HOW TO RUN A KILLER MEETING
(and get a promotion, not a prison sentence)

ARABELLA POLLACK  Nov 14, 2014
...AND IN CONCLUSION...

HURRAH!
WHAT IS A KILLER MEETING?

- Participants engaged
- Outcome that delivers against objectives
- Participants aligned on outcome
The goal

From this... ... to this
Who gets to decide?

Brand Manager
Who gets to decide?

- Consumer/Shopper Insights
- Legal
- PR
- International Partners
- Operations
- Sales
- Regional Managers
- Senior Managers
- Brand Manager
Who gets to decide?

- Consumer/Shopper Insights
- Legal
- PR
- International Partners
- Promotions Agency
- Operations
- Sales
- PR Agency
- Senior Managers
- Digital Agency
- Regional Managers
- Advertising Agency
- Brand Manager
Let’s Break it Down...

PLOTTING

EXECUTION

POST-MORTEM
THE PLOTTING
P...P.....P.....Plotting...

☐ P
☐ P
☐ P
☐ P
☐ P
☐ P
☐ P
☐ P
☐ P
Perfect Planning and Preparation Prevents Piss-Poor Performance!
What? (Part I)

- What are the meeting objectives?
  - What decisions are going to be influenced?
  - How important is it to the business?
  - Who are the major stakeholders and what are their going-in views?
  - What deliverables are required?
Who?

Based on the Meeting objectives…

- Who should attend?
  - Max 15-20

- Consider external facilitator
  - No personal agenda
  - Able to focus on meeting flow and capturing ideas vs. getting pulled into discussions

- Predefine small groups with mixture of backgrounds
How? ...

Think of a diamond....

First expand ideas.....
- Engaging exercises to spur creativity

... Then narrow them down
- Structured approaches to gain consensus
Expanding Ideas: The Importance of Play

Dr Stuart Brown
Medical doctor, Psychiatrist, Clinical Researcher, and Founder, National Institute for Play
We are animals too!

The benefits of Play:

- Overcome power differentials
- Tap into creativity
- Break out of rut
- Enhance engagement
- Improve alignment
- Provide stimuli for future development
How to incorporate play successfully

- Create a playful environment
  - Fun ice-breaker
  - Casual clothing

- Have a variety of exercises
  - Keep it interesting
  - Ideas include collages, story-telling, post-it work, role-plays etc.

- Have a clear objective for each exercise
  - What do you want to achieve?
  - How does it link to the overall meeting objective?
Creativity is a numbers game...
Narrowing ideas down

- Moving post-its
  - Discover themes
- Voting dots
  - Identify front-runners
  - Force prioritization
- Can also be done post-meeting by smaller group
When?

How long do you have…vs. how long do you need?

- Estimate how long each piece will take
  - Allow enough time for exercises…
    ...But not too much time
  - Allow plenty of time for discussion – this is where the real breakthroughs come from

- Time for people to arrive and settle in
- Creative icebreaker to set tone and make introductions
- Wrap up & next steps
- Breaks
When?

How long do you have…vs. how long do you need?

- Estimate how long each piece will take
  - Allow enough time for exercises…
    - ...But not too much time
  - Allow plenty of time for discussion – this is where the real breakthroughs come from

- Make sure to include:
  - Time for people to arrive and settle in
  - Creative icebreaker to set tone and make introductions
  - Wrap up & next steps
  - Breaks
Ways to Save Time…

- **Pre-reads**
  - Get everyone up to speed before meeting
  - Avoid starting with uni-directional format

- **Homework**
  - Get the creative juices and brainpower started
  - Provide stimuli for later exercises
Where?
What do you need?
- Flipcharts – ones with sticky backs? Markers? Post-its?
- Room layout?
- Music
- Projector, power sockets
- Print outs of key reference materials, exercise instructions

FOOD, caffeine, water
Execution

- Set tone!
- Discourage phones/laptops – reassure that time allowed to check messages
- Share objectives, overall agenda
- Get people moving physically
Keep things moving…
Keep things moving…

Enough,
Let’s
Move
On!
Keep things moving...

- Page for capturing offline items
- Time, time, time
  - Move around groups
  - Music
  - Tell people how much time, give heads up near end

Enough, Let's Move On!
Gain consensus

- Identify overlaps and common themes
- Identify areas of disagreement
- Red cards, green cards
- Power of the pen
Be flexible…

- At break times, consider if agenda needs changing
- If discussion is rich, let it have extra time
- If it’s stuck or finished, move on
THE POST-MORTEM
Post Mortem

- Take ALL the flipcharts/outcome with you, you never know what will be useful
  - Write it all up and categorize it
  - Appendix
  - Photos of images
- Draw key conclusions – make it easy for someone who wasn’t there
- Identify next steps and who’s responsible
Case Study

You are part of a team developing a brand identity for a new vodka.

- Originated in Australia (6100 area code)
- Partly owned by Robert de Niro
- Distilled in New Zealand from whey and spring water
- Packaging already in place
Case Study Exercise Part I

In groups of three, imagine VDKA 6100 is a person…

Are they male or female?
How old?
Married or single?
Where do they live?
What do they do for a living?

You have 5 minutes
And now draw a picture to show this person on a Thursday night..

What are they doing and where?
Who with?
Is music playing? If so, what?
What types of things are around them?
Etc…

You have 10 minutes
THANK YOU

Arabella.Pollack@GreystokeInsights.com
917.653.1813
www.GreystokeInsights.com
Example – The Brand at Home

- Eclectic, things collected from all over
- Warm, sanctuary, especially as travels a lot
- Nolita
- ELMO doll
- VDKA 6100
- Paper
- Sharpies