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# Our love/hate relationship with meetings: Relating good and bad meeting behaviors to meeting outcomes, engagement, and exhaustion

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**Our love/hate relationship with meetings:  
Relating good and bad meeting behaviors to meeting  
outcomes, engagement, and exhaustion**

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Review

Our love/hate relationship with meetings:

Relating good and bad meeting behaviors to meeting outcomes, engagement, and exhaustion

Abstract

**Purpose** — Employees at all organizational levels spend large portions of their work lives in meetings, many of which are not effective. Previous process-analytical research has identified counterproductive communication patterns to help explain why many meetings go wrong. This study illustrates the ways in which counterproductive—and productive—meeting behaviors are related to individual work engagement and emotional exhaustion.

**Design/methodology/approach** — We built a new research-based survey tool for measuring counterproductive meeting behaviors. An online sample of working adults ( $N = 440$ ) was recruited to test the factor structure of this new survey and to examine the relationships between both good and bad meeting behaviors and employee attitudes beyond the meeting context.

**Findings** — Using structural equation modeling, we found that counterproductive meeting behaviors were linked to decreased employee engagement and increased emotional exhaustion, whereas good meeting behaviors were linked to increased engagement and decreased emotional exhaustion. These relationships were mediated via individual meeting satisfaction and perceived meeting effectiveness.

**Implications** — Our findings provide a nuanced view of meeting outcomes by showing that the behaviors that people observe in their meetings connect to meeting satisfaction and effectiveness, but also to important workplace attitudes (i.e., employee engagement and emotional exhaustion). In other words, managers and meeting leaders need to be mindful of behavior in meetings, seek

## Good and Bad Behaviors in Workplace Meetings 2

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3 ways to mitigate poor behavior, and seek opportunities to reward and encourage citizenship  
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5 behavior.  
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8 **Originality/value** — This study shows how good and bad meeting behaviors relate to employee  
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10 perceptions of meeting effectiveness and individual job attitudes. We develop a science-based,  
11  
12 practitioner-friendly new survey tool for observing counterproductive meeting behavior and offer  
13  
14 a juxtaposition of good and bad meeting behaviors in a single model.  
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20 *Keywords:* Meetings; counterproductive meeting behaviors; survey development; employee  
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22 engagement; emotional exhaustion.  
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3 Meetings are held for a number of different purposes and take up increasing amounts of  
4 work time (e.g., Allen *et al.*, 2014). Unfortunately, almost half of today's numerous and time-  
5 consuming workplace meetings are evaluated as ineffective by the participating employees  
6 (Schell, 2010). Tedious, ineffective meetings may not only waste temporal and financial  
7 resources in organizations, but also leave a lasting imprint on individual attendees long after a  
8 meeting has ended. Meetings can play an important role for employees' job satisfaction and  
9 wellbeing at work (Luong and Rogelberg, 2005; Rogelberg *et al.*, 2006, 2010). In this paper, we  
10 draw from sensemaking theory (e.g., Weick *et al.*, 2005) to argue that what happens in a meeting  
11 is not just good or bad in itself, but can also set the tone for employees' workdays and shape their  
12 workplace experiences more generally.  
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27 The mismatch between the increasing amount of time employees spend in meetings on  
28 the one hand and the frequent experiences of bad meetings on the other hand calls for research  
29 aiming to understand how specific behaviors within meetings relate not only to meeting  
30 satisfaction and effectiveness, but also to employee attitudes and wellbeing beyond the meeting  
31 context. Previous research has identified specific functional behavior patterns (e.g., problem-  
32 solving behaviors) as well as dysfunctional meeting behaviors (e.g., criticizing others or  
33 complaining) and linked them to meeting satisfaction as well as more distal performance  
34 outcomes (e.g., Kauffeld and Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2012; Lehmann-Willenbrock *et al.*, 2013).  
35 However, it remains to be seen how the link between functional/productive versus dysfunctional/  
36 counterproductive meeting behaviors and meeting satisfaction and effectiveness may further  
37 connect to employee attitudes and wellbeing beyond the meeting context.  
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53 The purpose of this study is to investigate how the behaviors of meeting attendees—both  
54 good and bad—relate to meeting outcomes and employee attitudes beyond the meeting context.  
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## Good and Bad Behaviors in Workplace Meetings 4

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3 Building upon sensemaking theory, we propose that good and bad meeting behaviors can leave a  
4 lasting imprint on employees. In doing so, we connect the dots between previous team  
5 interaction process research and survey-based findings on meeting effectiveness in order to shed  
6 light on the relationships between positive vs. counterproductive meeting behaviors and  
7 immediate meeting outcomes (i.e., perceived meeting satisfaction and meeting effectiveness) as  
8 well as employee attitudes beyond the meeting (i.e., individual work engagement and emotional  
9 exhaustion). To test these arguments, we develop a new survey measure for assessing  
10 counterproductive meeting behaviors, grounded in previous process-analytical findings from  
11 team science. Moreover, we examine the relationships between meeting citizenship and  
12 counterproductive meeting behavior on the one hand and meeting outcomes as well as employee  
13 attitudes on the other hand in a sample of 440 working adults who regularly attend workplace  
14 meetings. We discuss implications for meeting science and managerial implications for detecting  
15 counterproductive meeting behaviors, promoting positive meeting behaviors, and managing  
16 meeting effectiveness.

*Meetings as sites for sensemaking in the workplace*

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Sensemaking is the process of achieving an understanding, or making sense of, an experienced event. In the workplace, sensemaking occurs through communication (e.g., Weick *et al.*, 2005). Although sensemaking occurs in many different conversational contexts in the workplace, meetings have been discussed as the most common workplace activity that is aimed at sensemaking, either explicitly or implicitly (Scott *et al.*, 2015). Many meetings are scheduled in the first place because there is a need to manage ambiguity and make sense of recent events (Eisenberg, 2007; Jarzabkowski & Seidle, 2008). Because meetings are often called in an effort to share information, reduce ambiguity, and promote collaboration, sensemaking has been

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3 discussed as a critical component of workplace meetings (for extensive arguments regarding  
4 meetings as sensemaking sites, see Scott *et al.*, 2015). Indeed, behavioral observations during  
5 workplace meetings suggest that sensemaking activities such as discussing problems, developing  
6 solutions, and identifying necessary action steps are typical behaviors that employees show  
7 during their meetings (Kauffeld and Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2012; Lehmann-Willenbrock *et al.*,  
8 in press b).

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18 Sensemaking and related activities during meetings can help reduce ambiguity, but may  
19 also affect meeting attendees' attitudes beyond the meeting itself. For example, the experience of  
20 a well-structured and effective meeting, characterized by functional problem-solving behaviors  
21 and action orientation, will be substantially different from the experience of attending a poorly  
22 structured meeting, characterized by inefficient sensemaking, derailing group processes, or the  
23 emergence of a negative group mood (e.g., Kauffeld and Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2012;  
24 Lehmann-Willenbrock *et al.*, 2011; Lehmann-Willenbrock and Kauffeld, 2010). As such, the  
25 way in which meetings can influence employees' work lives does not stop at the moments  
26 immediately after a meeting, when participants can be either satisfied or dissatisfied with their  
27 meeting. Indeed, what happens in meetings can have a profound impact on individual workplace  
28 attitudes far beyond the actual meeting context (e.g., Rogelberg *et al.*, 2010; Allen and  
29 Rogelberg, 2013). Previous research shows that meeting outcomes (i.e., meeting attendees'  
30 satisfaction as well as their perceptions of meeting effectiveness) relate to employee attitudes  
31 about their jobs and their emotional wellbeing more generally (e.g., Rogelberg *et al.*, 2010). To  
32 deepen our understanding of how good and bad meeting behaviors shape individual employees'  
33 workplace experiences, this study examines their relationships with meeting outcomes as well as  
34 two more proximate outcomes that go beyond the immediate meeting context, namely individual  
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## Good and Bad Behaviors in Workplace Meetings 6

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3 workplace engagement on the one hand and emotional exhaustion as an indicator of individual  
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5 wellbeing on the other hand. To examine within-meeting experiences, we first draw a distinction  
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7 between functional and dysfunctional, or helpful versus harmful behaviors that happen during  
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9 workplace meetings.  
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*Helpful and harmful meeting behaviors*

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15 Previous team process research shows that functional meeting behaviors such as  
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17 generating ideas or planning specific action steps to ensure that the ideas from the meeting will  
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19 make it into everyday practice can promote meeting effectiveness (Kauffeld and Lehmann-  
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21 Willenbrock, 2012; Nixon and Littlepage, 1992). Moreover, scholars have pointed to courtesy  
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23 behaviors as a possible way to reap the intended benefits of meetings in organizations. In  
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25 particular, Baran and colleagues developed a measure of meeting citizenship behaviors, using a  
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27 survey study of working adults from different organizations (Baran *et al.*, 2012). They describe  
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29 meeting citizenship in terms of extra-role behaviors aimed at supporting meeting processes. Such  
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31 extra-role behaviors include volunteering information to aid problem-solving, communicating  
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33 ideas, or coming prepared to the meeting.  
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40 When focusing on citizenship behaviors *within* the meeting (rather than before, as in  
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42 preparing a meeting), citizenship behaviors correspond to functional meeting behaviors  
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44 identified in previous research on team interaction processes during meetings, such as stating  
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46 problems, contributing solutions, or engaging in procedural behaviors to structure the meeting.  
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48 Previous process-analytical findings show that such functional behaviors can significantly  
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50 contribute to employees' satisfaction with their meetings and perceived meeting effectiveness  
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52 (Kauffeld and Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2012; Lehmann-Willenbrock *et al.*, 2013). Moreover, in a  
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54 study of public advisory meetings, McComas *et al.* (2007) highlight the importance of fair  
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3 procedures for meeting satisfaction and suggest that researchers pay closer attention to those  
4 behavioral processes that convey relational fairness perceptions. We would expect that meeting  
5 citizenship behaviors can play an important role toward this end, which again would suggest  
6 benefits of meeting citizenship behavior for attendees' meeting satisfaction.  
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12 However, previous work also shows that many organizational meetings suffer from  
13 disproportionately frequent dysfunctional behaviors (Kauffeld and Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2012;  
14 Lehmann-Willenbrock and Kauffeld, 2010). These include complaining, backbiting, or getting  
15 "off track" and losing the train of thought. For example, a study with 92 teams from different  
16 industries showed that the average team meeting contained 32 complaining statements and only  
17 two action planning statements per one-hour period (Kauffeld and Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2012).  
18 Counterproductive meeting behaviors, such as criticizing others or complaining, are problematic  
19 especially because they often occur in cycles or recurring patterns. For example, if a meeting  
20 participant starts complaining, this will likely receive support, which will in turn generate more  
21 complaining (Kauffeld and Meyers, 2009; Lehmann-Willenbrock *et al.*, 2011). In other words,  
22 counterproductive meeting behaviors have the potential to get a meeting "stuck" in negative  
23 loops, which derails meeting processes (Lehmann-Willenbrock and Kauffeld, 2010).  
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41 Taken together, previous findings from both survey and process-analytical research  
42 suggest that meeting citizenship behaviors on the one hand will positively impact meeting  
43 satisfaction and effectiveness because these behaviors move the meeting forward and help  
44 achieve meeting purposes (Baran *et al.*, 2012; Kauffeld and Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2012).  
45 Counterproductive meeting behaviors on the other hand should be negatively linked to meeting  
46 satisfaction and effectiveness, because these behaviors tend to derail the meeting and create  
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## Good and Bad Behaviors in Workplace Meetings 8

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3 hurdles for achieving meeting effectiveness (e.g., Kauffeld and Meyers, 2011; Lehmann-  
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5 Willenbrock and Kauffeld, 2010). Hence, we hypothesize:  
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8 H1: Meeting citizenship behaviors are positively linked to attendees' meeting satisfaction  
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10 (a) and meeting effectiveness (b).  
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12 H2: Counterproductive meeting behaviors are negatively linked to attendees' meeting  
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14 satisfaction (a) and perceived meeting effectiveness (b).  
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17 *How good and bad meeting behaviors relate to employee engagement*  
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20 Drawing from the notion of meetings as sites for organizational sensemaking (Scott *et al.*,  
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22 2015), we expect that meeting citizenship behaviors versus counterproductive meeting behaviors  
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24 can shape employees' workplace experiences more broadly. In particular, we focus on the  
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26 relationship between these two types of meeting behaviors and employees' work engagement.  
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28 Work engagement can be defined as "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is  
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30 characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2002, p.74). Engaged  
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32 employees identify with their work, involve themselves and contribute ideas, enjoy a feeling of  
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34 self-efficacy, and work energetically without suffering from burnout (e.g., Leiter and Bakker,  
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36 2010). In the context of workplace meetings, engagement can be boosted when a meeting is  
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38 conducted well by the meeting leader (Allen and Rogelberg, 2013). Although less is known  
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40 about how behaviors within the meeting may promote engagement, we would expect meeting  
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42 citizenship behavior to play a role here. Meeting citizenship behaviors can facilitate information  
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44 access, structure situations or problems, create a common understanding of problems, clarify  
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46 goals, and help generate feasible solutions that can improve work processes and thereby also  
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48 individual employees' everyday work lives (cf. Baran *et al.*, 2012; Kauffeld and Lehmann-  
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50 Willenbrock, 2012). When a meeting is characterized by such behaviors, meeting attendees will  
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3 likely not only leave the meeting satisfied and gain an impression of overall meeting  
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5 effectiveness, but will also feel energized and dedicated to implement goals set in the meeting. In  
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7 other words, such meetings may boost their work engagement.  
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10 On the other hand, bad or counterproductive meeting behaviors should have adverse  
11 effects on individual engagement. Previous research has found negative links between  
12 counterproductive verbal behaviors such as running off topic, criticizing others, or complaining  
13 and meeting satisfaction and effectiveness (Kauffeld and Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2012). Patterns  
14 of such counterproductive behaviors (i.e., complaining cycles) have also been linked to a bad  
15 overall mood in meetings (Lehmann-Willenbrock *et al.*, 2011). These findings suggest that when  
16 a meeting takes a downturn and becomes driven by counterproductive behaviors, this will likely  
17 create a negative affective experience, or a hindering job demand, for the individual employees  
18 who attend them. In other words, counterproductive meeting behaviors may diminish individual  
19 work engagement. Taken together, we hypothesize:  
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34 H3: Meeting citizenship behaviors are positively linked to employee engagement (H3a),  
35 whereas counterproductive meeting behaviors are negatively linked to employee  
36 engagement (H3b).  
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#### 41 *How good and bad meeting behaviors relate to emotional exhaustion*

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43 Distinct relationships between good and bad meeting behaviors and positive outcomes  
44 such as engagement also suggest that the two types of meeting behaviors should show different  
45 relationships with negative outcomes, in particular with emotional exhaustion in the workplace.  
46 The concept of emotional exhaustion concerns "feelings of being emotionally overextended and  
47 exhausted by one's work" (Wright and Cropanzano, 1998, p. 186). In the organizational context,  
48 emotional exhaustion has been defined as a state of depleted emotional and motivational  
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## Good and Bad Behaviors in Workplace Meetings 10

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3 resources (e.g., Hobfoll and Freedy, 1993). Emotional exhaustion has been shown to impair  
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5 employees' work attitudes and job performance, as well as their mental and physical health (e.g.,  
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7 Maslach, 2001).  
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10 Previous research has identified high workload, conflict, and requirements to express  
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12 positive emotions despite potential negative feelings as factors that can promote employee  
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14 emotional exhaustion, among others (e.g., Grandey, 2003). A recent review summarizes  
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16 unfavorable psychosocial working conditions—high workload, high quantitative, mental or  
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18 emotional demands, and low social support—as consistent predictors of emotional exhaustion  
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20 across studies (Seidler *et al.*, 2014). To date however, no study has examined how meetings may  
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22 contribute to or potentially diminish emotional exhaustion, despite the fact that meetings are a  
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24 steady component of many employees' work lives, constitute a salient context for interpersonal  
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26 interaction and for shaping workplace attitudes, and are often emotional venues (e.g., Lehmann-  
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28 Willenbrock and Allen, 2014; Rogelberg *et al.*, 2010).  
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34 Counterproductive meeting behaviors versus meeting citizenship behaviors should have  
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36 distinctly different linkages with employees' emotional exhaustion. We argue that meetings can  
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38 play a role for emotional exhaustion for three reasons. First, large and increasing amounts of  
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40 valuable work time are spent in meetings and employees often complain about having to attend  
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42 meetings that lack action results (e.g., Kayes *et al.*, 2005; Lehmann-Willenbrock *et al.*, in press  
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44 a). Rogelberg *et al.* (2006) even discuss the existence of a social norm for complaining about  
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46 meetings. Again, we would argue that it depends on what happened in a specific meeting:  
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48 Negative feelings, and potential emotional exhaustion, as a result of a meeting will be more  
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50 likely when a meeting was characterized by counterproductive rather than meeting citizenship  
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52 behaviors. Second, previous research suggests that meetings are affect-laden events and trigger  
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3 emotional responses by employees (e.g., Allen and Rogelberg, 2013; Lei and Lehmann-  
4 Willenbrock, 2015; Rogelberg *et al.*, 2010). Positive meeting behaviors shape positive affective  
5 experiences in meetings, whereas counterproductive behaviors shape negative collective affect in  
6 meetings (Lehmann-Willenbrock *et al.*, 2011). Third, counterproductive meeting behaviors, such  
7 as complaining and criticizing, may be linked to increased emotional exhaustion in light of  
8 previous findings that tensions and verbal maltreatment can promote emotional exhaustion  
9 (Grandey *et al.*, 2007). Meeting citizenship behaviors on the other hand can function as a  
10 positive resource (Baran *et al.*, 2012) and thus should be negatively linked to experiences of  
11 emotional exhaustion. Taken together, we hypothesize:

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24 H4: Meeting citizenship behaviors are linked to lower levels of emotional exhaustion  
25 (H4a), whereas counterproductive meeting behaviors are linked to higher levels of  
26 emotional exhaustion (H4b).  
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### 31 *Mediating relationships*

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34 From our previous line of reasoning, it logically follows to propose a mediated model for  
35 explaining the relationships between good and bad meeting behaviors, immediate or proximal  
36 meeting outcomes (meeting satisfaction and perceived meeting effectiveness), and more distal  
37 meeting outcomes (individual engagement and emotional exhaustion). Specifically, focusing on  
38 employee engagement as an individual outcome first, we expect that good meeting behaviors  
39 will leave meeting attendees feeling that their meeting time was well spent, which creates  
40 psychological conditions that are conducive to work engagement (cf. Kahn, 1990; Allen and  
41 Rogelberg, 2013). In other words, the positive link between meeting citizenship behaviors and  
42 individual engagement will be mediated by the positive relationship between good meeting  
43 behaviors and meeting satisfaction and effectiveness.  
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## Good and Bad Behaviors in Workplace Meetings 12

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3 On the contrary, counterproductive meeting behaviors can leave meeting attendants  
4 feeling unsatisfied or even drained, and as such may create psychological conditions that are  
5 detrimental for individual work engagement. In other words, we propose that the negative link  
6 between counterproductive meeting behaviors and work engagement will be mediated via their  
7 negative relationship with meeting satisfaction and meeting effectiveness. Taken together, we  
8 hypothesize:  
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17 H5: The positive relationship between meeting citizenship behaviors and employee  
18 engagement is (positively) mediated by (a) meeting satisfaction and (b) meeting  
19 effectiveness.  
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24 H6: The negative relationship between counterproductive meeting behaviors and  
25 employee engagement is (negatively) mediated by (a) meeting satisfaction and (b)  
26 meeting effectiveness.  
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31 Similarly, our previous argumentation when considered in summary suggests that the  
32 proposed negative link between meeting citizenship behaviors and individual participants'  
33 emotional exhaustion, as well as the proposed positive link between counterproductive meeting  
34 behaviors and individual emotional exhaustion, will be mediated via the differential relationships  
35 between these different types of meeting behaviors and meeting satisfaction and effectiveness.  
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43 From our above line of reasoning it follows that meeting citizenship behaviors can leave  
44 participants feeling satisfied and positive about meeting effectiveness, both of which can be  
45 regarded as conditions that can alleviate experiences of emotional exhaustion. And finally, we  
46 propose that counterproductive meeting behaviors can increase individual experiences of  
47 emotional exhaustion at work via their negative relationship with meeting satisfaction and  
48 effectiveness. In other words, counterproductive meeting behaviors may be linked to higher  
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3 emotional exhaustion because they reflect psychosocial working conditions, in terms of low  
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5 meeting satisfaction and low meeting effectiveness, which are potentially emotionally exhausting  
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8 (cf. Seidler et al., 2014). Our two final hypotheses thus state:  
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10 H7: The negative link between meeting citizenship behaviors and emotional exhaustion is  
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12 mediated (positively) by meeting satisfaction (a) and meeting effectiveness (b).  
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14 H8: The positive link between counterproductive meeting behaviors and emotional  
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16 exhaustion is mediated (negatively) by meeting satisfaction (a) and meeting effectiveness  
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19 (b).  
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## 22 **Method**

### 23 *Sample and Procedure*

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27 The sample included working adults who regularly attend work meetings as a part of their  
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29 job. Participants completed the survey online and were recruited using Amazon's Mechanical  
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31 Turk (MTurk). MTurk is maintained by Amazon.com and panelists are recruited from the vast  
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33 membership of Amazon.com users who have an interest in receiving monetary compensation for  
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35 work opportunities through the MTurk system. Previous studies used MTurk for collecting data  
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37 and found it to be a good resource for clean and useful data (Buhrmester *et al.*, 2011; Shapiro *et*  
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39 *al.*, 2013). For our study, a small financial incentive was provided for participating in the online  
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41 survey (i.e., \$0.50). The final usable sample included 440 adults, 49.7% were female, the mean  
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43 age of the participants was 37.2, and the majority of the sample indicated they work in a group or  
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45 team (82.4%).  
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### 50 *Measures*

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53 *Counterproductive meeting behaviors* were assessed using a ten-item measure which we  
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55 developed for the present study. Items were developed based on previous process-analytical  
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## Good and Bad Behaviors in Workplace Meetings 14

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3 findings obtained with the act4teams coding scheme for meeting interaction. The act4teams  
4 coding scheme is conceptually grounded in previous group interaction coding instruments and  
5 was developed and validated using a sample of 95 real organizational meetings from a range of  
6 organizations (Kauffeld and Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2012; see also Meinecke and Lehmann-  
7 Willenbrock, 2015). Based on this coding scheme, we distinguished between negative procedural  
8 behaviors (running off topic or losing the train of thought), negative socioemotional behaviors  
9 (e.g., criticizing others), and counteractive behaviors (e.g., complaining). We rephrased the  
10 wording such that observation codes from the act4teams scheme were stated as behavior  
11 observations that can be completed by regular meeting attendees. For example, the original  
12 act4teams observation code “self-promotion” was described in the item “Meeting attendees point  
13 out their work experience to show that they are superior” (see Appendix A).  
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29 After generating the list of items, an expert panel of researchers reviewed and commented  
30 on the items (Baran *et al.*, 2012). The final set of 10 items were modified and selected for  
31 inclusion on the survey. Items were rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 being  
32 “strongly disagree” to 5 being “strongly agree”. Instructions asked participants to indicate their  
33 agreement with the following statements concerning their workplace meetings in general. Before  
34 testing hypotheses with this measure, we performed an exploratory factor analysis to investigate  
35 the factor structure. Using direct oblimin rotation, we obtained a one-factor solution (eigenvalue  
36 = 5.56). Appendix A shows all items and their factor loadings as well as the scree plot, which  
37 also indicated a one-factor solution.  
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50 *Meeting citizenship behaviors* were assessed using an eight-item scale (Baran *et al.*,  
51 2012). Participants were asked to indicate their agreement with the statements concerning their  
52 workplace meetings. Sample items include “I try to make our meeting more productive” and “I  
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3 come prepared to meetings”. Items were rated on a six-point Likert scale from 1 being  
4  
5 “completely disagree” to 6 being “completely agree”.

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7  
8 *Meeting satisfaction* was measured using a 6-item scale (Rogelberg *et al.*, 2010).

9  
10 Participants were asked to think about their work meetings and indicate how the words presented  
11 described their meetings. Sample items include “satisfying” and “enjoyable”. Items were rated  
12 on a five-point Likert scale ranging from “completely disagree” to “completely agree”.

13  
14  
15 *Meeting effectiveness* was assessed using a 6-item scale (Rogelberg *et al.*, 2006).

16  
17 Participants were asked to think of their last work meeting and rate the effectiveness of the  
18 meeting relative to the statements provided. Sample items included “achieving your own work  
19 goals” or “providing you with an opportunity to acquire useful information”. Items were rated on  
20 a five point scale ranging from 1 (“extremely ineffective”) to 5 (“extremely effective”).

21  
22  
23 *Employee engagement* was assessed using an abbreviated nine-item version of the  
24 Utrecht Work Engagement Scale designed to assess overall employee engagement (Schaufeli  
25 and Bakker, 2003). This 9-item measure assessed the three facets of employee engagement:  
26 vigor, dedication, and absorption. The instructions read “Think about the work that you do.  
27 Please indicate how frequently the following are true of you at work.” Sample items include “At  
28 my work, I feel bursting with energy,” “I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose,”  
29 and “Time flies when I am working.” Ratings were made on a 5-point scale, ranging from 1  
30 being “never” to 5 being “always.”

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48 *Emotional exhaustion* was measured using the eight-item emotional exhaustion subscale  
49 of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach and Jackson, 1981) Participants were asked, “How  
50 often do you:” followed by a series of statements. Sample items include “I feel emotionally  
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## Good and Bad Behaviors in Workplace Meetings 16

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3 drained from work” and “I feel burned out from my work”. Items were rated on a seven-point  
4  
5 Likert scale ranging from 1 being “never” to 7 being “every day.”  
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8 Demographic variables were assessed as potential control variables as well as  
9  
10 information concerning sample characteristics. These included measures of age, gender,  
11  
12 education, tenure with their current employment organization, and job level. Only job level  
13  
14 showed a significant correlation with any of the main study variables. As such, we tested the  
15  
16 models with and without job level as a control variable. However, because the pattern of results  
17  
18 were the same and we did not have an a priori theory for including job level as a control variable,  
19  
20 we report the models without controlling for job level and this process is consistent with current  
21  
22 thinking and treatment of control variables using complex models (Becker, 2005).  
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## 27 Results

### 28 *Discriminant validity*

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31 Before testing the hypothesized model, we performed a confirmatory factor analysis in  
32  
33 order to verify the distinctiveness of the six focal measures (see Table 1). We compared the  
34  
35 model fit for each of the five nested models, ranging from a single-factor model to a six-factor  
36  
37 model (cf. Lance and Vandenberg, 2002). Specifically, the one-factor model combined all focal  
38  
39 measures into a single factor. Each subsequent model separated each measure out (i.e.,  
40  
41 counterproductive meeting behaviors, meeting citizenship behaviors, meeting satisfaction,  
42  
43 meeting effectiveness, employee engagement, and emotional exhaustion). When inspecting the  
44  
45 fit indices as shown in Table 1, the six-factor model showed the best overall fit. Although each  
46  
47 more differentiated model showed a significantly better Chi-square statistic (James *et al.*, 1982),  
48  
49 the six-factor model showed a better root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA),  
50  
51 comparative fit index (CFI), and Tucker-Lewis index (TLI). Additionally, all values were above  
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3 their recommended cutoff of .90. Notably, all items in the six-factor model loaded reliably on  
4  
5 their predicted factors with the lowest loading of .42.  
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8 -----  
9 Insert Table 1 about here  
10 -----

11 Additionally, average variance extracted for each measure was consistently greater than  
12  
13 .60 and alpha reliability estimates were greater than .80 for all measures. Both suggest adequate  
14  
15 convergent validity and reliability to proceed with hypothesis test. The means, standard  
16  
17 deviations, intercorrelations, and internal consistency reliability estimates are shown in Table 2.  
18  
19 All correlations were consistent with the proposed hypotheses and significant in the proposed  
20  
21 directions ( $p < .05$ ).  
22  
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27 Insert Table 2 about here  
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### 29 30 *Tests of the proposed model*

31  
32 To fully test the proposed hypotheses, we tested the proposed model (see Figure 1) with  
33  
34 structural equation modeling using LISREL 8.80. In addition to the full-mediation model, we  
35  
36 tested two alternative models as comparison points for assessing the efficacy of the proposed  
37  
38 model: a direct effects model and a partial-mediation model (see Table 3). The full-mediation  
39  
40 model provided a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(936) = 2749.04, p < .05$ ; RMSEA = .06, TLI = .97, CFI  
41  
42 = .97. However, the partial-mediation model showed a significantly better fit based on the Chi-  
43  
44 square difference test ( $\chi^2(4) \text{ difference} = 49.56, p < .05$ ). This finding suggests remaining direct  
45  
46 effects of both counterproductive meeting behaviors and meeting citizenship behaviors on both  
47  
48 emotional exhaustion and employee engagement, in addition to the mediation effects (see Table  
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54 3).  
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## Good and Bad Behaviors in Workplace Meetings 18

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Insert Figure 1 about here

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Insert Table 3 about here

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The path coefficients for the relationships between meeting citizenship behaviors and meeting satisfaction ( $\beta = .35, p < .05$ ) and effectiveness ( $\beta = .32, p < .05$ ) were significant and with the expected sign, which supports hypotheses 1a and 1b. Moreover, consistent with hypotheses 2a and 2b, the path coefficients for the relationships between counterproductive meeting behaviors and meeting satisfaction ( $\beta = -.42, p < .05$ ) and effectiveness ( $\beta = -.37, p < .05$ ) were significant and with the expected sign.

The path coefficients for the direct relationships between meeting citizenship behaviors and engagement ( $\beta = .19, p < .05$ ) as well as counterproductive meeting behaviors and engagement ( $\beta = -.10, p < .05$ ) were significant and with the expected sign, which supports hypotheses 3a and 3b. Moreover, the path coefficients for the direct relationships between meeting citizenship behaviors and emotional exhaustion ( $\beta = -.16, p < .05$ ) as well as counterproductive meeting behaviors and emotional exhaustion ( $\beta = .19, p < .05$ ) were significant and with the expected sign, which supports hypotheses 4a and 4b.

To test for mediation effects, we followed two processes given current conventions concerning testing mediation hypotheses using SEM (Mackinnon *et al.*, 2012). First, we followed the steps described by Kenny *et al.* (1998) and all paths were tested simultaneously using SEM (see Figure 1). Second, we tested the indirect effects of the main predictors (i.e., counterproductive meeting behaviors and meeting citizenship behaviors) on the outcomes (i.e., employee engagement and emotional exhaustion) through the mediators (i.e., meeting satisfaction and effectiveness) using bootstrapping methods developed by Preacher and Hayes (2008).

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2  
3 First, Figure 1 and Table 3 show the significant path coefficients following the steps  
4 described by Kenny *et al.* (1998). Concerning employee engagement as a distal meeting  
5 outcome, we found that meeting citizenship behaviors were related to both meeting satisfaction  
6 ( $\beta = .35, p < .05$ ) and effectiveness ( $\beta = .32, p < .05$ ) and they were both related to employee  
7 engagement ( $\beta = .38$  and  $.23$ , respectively,  $p < .05$ ). This finding lends support to hypotheses 5a  
8 and b. Moreover, counterproductive meeting behaviors were related to both meeting satisfaction  
9 ( $\beta = -.42, p < .05$ ) and effectiveness ( $\beta = -.37, p < .05$ ) and they were both related to employee  
10 engagement ( $\beta = .38$  and  $.23$ , respectively,  $p < .05$ ), which supports hypotheses 6a and 6b.  
11  
12 Concerning emotional exhaustion as a distal meeting outcome, we found that meeting citizenship  
13 behaviors were related to both meeting satisfaction ( $\beta = .35, p < .05$ ) and effectiveness ( $\beta = .32, p$   
14  $< .05$ ) and they were both related to emotional exhaustion ( $\beta = -.38$  and  $-.22$ , respectively,  $p <$   
15  $.05$ ), thus lending support to hypotheses 7a and 7b. Moreover, counterproductive meeting  
16 behaviors were related to both meeting satisfaction ( $\beta = -.42, p < .05$ ) and effectiveness ( $\beta = -.37,$   
17  $p < .05$ ) and they were both related to emotional exhaustion ( $\beta = -.38$  and  $-.22$ , respectively,  $p <$   
18  $.05$ ), which supports hypotheses 8a and 8b.  
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39 Second, using 5,000 bootstrap samples, we computed indirect effects estimates along  
40 with 95% confidence intervals around the estimates (see Table 4). All eight indirect effects were  
41 significant ( $p < .05$ ) and in the hypothesized directions, thus lending further support to  
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46 hypotheses 5 through 8.  
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49 Insert Table 4 about here  
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## 52 Discussion

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## Good and Bad Behaviors in Workplace Meetings 20

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3 This study considered both constructive and counterproductive meeting behaviors and  
4 how they relate to both proximal meeting outcomes (i.e., immediate evaluations of work  
5 meetings) and more distal meeting outcomes (i.e., individual engagement and emotional  
6 exhaustion). Our findings add to research and theory concerning workplace meetings by  
7 expanding the nomological network surrounding meeting effectiveness to include both processes  
8 within the meeting and attitudes beyond the meeting context. Because meetings are so common  
9 in daily organizational life, organizations must try to make meetings as satisfying and effective  
10 as possible if they want employees to remain engaged in their jobs and emotionally healthy at  
11 work.  
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*Findings*

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26 Our proposed mediation model, where meeting citizenship and counterproductive  
27 meeting behaviors related to both employee engagement and emotional exhaustion through their  
28 linkages with meeting satisfaction and effectiveness, received consistent support from the data  
29 (see Figure 1). Further, we found that the distinct relationships between counterproductive versus  
30 meeting citizenship behaviors on the one hand and distal outcome variables (engagement and  
31 emotional exhaustion) on the other hand persisted even while accounting for relationships  
32 between these two types of meeting behaviors and proximal meeting outcomes (see the partial  
33 mediation model presented in Table 3). These findings are consistent with recent literature  
34 investigating the linkages between meeting processes and workplace attitudes and performance  
35 outcomes more generally (e.g., Allen and Rogelberg, 2012; Kauffeld and Lehmann-Willenbrock,  
36 2012). In sum, our results illustrate that good and bad behaviors in meetings by attendees matter  
37 to both proximal and distal outcomes for employees in organizations. As such, our findings  
38 showcase the important role of meeting experiences in employees' work lives.  
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*Implications for meeting science*

Our study has several theoretical implications. First, we developed a new survey measure of counterproductive meeting behaviors that can inform meeting science aimed at better understanding this critical issue in organizational meetings (e.g., Lehmann-Willenbrock and Kauffeld, 2010). Previous research on within-meeting processes has used behavioral observations and relatively complex, time-consuming, and therefore labor-intensive process-analytical methods (e.g., Kauffeld and Meyers, 2009; Kauffeld and Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2012; Lehmann-Willenbrock *et al.*, 2011). However, these previous studies have also paved the way for our new measure of counterproductive meeting behavior, which is grounded in previous process-analytical meeting science. Results of reliability analysis showed that this new survey has high internal consistency. Furthermore, confirmatory factor analysis showed good internal consistency of this new survey. As such, our survey approach can provide a valuable tool for future scientific and practical attempts to understand good and bad meeting behaviors and their effects on individual employees beyond the meeting context, for example when managers or meeting leaders are trying to quickly grasp what did or did not go well in a meeting in order to take necessary steps for improvement.

Second, our empirically supported model offers a juxtaposition of good and bad meeting behaviors in a single model. As such, this study extends the majority of previous meetings research that has focused exclusively on helpful meeting behaviors (e.g., Baran *et al.*, 2012; Rogelberg *et al.*, 2010; Allen and Rogelberg, 2013), as well as the smaller body of previous work that has focused only on harmful meeting behaviors (e.g., Lehmann-Willenbrock and Kauffeld, 2010; Schulte *et al.*, 2013). The reality of most organizational meetings is that they will contain both good and bad meeting behaviors in the same meeting. The question is whether the good or

## Good and Bad Behaviors in Workplace Meetings 22

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3 the bad outweigh one another, in terms of the ways in which they can affect individual job  
4 attitudes and experiences. In fact, previous process-analytic findings suggest that bad meeting  
5 behaviors such as complaining, running off topic, or criticizing others outweigh good meeting  
6 behaviors considerably (Kauffeld and Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2012). As such, it is of particular  
7 importance to detect and understand counterproductive meeting behaviors. The new survey  
8 measure of counterproductive meeting behaviors developed in this study is readily applicable in  
9 organizational practice.

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20 Third, our findings provide a more nuanced view of meeting outcomes. Our finding that  
21 meeting behaviors were meaningfully linked to both proximal and more distal meeting outcomes  
22 for the individual aligns with previous process-analytical findings concerning linkages between  
23 meeting behavioral processes on the one hand and meeting satisfaction and effectiveness as well  
24 as longer-term productivity and organizational functioning on the other hand (Kauffeld and  
25 Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2012). However, our present findings extend these previous insights in  
26 that we focused on meeting outcomes for the individual participant, rather than aggregating  
27 behaviors and meeting outcomes to the team-level. Furthermore, in terms of providing a more  
28 nuanced perspective of meeting outcomes, we considered both desired (i.e., engagement) and  
29 undesired outcomes (i.e., emotional exhaustion) for individual meeting attendees, and we  
30 identified the mediating mechanisms that help explain why the different types of meeting  
31 behavior relate to these two outcomes. Identifying the mediating function of proximal meeting  
32 outcomes (i.e., meeting satisfaction and meeting effectiveness) in the link between within-  
33 meeting behaviors and the more distal outcome variables of individual work engagement and  
34 emotional exhaustion is a move beyond previous findings on the meeting behaviors—meeting  
35 outcomes link (e.g., Kauffeld and Lehmann-Willenbrock, 2012), and an important step forward  
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3 for meeting science. In addition, our finding that good versus bad meeting behaviors are  
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5 differentially related to employee engagement and emotional exhaustion underscores the fact that  
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7 meetings are more than just a "nuisance" that we have to live with at work; rather, they constitute  
8  
9 an important social context for managing employee attitudes and preventing emotional  
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11 exhaustion.  
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#### 14 15 *Limitations and future directions* 16

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18 As any empirical investigation, this study has several limitations. First, our online survey  
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20 used a cross-sectional study design and relied on self-report measures concerning meeting  
21  
22 behaviors and outcomes. As such, common-method bias could be a potential issue. However, we  
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24 followed recommendations by Conway and Lance (2010) in terms of reporting our results as  
25  
26 well as methodological fixes suggested by Podsakoff *et al.* (2003). Methodologically, we  
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28 rearranged the order of the measures on the survey, thus better controlling for item-context-  
29  
30 induced mood states, priming effects, and other biases related to question context or item  
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32 location on the survey (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2003). In terms of reporting, we provided a CFA that  
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34 confirmed a single factor was not the best fitting model for the measurement model. If common-  
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36 method bias were indeed present, a single-factor model would fit as good as or better than the  
37  
38 differentiated model (Conway and Lance, 2010). Moreover, our sample was US-American,  
39  
40 which limits the generalizability of our findings across different cultural settings. Meetings are  
41  
42 particularly frequent in the US context (e.g., Newlund, 2012), which underscores the importance  
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44 of our present findings. Nevertheless, future research should explore whether the linkages  
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46 between good vs. bad meeting behaviors and individual engagement and exhaustion hold true in  
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48 different cultural contexts as well.  
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## Good and Bad Behaviors in Workplace Meetings 24

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3 Second, our use of a cross-sectional research design precludes any causal inferences. Our  
4 findings regarding good and bad meeting behaviors and their relationships with meeting  
5 effectiveness as well as employee engagement and exhaustion pave the way for future research  
6 aimed at establishing the directionality of these effects. Future research could manipulate good  
7 and bad meeting behaviors in a laboratory setting or quasi-experimental field design, include  
8 longitudinal measures of proximal and distal meeting outcomes, or study the effects of training  
9 interventions aimed at improving meeting behaviors in the field.  
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20 Third, we deliberately took a different approach in wording the items for our newly  
21 developed measure of counterproductive meeting behaviors compared to the wording in the  
22 available measure of meeting citizenship behaviors (Baran *et al.*, 2012). Whereas the meeting  
23 citizenship behavior items ask participants to report on their own behaviors, our  
24 counterproductive meeting behavior items were worded such that participants reported about the  
25 occurrence of these behaviors during their last meeting in general, regardless of the specific  
26 actor(s). There may have been a self-serving bias concerning the meeting citizenship measure,  
27 whereas we would hope that our counterproductive meeting behavior measure may have yielded  
28 more objective results in comparison. We chose this approach in order to avoid social  
29 desirability responses, as participants may not be willing to admit—or may not reflect in  
30 hindsight—that they contributed counterproductive behaviors themselves. However, future  
31 research could explore whether a more direct item wording is feasible, in order to draw more  
32 direct comparisons between meeting citizenship behaviors and counterproductive meeting  
33 behaviors (which was not a core intent of the present investigation).  
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53 Fourth, this study was aimed at identifying the relationships between good vs. bad  
54 meeting behaviors and meeting effectiveness as well as employee attitudes and experiences  
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3 beyond the meeting context. However, we made no efforts to improve participants' meeting  
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5 practices. Future research can strive to develop interventions, based on identifying  
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7 counterproductive meeting practices with our new measure, that help stop draining meeting  
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9 experiences for the individuals participating in them and help organizations move forward.  
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### 12 *Implications for organizational practice*

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15 Because this is the first study to show the relationships between both good and bad  
16  
17 meeting behaviors on meeting outcomes and individual job attitudes, there are several practical  
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19 implications worth mentioning. These implications occur at the individual employee level (i.e.,  
20  
21 the meeting attendee), the manager or meeting leader level, and in terms of the organization as a  
22  
23 whole. First, as an individual employee or meeting attendee, our findings suggest that one's  
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25 behaviors in a meeting, good and bad, appear to influence others in a meaningful way. The  
26  
27 implication here is that meeting attendees should self-correct their own behavior and choose to  
28  
29 engage in more meeting citizenship behavior generally.  
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34 Second, in terms of the manager or meeting leader, meeting ground rules can be set that  
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36 allow for the reward of good behavior and the sanctioning of bad behavior. That is, meeting  
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38 leaders should identify problematic behaviors early and often, thereby discouraging such  
39  
40 behavior. Conversely, they should also identify good behavior, reward it, and encourage it  
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42 moving forward. Doing so will likely provide beneficial outcomes for individual meeting  
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44 attendees and the meeting group in general. Specific trainings for meeting leaders could be  
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46 tailored toward these issues.  
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50 Finally, in terms of the organization, organizational leaders should consider an  
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52 organization-wide initiative to combat bad meeting behavior and promote good meeting  
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54 behavior. This could include incorporating meeting behavior into performance appraisal systems  
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## Good and Bad Behaviors in Workplace Meetings 26

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3 or as a component of the annual engagement survey or both. By institutionalizing positive  
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5 meeting behaviors and promoting them, organizational effectiveness may improve, one meeting  
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8 at a time.  
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For Peer Review

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## Good and Bad Behaviors in Workplace Meetings 30

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Table 1: Confirmatory factor analyses for all focal measures

Model	CFI	TLI	$\chi^2$	df	Difference	RMSEA
One factor	.83	.82	19194.82*	945		.21
Two factors	.87	.86	13861.16*	944	5333.66*	.18
Three factors	.90	.89	11154.61*	942	2706.55*	.16
Four factors	.91	.90	9198.81*	939	1955.80*	.14
Five factors	.94	.93	6383.27*	935	2815.54*	.11
Six factors	.97	.97	2488.52*	930	3894.75*	.06

Notes.  $N = 440$ . The one-factor model includes all focal measures combined. Each subsequent model separates each measure out, step-by-step, until the six-factor model which separates each measure into distinct factors. CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis index; Difference = difference in Chi-square from the next model; RMSEA = root-mean-square error of approximation. \*  $p < .05$ .

Table 2: Means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations of all measures

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Counterproductive meeting behaviors	2.70	.78	(.91)								
2. Meeting citizenship behaviors	4.37	.92	-.11*	(.92)							
3. Meeting satisfaction	2.86	.89	-.44*	.34*	(.87)						
4. Meeting effectiveness	3.54	.74	-.37*	.30*	.61*	(.92)					
5. Employee engagement	3.06	.77	-.11*	.34*	.43*	.39*	(.92)				
6. Emotional exhaustion	3.67	1.57	.37*	-.30*	-.46*	-.39*	-.56*	(.95)			
7. Age	37.22	12.14	.02	.04	.02	.02	.01	-.04	-		
8. Gender	1.50	.50	-.08	-.08	-.06	-.03	-.02	.08	.07	-	
9. Job level	3.48	.91	-.01	-.25*	-.20*	-.13*	-.28*	.14*	-.06	.09*	-

Note.  $N = 440$ . Diagonal values are the internal consistency reliability estimates for each scale. \*  $p < .05$  (2-tailed).

Table 3: Fit indices and standardized path coefficients for theoretical models

Measures	Direct effects model	Full mediation model	Partial mediation model
Fit Indices			
$\chi^2$	2887.93*	2749.04*	2699.48*
<i>Df</i>	936	936	932
<i>CFI</i>	.96	.97	.97
<i>TLI</i>	.96	.97	.97
<i>RMSEA</i>	.06	.06	.06
Direct effects on engagement			
Counterproductive meeting behaviors	-.10*	-	-.12*
Meeting citizenship behaviors	.19*	-	.19*
Meeting satisfaction	-	.38*	.37*
Meeting effectiveness	-	.23*	.21*
Direct effects on emotional exhaustion			
Counterproductive meeting behaviors	.19*	-	.19*
Meeting citizenship behaviors	-.16*	-	-.16*
Meeting satisfaction	-	-.38*	-.26*
Meeting effectiveness	-	-.22*	-.15*
Direct effects on meeting satisfaction			
Counterproductive meeting behaviors	-.43*	-.42*	-.42*
Meeting citizenship behaviors	.35*	.35*	.33*
Direct effects on meeting effectiveness			
Counterproductive meeting behaviors	-.37*	-.37*	-.37*
Meeting citizenship behaviors	.32*	.32*	.31*

Note.  $N = 440$ . \* $p < .05$ .

## Good and Bad Behaviors in Workplace Meetings 36

Table 4: Mediation of the effects of meeting attendee behavior on employee engagement and burnout through meeting outcomes

	Product of coefficients			Bootstrapping					
	$\beta$	SE	Z	Percentile 95% CI		BC 95% CI		BCa 95% CI	
				Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper
1. CMBA → MS → EE	-.21*	.03	-7.29	-.28	-.14	-.29	-.14	-.28	-.14
2. CMBA → ME → EE	-.15*	.02	-6.03	-.19	-.10	-.20	-.11	-.20	-.11
3. CMBA → MS → EX	.32*	.05	6.34	.21	.46	.22	.47	.21	.46
4. CMBA → ME → EX	.22*	.04	5.20	.13	.31	.14	.32	.14	.31
5. MCB → MS → EE	.10*	.02	5.57	.06	.15	.06	.15	.06	.15
6. MCB → ME → EE	.08*	.01	4.87	.04	.12	.04	.13	.04	.12
7. MCB → MS → EX	-.23*	.04	-5.84	-.33	-.14	-.34	-.15	-.33	-.15
8. MCB → ME → EX	-.17*	.03	-4.97	-.26	-.09	-.26	-.10	-.25	-.10

Notes.  $N = 440$ .  $*p < .05$ . CMBA = counterproductive meeting behaviors, MS = meeting satisfaction, EE = employee engagement, ME = meeting effectiveness, EX = emotional exhaustion, and MCB = meeting citizenship behavior. BC = bias corrected; BCa = bias corrected and accelerated; 5,000 bootstrap samples.

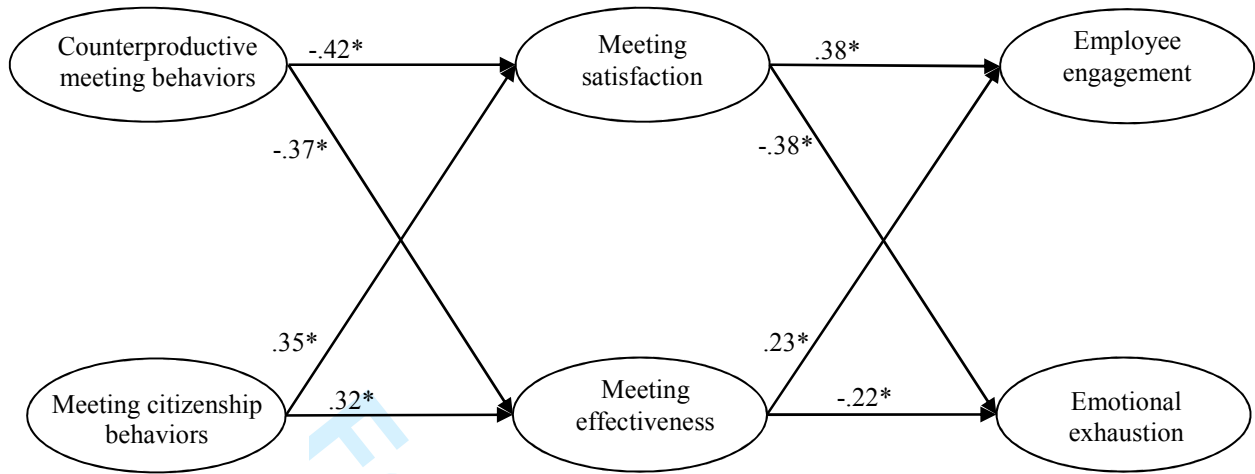


Figure 1. Path model with standardized coefficients. \*  $p < .05$

## Good and Bad Behaviors in Workplace Meetings 38

## Appendix A: Counterproductive Meeting Behaviors Measure including Factor Loadings and Scree Plot

Scale item	Factor loading
1. Meeting attendees engage in long monologues that do not move the discussion forward	.58
2. Meeting attendees heavily criticize others in the meeting.	.67
3. Meeting attendees heavily criticize others who are not present in the meeting.	.76
4. Meeting attendees complain about things during the meeting.	.69
5. Meeting attendees use random sayings or empty phrases.	.61
6. Meeting attendees express little interest in trying out new ideas or procedures.	.59
7. Meeting attendees look for a scapegoat.	.80
8. Meeting attendees point out that other employees are to blame.	.81
9. Meeting attendees shift responsibility to others.	.83
10. Meeting attendees point out their work experience to show that they are superior.	.69

