

## Reading Passage (196 words): Three Tips to Business Success

All businesses want to succeed, and arranging meetings, encouraging employees to read all required training materials and reports, and making sure employees bypass the stages of the writing process since it is too time-consuming will make companies more efficient.

All employees need to attend all company meetings, and companies should schedule as many meetings as possible. Meetings are effective for discussing controversial issues and making sure everyone is up to date with the current technology needed to complete their jobs.

In addition to having necessary meetings, employees should be provided with supplementary reading materials that will help them to perform their jobs more effectively. Employees, focusing on the main and minor details in the assigned reports, are always encouraged to read all documents in their entirety.

Too many employees when they are assigned to write a report or proposal pretend like they are still in college, and, in their quest to write the perfect document, will attempt to use all the required stages in the writing process. These employees should not try to separate the steps in the writing process because it is simply too time-consuming. They should write the document all at once.

Writing Prompt: How does the information in the lecture contradict the information in the reading passage?

Listening Passage (445 words): Are these tips really useful?

All businesses want to succeed, but they should think twice when it comes to some of the suggestions you just read about.

Limit the number of meetings you schedule. Internal meetings can be a huge waste of time. A short meeting can be useful for discussing a controversial issue, but long meetings — beyond 60 to 90 minutes — are usually unproductive. Leaders often spend too much time reciting introductory material, and participants eventually stop paying attention. Try very hard to avoid meetings that you suspect will be long and unproductive. When possible, politely decline meeting invitations from your peers by pointing to your impending deadlines. If that's not an option, make clear that you can stay for only the first 60 minutes, and will then have to deal with more pressing obligations. And be hesitant to call meetings yourself; you can deal with most issues through e-mail or a quick phone call. If you're involved in calling or planning a necessary meeting, make sure it's productive.

Another way to become more efficient is that you don't need to read the full text of everything you come across in the course of your work, even if it comes directly from the boss. Though reading a long article from cover to cover might make you feel productive, it might not be the best use of your time. Most likely, only a very small part of that article is vital to your work. Maybe you need to remember the big ideas, not the intricate details. Or maybe you need only to find one or two examples that illustrate a particular larger point. Once you start reading a text, make it a point to search for what's important, while skipping sections that are less relevant.

The final suggestion that is important is helping you and other employees to become more efficient is to follow the steps in the writing process. When some people sit down to write a long memo, they insist on perfecting each sentence before moving to the next one. They want to complete all the stages of the writing process at the same time — a most difficult task. In my experience, this leads to very slow writing. A better approach separates the main steps in the writing process. First, compose an outline for what you are going to say, and in what order. Then write a rough draft, knowing it will be highly imperfect. Then go back over your work and revise as needed. This is the time to perfect the phrasing of those sentences. Following these steps in the writing process will ensure that you complete your writing projects in a timely and accurate manner.