

Stop this meeting, I want to get off!

Video transcript

Characters:

John Matters – a mature, pompous man of means and chairman of the committee)

Mizti – a glamazon marketing type

Rosaria – a power-suit wearing corporate type, former nurse

Janet – an IT geek who will spend this entire scene attached to an array of electronic devices

Matt – the well-meaning Community engagement worker

Angela – the consumer representative attending the first meeting of this group

Scene: Meeting room of a health service. The community advisory group is preparing to meet. Seated at the table is the chair of the committee, **John Matters** and three health service staff.

Scene opens with group huddled over a set of papers and whispering furiously about the Standards.

John Matters: *“Good, so that’s decided then?”*

Health service staff nod and smile at each other.

John Matters: *“So now I suppose we should run through the rest of the agenda.....”*

Interrupted by **Matt** bustling in with Angela, the consumer. **John Matters** looks blankly at the health service staff.

Matt: *“Sorry we’re late. We couldn’t find the meeting room.”*

Mitzi: *“The directions were sent out with the agenda”*

Angela: *“I didn’t receive anything”*

Mitzi: *"Well, it was emailed out to everyone half an hour ago!"(holds up her iPad which everyone else around the table also has – apart from Angela)*

ALL CAST FREEZE, EXCEPT ANGELA, WHO STANDS, TURNS AND FACES AUDIENCE: *"I really wasn't sure I wanted to do this in the first place—I mean, what do I have to offer at a meeting like this? But now it's obvious that it wasn't important to them that I have the agenda or even find the meeting!"*

John Matters: *"Never mind we must have an extra copy here. Sit down"*

Angela is directed to sit at the opposite end of the table. **John Matters** gestures to **Rosaria** who hands **Angela** a huge wad of paper.

John Matters: *"So let's get cracking...."* (Looks at his watch)

Matt: *"Perhaps we should all introduce ourselves first?"*

John Matters: *"Ah yes, of course. I am **John Matters**. I'm a member of the health service board, I have 25 years of experience in healthcare management, plus an MBA—and last year I finished my PhD in time management..."*

Mitzi: *"I'm Mitzi Harris-Jones and I'm from the Corporate Unit. I manage Communications, Marketing and Events. I also like to keep an eye on volunteers, to make sure they're, you know," (smiles sweetly) "doing what the organisation needs from a marketing perspective..."*

Rosaria: *"I'm Rosaria Smythe and I'm the Director of Clinical Governance, Quality Innovations and Feng Shui. I was a nurse in a former life but now I work on issues of current relevance, political correctness and, well, I attend a lot of meetings..."*

Janet: *"I'm Janet and I'm from IT."*

ALL CAST FREEZE, EXCEPT JANET, WHO STANDS, TURNS AND FACES AUDIENCE: *'To tell you the truth, I have no idea what I'm doing at this meeting or why on earth there is a consumer turning up.'*

John Matters looks at Matt: *"And who do we have here, Mark?"*

Matt: *"Matt, my name is Matt" (gestures to Angela). "This is Angela. Perhaps she could just....."*

John Matters interrupts: *"Welcome Angela. But we'll have to move along now with the agenda, Mark. Perhaps you can introduce yourselves after the meeting if there's time"*

ALL CAST FREEZE, EXCEPT ANGELA, WHO STANDS, TURNS AND FACES AUDIENCE: *"What a relief that he wasn't interested in meWhat would I have said? 'Um, I'm just the daughter of a patient here?' At work I have a role and responsibilities—here I'm nobody."*

John Matters goes to start the meeting and then says; *“Sorry, Mitzi would you please give Angela the welcome pack Communications has prepared for them?”*

(Mitzi hands Angela a fancy looking presentation pack.)

John Matters: *“Great. So the first item on the agenda is the VAGO report which is pages 12 to 70. Has everybody read this?”*

Health service staff all nod knowingly. Angela shakes her head furiously while pouring through the pile of papers in front of her.

John Matters: *“Right. Well, Angela, VAGO came and conducted an audit and have written a report with some recommendations which we are noting. What’s this next item, Mitzi?”*

Mitzi: *“The next item on the agenda is the MOU from the CEO. We spoke about this at the meeting with ICT and CG about the LGA data and discussed the need to synchronise our Riskman Q input with the HR directives in order to have our CISM reports available for the planning session about the ACSQHC Standards. Any comments?”*

John Matters: *“That all seems A-OK”*

Rosaria: *“I’ll get onto it ASAP”...*(then looks around at the rest of the blank looks...)

Janet: looks up from her phone/iPad/laptop and gives a thumbs-up.

ALL CAST FREEZE, EXCEPT ANGELA, WHO STANDS, TURNS AND FACES AUDIENCE: *“This is exactly what I thought it might be like. A lot of people in suits, around a table, speaking in three-letter-acronyms. It’s not just that I don’t know what they’re talking about. But, what really bothers me is wondering ‘What does any of this have to do with improving care for my mother and other older patients?’ (As she sits, **Rosaria** stands up)*

ALL CAST FREEZE, EXCEPT ROSARIA, WHO STANDS, TURNS AND FACES AUDIENCE: *‘I know what that woman is thinking (points at Angela). She’s wondering if this is all we do at this health service – go to meetings and promise to write reports, type up minutes and promise to attend more meetings. I know how she feels...This isn’t why I became a nurse 20 years ago...’*

John Matters: *“Next item on the agenda is a community information session with our Arabic Women’s group. It says here that we want to ‘increase awareness among Arabic women of ???’. Hmmmmmm”* (scratches his head and looks at the health service staff who look perplexed - turns to consumers and points at “the foreign looking one’, Angela)

John Matters: *“What do you think about this, Angela?”*

All of health service staff look at Janet’s laptop intently, not listening to John and Angela.

Angela: *"Well, I'm not sure. This is my first meeting and I don't know anything about this women's group."*

John Matters: *"Hmmm yes, but you are from overseas AND you are a woman, so you must know something about this?"* (Matt cringes, shakes his head and looks embarrassed)

Angela: *"Actually, I'm Australian. I was born in Melbourne. And I'm not Arabic.....I think you should talk to the women and ask them how to run the session."*

Matt nods in agreement.

ALL CAST FREEZE, EXCEPT MATT, WHO STANDS, TURNS AND FACES AUDIENCE: *'He's so embarrassing. But, at the same time, it's not as easy as Angela may think. Who has the time to chase down every CALD group to ask them what they think....I wish I could, but it's a struggle.'*

John Matters: *"Yes, interesting idea but...."*

Mitzi: *"I'll ask my PA about it, she's from Thailand."*

John Matters: *"Great. Now to our last item – the Strategic Plan. We need to plan to hold a planning meeting to prepare a plan for all the plans we need to put together to plan for the Strategic plan. So we should make a plan for that now so that we have plenty of time to consult with people properly."*

Rosaria: *"When does it need to be ready, John?"*

John Matters: *"This Friday. It's OK, we've still got four days."*

Angela looks mortified.

Mitzi: *"OK. I'll have my PA send you all an invitation to a 7am breakfast meeting tomorrow so we can have it all sorted before lunch. Then we can turn it over to marketing to fix it all up."*

John Matters: *"Fantastic. Well, that's all*

Angela: *"I wanted to highlight some of the feedback I got from patients waiting in Emergency Department..."*

John Matters: *"Sorry but that's not on the agenda. If you had read your orientation pack you would have known that there's a process for putting issues on the agenda. You need to go through Mitzi...But thanks, Angela, for coming along and for your valuable input. We'll email you about the next meeting time."*