

**These slides are from a presentation at the Collaborative Technologies Conference in Boston on June 20, 2006.**

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**Ideas about teams and  
collaboration based on our  
experience at 37signals**

**Not talking technology**

**Unconventional**

**Backwards, reckless,  
unprofessional,  
irresponsible, wrong.**

- 1. Team size**
- 2. Team location**
- 3. Meetings**
- 4. Decisions**

**Keep your team small**

**Less control.**



**Clearer communication.**

**Collaboration is about  
communication, not control.**

**Keep your team apart**

**Interruption is not  
collaboration.**

**The biggest enemy of  
productivity is interruption.**

**Encourage alone time**

**R.E.M. sleep**

**R.E.M. work**



**Stay away from one another**

**Meetings are toxic**

**Meetings are symptoms,  
not solutions.**

**Meetings are a last resort**

**They break your work day  
into small, incoherent  
pieces that disrupt your  
natural workflow.**

**They're usually about words  
and abstract concepts, not  
real things.**

**They usually convey an  
abysmally small amount of  
information per minute.**

**They frequently have  
agendas so vague nobody  
is really sure what they're  
actually about.**



**They require thorough  
preparation that people  
rarely do anyway.**

**So how do you avoid them?**

**Make tiny decisions**

**Decisions are progress.**

**Make them and move on.**

**When you make tiny  
decisions you can't make  
big mistakes.**

**Team size.**

**Small.**

**Team location.**

**Apart.**

**Meetings.**

**Less of them.**



**Decisions.**

**Tiny.**

**Any questions?**

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