

# Mundane?

In our work, we observe numerous board and committee meetings. And it's striking how often it's the little things that make a big difference.

Don't underestimate the importance of 'mundane' tasks (often referred to as 'hygiene' factors). If neglected they can often have a negative impact... but if tackled can have a transformative effect.



THE CHAIRMAN SEES NO NEED FOR A BREAK

**So, here's your checklist of things which are under your control (or at least some of them) to help ensure your board meetings are as effective as possible:**

1. **Venue** – when you book the venue for your next board or committee meeting think of: light, layout, catering, temperature...

**Light:** Sitting for hours in a room with no natural light will inevitably hinder concentration and ultimately affect engagement levels.

**Catering:** Too much food, drink – or the opposite, a lack of it – will hit those energy levels so try to get the balance right - and make sure the catering team don't interrupt

**Layout:** Make sure the room has the optimum layout. Think of trivial things like ensuring board members don't have to stand up and move too far to get access to drinks or a notebook... Movement during the meeting will disrupt the flow despite best efforts from that person to keep it quiet.

**Temperature:** Check room temperature, is the air conditioning working?

2. **Seating arrangement:** Optimise the seating arrangement, and avoid blind spots. Do you really want the Audit Committee Chair sitting opposite the CEO and the Chairman whilst the CFO and Head of Internal Audit are in her blind spot?

3. **Breaks:** Allow for breaks, remember board members are 'human'...do not expect to go through the whole agenda without a pause. Give them a break, avoid unwanted disruption and keep those energy levels up.

Independent Audit are leading specialists in governance, risk and assurance. We help clients understand and improve the effectiveness of their governance, including the board and its committees, internal and external audit, and risk governance.

