-delivered to you.

Ideally, in a centralized place, and not some co-workers scratchpad or random folder.

So skip the meeting and ask for notes instead.

4. Stand up for stand-ups:

It’s popular to describe ultra-brief meetings as stand-ups.

I’ve noticed, though, that if anyone is remote, stand-ups become sitting-down meetings (if they weren’t already).

The point of calling it a stand-up is that you get tired if it goes on too long.

So stay standing!

When you start to get tired, it's time to end the meeting, move on, and get back to work.

5. Working together isn’t the same as having a meeting:

The real secret in hitting the 10% goal is that your team can still work together, just don’t have a meeting.

For example:

Yesterday an employee asked if I could chat about a design.

I jumped in a video conference, we chatted, and we’re done.

It took 8 minutes.

By not blocking off an arbitrary 30-minutes, we got the discussion done in exactly the required time.

Nothing more.

Proposing all these changes at once might cause too big of a shock for your co-workers.

Try picking one and giving it a test run.

You might surprise yourself at how excited your team gets to have more time to focus on moving the needle.

That’s all for today.

If you found this thread valuable:

1. Follow me for more threads on business, leadership, and productivity → @darrenchait

2. Check out how my team at Hugo is changing the way people think about meetings ■ https://t.co/c9gKNENKXc