

PAGE Audio #2 Script

This script is from the ICON9 Learn As You Go Audio series.

Welcome to the second module on the PAGE tool!

In this module, we're going to look at how to use PAGE *actively* at the start of a *long or substantial* meeting. For example ...

Let's say that I'm going, with a colleague, to a customer meeting that involves a manager and 3 to 4 engineers. These encounters happen approximately once every six months and their purpose is to review progress and make midcourse corrections on a collaborative project. In this example, we are supporting our customer's product development. They've designed an intelligent sensor for trains - to count people, detect trouble, and so on – and our role is to develop an integrated circuit for this.

So the obvious objectives are, firstly, to deliver a progress report then, secondly, to understand how well *they* are getting on. However, for this particular meeting, we also wish to negotiate a stricter process for specification changes (because late changes are having an impact on our work). Lastly, it would be good to discover more about the application, since this could help us to find new work in the same domain.

Most of this has been discussed and agreed by email already. Everything except the last objective, in fact. I am therefore prepared with a couple of slides that summarize the Purpose, Agenda and Goals, and, once greetings, introductions and inclusion are over with, I get the meeting started as follows:

“Ladies and gentlemen, I suggest we get started now. Since we all know each other, there is no need for introductions but I do think it's worth us having a look at the agenda that we worked out by mail.”

At this point I show a slide whose title defines the Purpose of the meeting - "Six-Month Review" – and whose content is the agreed Agenda. I go through it step-by-step, checking with key people as I get to items that concern them. Once I'm through I ask, “And are there any other points that we should cover, or modifications to make to this agenda? I believe we have two finish by 5 o'clock, which gives us two hours. Is there anybody who has to leave before then?”.

I then look for a response, and I don't move on to talk about the goals until I get a satisfactory one! When I do so, I say something like:

“Thank you. Now, here are the meeting Goals that we collected” - and I work through this slide also. Once these are agreed, I could say something like, “In fact, I'd like to add one point. If there's time at the end, we'd like to discuss the trends in IoT for transport. I think that both our companies could benefit from being in sync on this.”

So that's my example. Let's see what you come up with.

Please imagine a situation where you will have an active role in getting some kind of *large, significant* meeting started – something that doesn't happen very frequently but which is important, and where a number of people are involved. What is the context and who is there?
<pause>

Do you have any private objectives for the encounter? If so, what are they?

<pause>

What parts of PAGE were agreed before the meeting?

<pause>

We'll assume that these things were agreed by email, and that most or all of the people attending were on copy. Of course, we can assume that most of them completely ignored those emails! ☺ No matter, you have a slide or two that summarize the information.

Let's say that people arrive in different states of readiness and in a range of moods. We get a feel for this in the initial part of the Engage step, where everyone is included and introduced into the meeting. It is now up to you to manage the transition to the main part of the meeting.

So, what do you say to get people's attention and make the Purpose statement?

<pause>

And what do you say as you present the Agenda slide?

<pause>

Similarly, what might you say as you show the Goals slide?

<pause>

And how do you invite an Endorsement of the Agenda and Goals?

<pause>

There you go!

Notice that there is no reason for the PAGE statement to be particularly long, even for a substantial meeting. The size of the PAGE does not scale linearly with the length of the encounter!

If you worked through the first audio on PAGE, I hope you will see the differences between how it is used in *short calls* and *more substantial meetings*. Of course, there is an infinite number of variants of these two encounter types, and you are free to adjust your PAGE style as makes sense.

The key thing to remember is that the elements of PAGE – the *why*, the *how* and the *what* of an encounter – are fundamental, and that it is *not* sufficient just to state them. Some kind of feedback, acknowledgement or – as we describe it in PAGE – Endorsement of the meeting plan is needed before things get started.

In the next two audio tracks we look at how to use PAGE *reactively* – or *defensively* if you like – at the start of meetings that someone else has taken hold of. This introduces additional complications!

880 words