

5 foolproof methods

to turn your next project kickoff into a productivity booster



Today, teams are all about projects!

Teams are increasingly working in project mode, but :

- They are often required to do so without any training in project management.
- Nearly 1 in 2 projects do not rely on a structured methodology. (Wellington)

→ The result?

Poor coordination, no common framework, and bad decisions-causing delays and higher costs.

An effective kickoff is more than just a meeting:

it is the essential starting point that structures your project, aligns contributors, and equips them with the tools to achieve your goals!

Ready to supercharge the efficiency of your next project kickoff?



1. Prepare yourself to the fullest!

Myth N°1

A project kickoff doesn't require preparation.

False: It is lack of preparation that makes meetings ineffective.

- The project kickoff establishes a shared framework and prevents unnecessary meetings.
- To achieve this, everyone should review key information beforehand, and align or adjust the framework as needed during the session.

71%

of managers and 92% of employees believe that workplace meetings are ineffective.

(HBR 2022-2023)

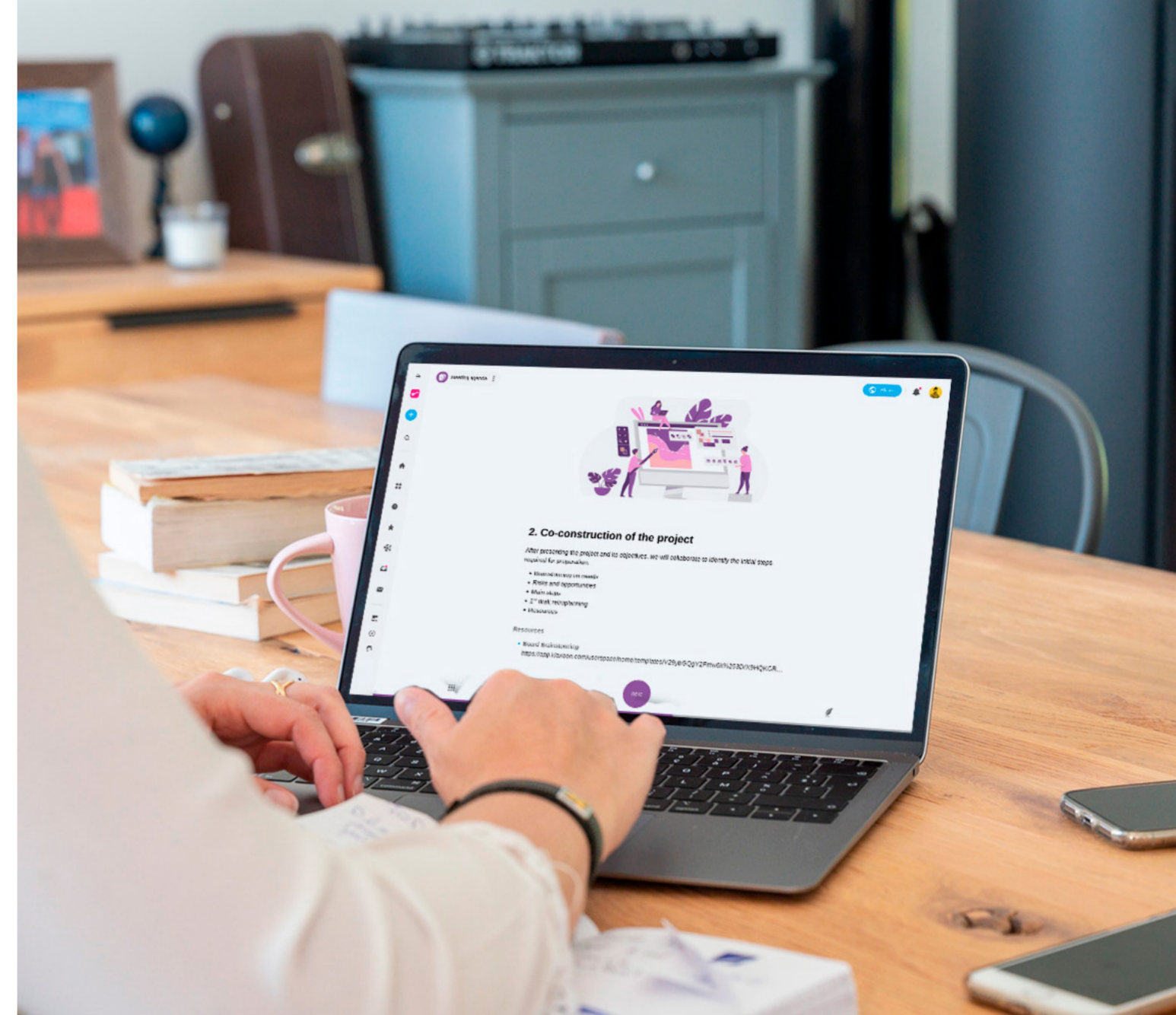
62%

of meetings are improvised and lack prior preparation.

(Microsoft)

How to prepare for your next kickoff?

- ✓ **Set clear goals for the kickoff** and the project using the SMART Goals method as a guide.
- ✓ **Share project context beforehand** and gather questions to stay focused during the meeting.
- ✓ **Plan time management for your kickoff** and use a timer for precise tracking on the day.



Tip:

Use a short, accessible format like the [Meeting Agenda Memo](#) available anytime, anywhere.

2. Actively engage every participant

Myth N°2

Your team already knows how to work in project mode.

- Projects are often managed by teams without project management training.
- The kickoff is the perfect time to engage stakeholders and build the trust essential for collective efficiency.



40%

of leaders believe that a lack of trust can jeopardize their company's productivity and deliverable quality.

(Korn Ferry, 2024)



How to prepare for your next kickoff?

- ✓ **Think hybrid:** Create a great experience for all project contributors, whether on-site or remote.
- ✓ **Break the ice:** Start your kickoff with an icebreaker to help participants feel at ease, build trust, and connect with the team (especially if they don't know each other). Try activities like 'Team Mood Forecast,' 'If I Were...,' or 'Two Truths and a Lie.'
- ✓ **Engage all participants:** Ensure everyone contributes using quick and effective digital brainstorming methods like Crazy 8 or World Café.

Tip:

Measure your kickoff's impact with a Board-add icebreakers, ideation activities, and track detailed engagement stats.



3. Learn from the past to move forward better

Myth N°3

We've always done it this way.



Past projects, successful or not, offer valuable insights to lay strong foundations and anticipate challenges.

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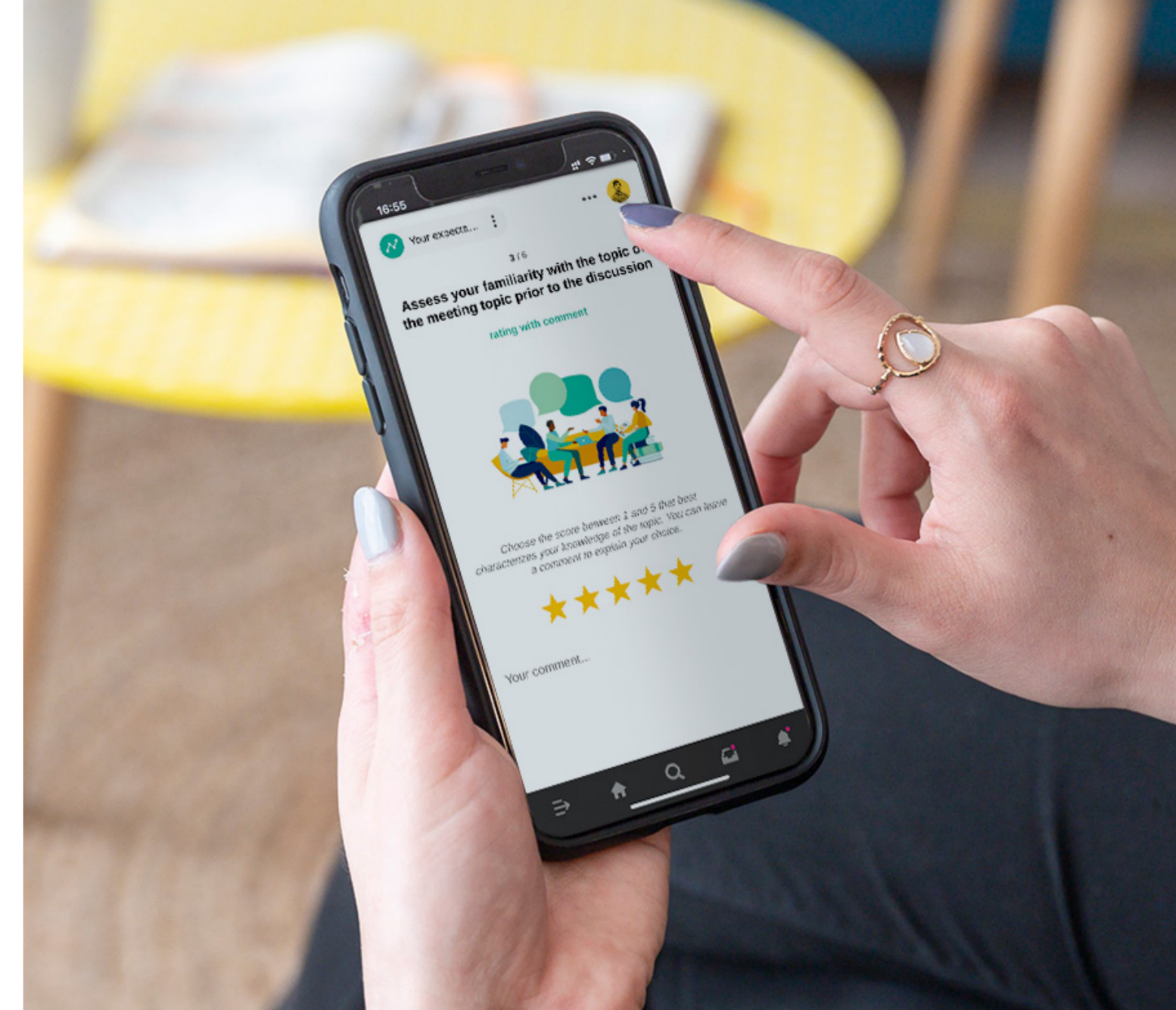
Insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results.

Albert Einstein



How to prepare for your next kickoff?

- ✓ **Identify potential risks:** Map out past project blockers that could hinder the current one, using tools like the Risk Matrix.
- ✓ **Gather feedback** from your project team by sharing a short survey before the kickoff.
- ✓ **Adopt the retrospective reflex:** Review past retrospectives and list improvement points relevant to your current context.



Tip:

Use the [‘Expectations Before the Meeting’ Survey template](#) to quickly gather project team feedback.

4. Leverage visual memory

Myth N°4

They have the info; I've already told them.



Don't underestimate the power of visual management to enhance your kickoff, stay focused, and improve information retention!



- The human brain processes visuals 60,000 times faster than text. (*The SAGE Handbook of Political Communication*)
- 67% of business decision-makers believe visualizing ideas and processes is essential to their work. (Forrester)

How to prepare for your next kickoff?

- ✓ **Centralize information** for your kickoff and entire project using an online whiteboard.
- ✓ **Organize visually:** Structure information with legends, color codes, etc.
- ✓ **Apply the Pareto principle** to your kickoff space: 80% visuals, 20% text.



Tip:

Use [Zones on Board](#) to visually organize your workspace and sequence your kickoff presentation.

5.

Don't leave the meeting without an action plan

Myth N°5

Everyone completes their action plan before the next meeting!

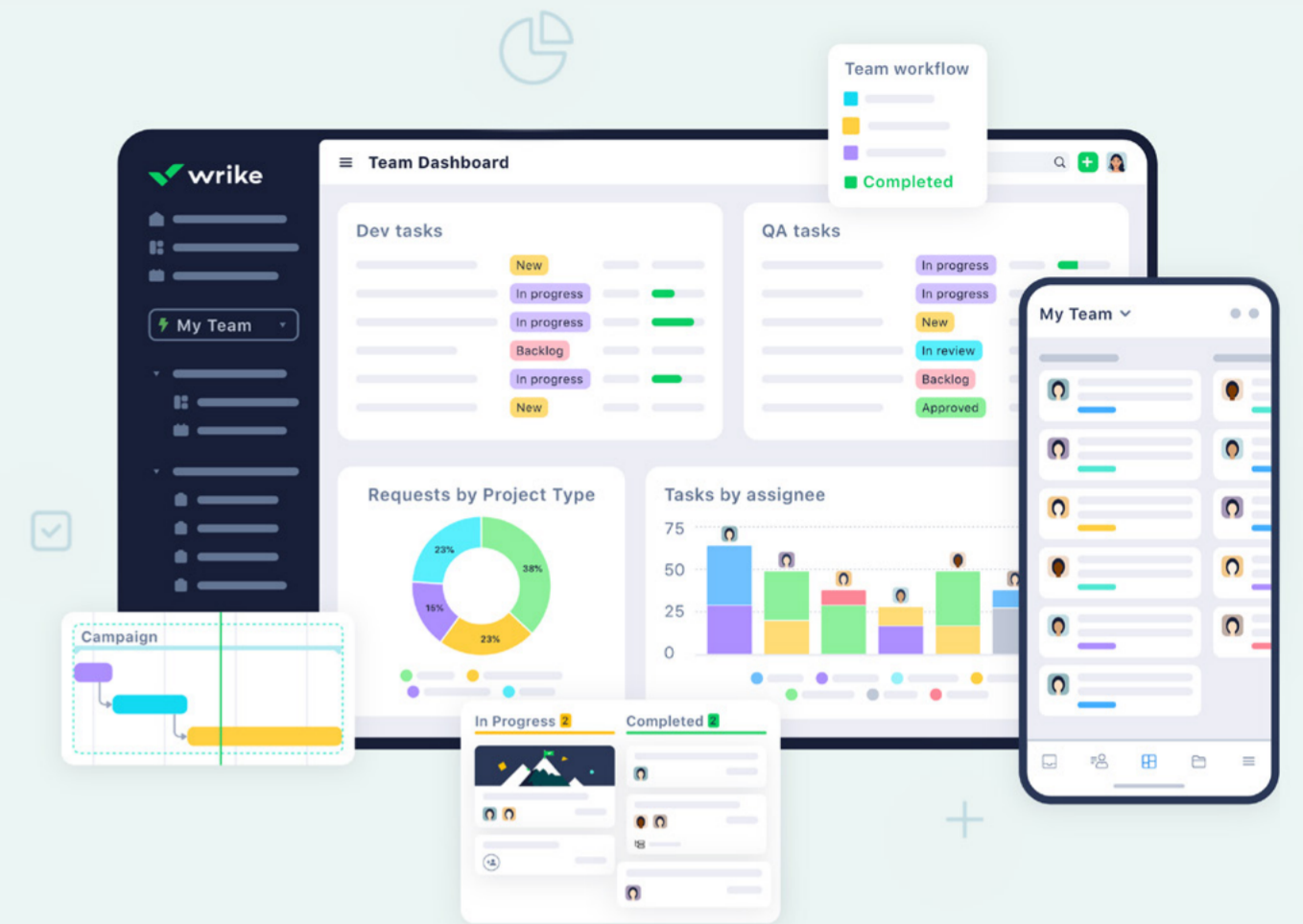
Yes, likely 2 minutes before, with a vague memory of the last discussion.

- The action plan turns your kickoff efforts into tangible results.
- Leave the meeting only when aligned on the next project step.



How to prepare for your next kickoff?

- ✓ **List project KPIs** and use likes or dot voting in your workspace to select the most relevant ones.
- ✓ **Identify the top 3 priority actions** and break down overall goals into achievable milestones for each project phase.
- ✓ **Schedule project follow-ups** (weekly, monthly, etc.) and set the next milestone date now.

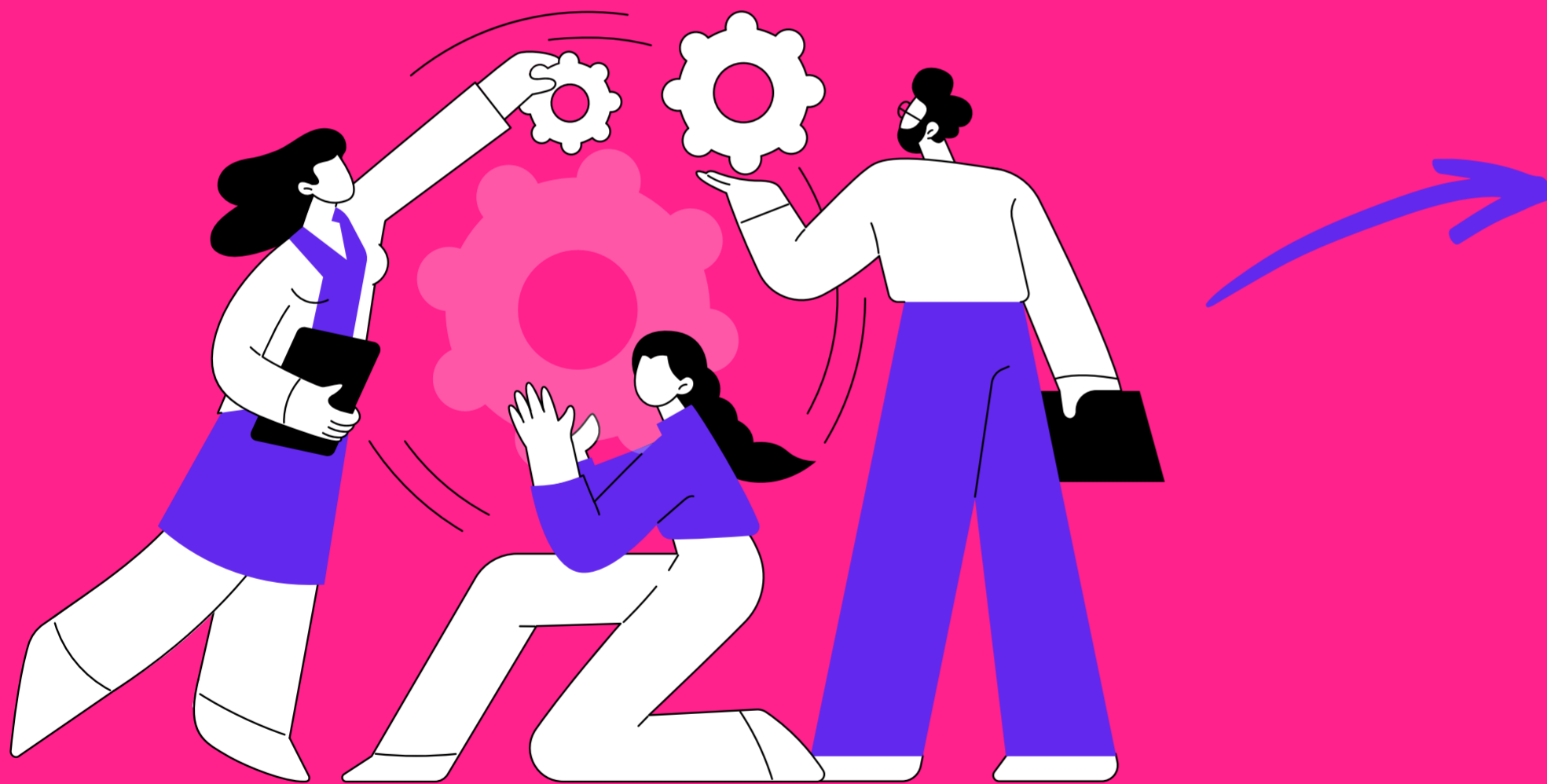


Tip:

Use a centralized project management platform like [Wrike](#) to streamline processes and drive efficiency.



Key points checklist:



- 1 Engage contributors early** for a more effective kickoff.
- 2 Build trust during the kickoff** for stronger project engagement.
- 3 Learn from past projects** to anticipate potential obstacles.
- 4 Manage information visually** to keep the team focused and ensure quick understanding.
- 5 Plan next steps** and guide your team to their collaboration workspace!

How can collaborative tools boost your project meetings?

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