The Useful Pause

C1 Advanced · Work · about 2 min of audio

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Name _____ Date _____

Part 1 — Fill the gaps while you listen

1. _____ often begin with speech, as though the first person to talk deserves to set the problem.
2. Yet two minutes of silent writing can make a _____ faster by delaying its loudest certainty.
3. At a warehouse planning meeting, a _____ once asked everyone to note the cause of recurring late deliveries.
4. Early answers blamed traffic, until a quiet _____ described pallets waiting for labels after the loading bay was free.
5. The detail changed the question from how to drive faster to why _____ arrived too late.
6. Such pauses do not _____ insight, and written thoughts can be just as timid as spoken ones.
7. Nor should every routine decision be wrapped in ceremony, since a broken kettle needs no _____ exercise.
8. But where status shapes _____, a private first draft gives junior staff room to notice what senior colleagues overlook.
9. Once those _____ are visible, debate can test them rather than merely reward confidence.
10. The small delay also prevents a familiar _____ in which people refine the manager's first suggestion.
11. Silence, properly used, is not an absence of _____ but its first fair distribution.
12. An _____ meeting may therefore spend its opening minutes refusing to begin.

Part 2 — Write every sentence you hear

1. _____

_____

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12.

Answer key

Part 1 — the missing words

1. Meetings 2. discussion 3. supervisor 4. dispatcher 5. paperwork 6. guarantee 7. reflective 8. conversation 9. observations 10. performance 11. collaboration 12. efficient

Part 2 — the full transcript

1. Meetings often begin with speech, as though the first person to talk deserves to set the problem.
2. Yet two minutes of silent writing can make a discussion faster by delaying its loudest certainty.
3. At a warehouse planning meeting, a supervisor once asked everyone to note the cause of recurring late deliveries.
4. Early answers blamed traffic, until a quiet dispatcher described pallets waiting for labels after the loading bay was free.
5. The detail changed the question from how to drive faster to why paperwork arrived too late.
6. Such pauses do not guarantee insight, and written thoughts can be just as timid as spoken ones.
7. Nor should every routine decision be wrapped in ceremony, since a broken kettle needs no reflective exercise.
8. But where status shapes conversation, a private first draft gives junior staff room to notice what senior colleagues overlook.
9. Once those observations are visible, debate can test them rather than merely reward confidence.
10. The small delay also prevents a familiar performance in which people refine the manager's first suggestion.
11. Silence, properly used, is not an absence of collaboration but its first fair distribution.
12. An efficient meeting may therefore spend its opening minutes refusing to begin.

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