



## How to Lead a Weekly Planning and Scheduling Meeting

Too many, this month's tip may seem to be a relatively simple component of the standard weekly maintenance management process. But it is one I find in most organizations I work with needs improvement: [The Weekly Maintenance Planning and Scheduling Meeting](#). I actually find a large number of organizations have no organized; regularly scheduled, weekly meeting to discuss the status of current work being performed and begin discussions about what the plan is for the next week and beyond.

The principle to the whole meeting concept is twofold.

1. The first part is to bring *all* of the necessary parties into one room and discuss the basic meeting topic. Even without a published agenda the meeting will still be somewhat successful because of the normal discussion that originates.
2. The second interesting component of the meeting concept is, with an agenda and with some well spelled out expectations, most attendees will prepare for the meeting. This means they will study in order to answer questions from the meeting leader.

Many of you long-time readers understand the term "*Mikes World*." (As a side note it was coined by some Boeing employees many years ago when I was teaching a Maintenance Planning and Scheduling course in the Puget Sound area). One of the students commented, after just giving them one of my concrete rules on how to manage a maintenance department, "you are talking about "*Mikes World*" now tell us what we should do in real world!"

So back to the topic at hand, in *Mike's World* a weekly maintenance planning and scheduling meeting would be held each Thursday afternoon or Friday Morning. This meeting would be mandatory for **all** maintenance leaders and planner/schedulers. By mandatory I mean a death certificate is required to be excused from the meeting. It would be held on the same day and time each week with no exceptions or changes.

The structure of the weekly meeting should include a discussion about the successes and failures of the prior week's planned and scheduled work, an update of the current week's plan and schedule, and most importantly, a detailed discussion about the next week's planned and scheduled work.



Now the details of [How to Lead a Weekly Planning and Scheduling Meeting](#):

1. To lead the meeting successfully you should be the *Leader, Boss, Person-in-Charge*, the person with the big office at the end of the hall. I think you get the point; someone with authority should lead the meeting. That is the **only** way to ensure the performance you expect.
2. Mandatory attendance should become part of the culture. Obviously there will always be exceptions to the attendance rule but they should be held to a minimum. Take attendance if you need to.
3. There should *always* be an agenda; especially in the early stages of creating the culture and traditions of the weekly meeting. As time goes on the agenda may concentrate on unusual or special topics not the normal day-to-day planning and scheduling
4. Each maintenance supervisor and planner (if you don't have a planner then the supervisor) should come to the meeting prepared to discuss in detail:
  - a. Last week's scheduling problems,
  - b. The update status of this week's scheduled work, and
  - c. A written work schedule for their crew for the upcoming week. This schedule should be documented by crew assignment for each day of the week and hopefully in time detailed to the individual mechanic level by the hour of the day.Again this gets back to one of the meeting principles, if you require them to write it down and make assignments by person and crew it will ensure they took time to think about the process and the work assigned. I guarantee the weeks work will go smother just because of this simple process.
5. The leader should (and will):
  - a. Have the schedule compliance graph in front of them to ask questions as to why the previous week's scheduled work finished where it did.
  - b. Have a copy of the current week's schedule for each crew in front of them to ask questions about work statuses.
  - c. Have a copy of next week's schedule so questions about content and coordination among crews and can be discussed.
6. The last item on the agenda would be too go around the table to see if there are any comments, questions, or discussion about what will be attempted the next week.



So the bottom-line is:

1. Have a weekly meeting at the same time each week
2. Have an agenda,
3. Have the written copies of current and past schedules available for review, and
4. Require a detailed written work schedule be presented by each crew for the upcoming week.

An option here is to invite some of your operations employees to the meeting if the work coordination is required it but be careful not to let the meeting get too big to manage and keep order. It must be productive or it is a waste of time.