

# Ag Banking SOLUTIONS



Tips & information for the ag industry from Investors Community Bank / Volume 4, Issue 1, 2018

## LET'S GET PERSONAL



**SCOTT SCHROETER**

*Many of you know our ag team on a professional level, but how much do you know about them personally? Each issue we spotlight a different team member and share some fun facts!*

**Name:** Scott Schroeter

**Title:** AVP - Ag Banking Officer

**Education:** BA - Lakeland University  
MS - Silver Lake College

- **Years ag banking experience:** 18
- **What's the most played song on your iPod?** "Jackson" by Johnny Cash and June Carter Cash
- **What celebrity do you get mistaken for?** Brian Stepanek
- **When you have 30 minutes of free time, how do you pass the time?** Playing acoustic guitar
- **What chore do you absolutely hate doing?** Washing the dishes
- **What is your favorite quote?** "It's not how many times you get knocked down that count, it's how many times you get back up."  
- Vince Lombardi

## Have a Plan in Place Before Holding Meetings

With the continued stress in the agricultural economy, farm management meetings are more important than ever. It is essential that all parties involved with the farm operation are focusing on the same objectives to efficiently run the farm and manage costs.

For anyone who's been in a meeting, you know that some are more productive than others. At some point in time, who hasn't walked out of a room with unanswered questions, such as, "What was accomplished for the past hour?" or "What happens next?" Oftentimes, meetings have good discussions, but lack clear direction or calls to action. Here are some basic tips to running a productive meeting:

**Don't have a meeting.** Before scheduling a meeting, determine if the meeting needs to happen in the first place. Can the information that needs to be conveyed be covered in an email or a memo? If the goal of the meeting is to deliver a message and does not require dialogue between the involved parties, a meeting is likely not necessary. If the topic is concise but requires dialogue, a conference call or teleconference might be more effective than a face-to-face meeting. This approach will ensure confidence in the productivity of future meetings.

**Send out the agenda beforehand.** Before the meeting, set goals with an agenda. The agenda should clearly define the overall goal and prioritize specific objectives. By providing the agenda before the meeting, everyone will have the opportunity to prepare, and therefore fully contribute. The agenda should include the responsibilities of each team member and the amount of time allotted for each topic to make sure the meeting stays on track.

Everyone is responsible for a quality meeting. Everyone needs to understand the basic responsibilities for the meeting: be prepared, be on time, listen to others' input respectfully, stay focused, resist interruptions, follow up on outstanding items and participate.

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## Have a Plan in Place Before Meetings (cont.)

**Assign action items.** Not all topics can be resolved in a meeting. After discussing each topic, assign responsibilities for each follow-up item with a deadline for resolution. By assigning tasks for follow-up, you can keep the meeting on time while attaining a resolution.

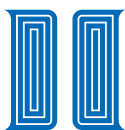
**Follow through.** At the end of the meeting, review what has been accomplished and the assigned follow up tasks. Within days after the meeting, everyone who attended the meeting should receive and review a copy of the meeting minutes that contain assigned tasks and timelines. Timely meeting minutes ensure clarity of responsibilities.

**Review and improve.** After the meeting discuss: Were the goals achieved? What could have been done differently? How could the meeting be improved? Were the right people at the meeting? Asking these questions will improve future meetings. It is critical to assess the effectiveness of the meeting and make plans to improve future meetings.

Farmers are continually looking for ways to improve their operations by reducing cost and increasing production. There is a wide array of ways to address those issues, but if the tactics are not approached in a way that includes all parties, efficiencies will be lost. By having regular team meetings that are well-organized and focused, the farm can achieve its goal in the most efficient manner.



By *Tim McTigue*,  
Senior Vice President -  
Ag Banking,  
Investors Community Bank



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INVESTORS  
INSURANCE SERVICES, LLC

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#### *Dairy Revenue Protection*

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