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January 4, 2004 -- Who would have thought it? Office meetings tend to put people to sleep and produce little progress, particularly on the East Coast.

In a survey of thousands of executives and managers who attend three or more meetings a week, the respondents widely panned their office sit-downs.

Six percent fake illness to skip meetings, and 5 percent get colleagues to page them out of meetings. Seven percent play electronic games during the meetings.

Half of the respondents at large corporations witnessed at least one person falling asleep in a meeting, while at small firms just one in four saw a snoozer.

West Coast firms tend to have better meetings than East Coast outfits because there are one-third fewer meetings out West, says the study, by Interactive Meeting Solutions.

"Half of the meetings in the country should probably be canceled," said President **Chuck McPherson**. "They should never have been scheduled in the first place."

He noted a third of workers believe meetings are a complete waste of time, while two-thirds say they avoid voicing honest criticism because of fear of dismissal.

About 55 percent of attendees also say that one or two bullies dominate their meetings and that no important decisions ever get made.



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