

Conducting a Lean Coffee

A **Lean Coffee** is an agenda-less structured meeting leading to productive conversation.

It is kept simple on purpose and is meant to enable a group of people to show up, decide on topics to discuss and to learn together.

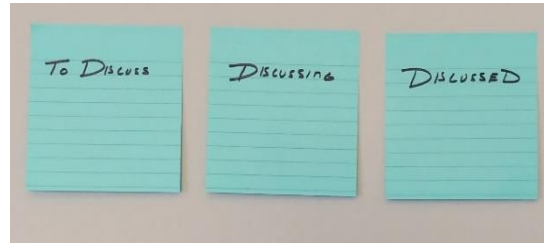
Successful Lean Coffee groups keep to a reliable cadence, meeting on a regular basis.

Tools:

Sticky note pads 3"x 3"
Markers for writing
Timing device (smart phone)
Wall or flip pad to create Kanban board
Chairs in a circle around the board

Guidelines for Engagement:

- Arrive with ideas in mind to contribute
- Keep the conversation flowing
- No one person should dominate the conversation
- Engage – share your knowledge on the subject
- Keep to the time frames or less
- Learn from each other and have fun!



Process:

1. Set up a Personal Kanban board as a group on a wall or at small table groups
 - **To Discuss** or Ready
 - **Discussing** or Doing
 - **Discussed** or Done
2. Participants propose topics on sticky notes – one topic per note.
3. Participants place their topics in an area to the side of the Kanban board and describe the topic in a sentence or two.
4. Once all topics are listed, participants vote on topics to discuss. Each participant gets 2 votes; they can vote for their own. Note the votes with tally marks on the sticky note.
5. Reorder the topics with the highest votes at the top and the lowest at the bottom in the **To Discuss** column of the Kanban.
6. This creates the group's agenda – it is not an agenda until the group votes!
7. Agree to a time frame for discussing. 8 minutes is a typical time frame with a 4 minute add on if the group decides it needs more time.
8. Identify a time keeper and have them set up a timer.
9. The proposer of the 1st topic places it in the **Discussing** column and kicks off the conversation.
10. Discuss for 8 minutes or less. If the conversation warrants more time after 8 minutes, quickly vote with a thumbs up (4 min), sideways (2 min) or down (0 min). Decide as a group to add 4 more minutes (or other agreed to time).
11. When the topic has ended, the proposer places the sticky in the **Discussed** column.
12. Repeat from step 8 on with as many topics as the group can cover in the allotted meeting time.
13. Allow 5 minutes to conduct a quick retrospective on the value produced, key takeaways or actions.
14. Photograph the Kanban board.