

Retire the status meeting

A hundred small, ambient signals build a sense of the room that no weekly update can match — and they cost no one a meeting.

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“Ambient awareness” is the name researchers gave to a now-familiar phenomenon: from a steady stream of small, individually trivial updates, people assemble a surprisingly rich sense of what others are doing and thinking — the way you can know a lot about a colleague you sit near without ever holding a meeting about it.

“Each little update is insignificant on its own. But taken together, over time, the little snippets coalesce into a surprisingly sophisticated portrait.”

Clive Thompson, “Brave New World of Digital Intimacy” (2008)

Most organizations try to manufacture this with the opposite mechanism: a scheduled meeting where everyone reports up, once a week, after the fact. It is expensive, it is stale by the time it happens, and because its real audience is leadership, people perform for it instead of learning from it.

What to do on purpose

- Make work ambient — let what teams ship, decide, and learn surface as a feed, not a report.
- Flow sideways before up: peers are the primary audience; the executive roll-up is derived.
- Let leaders pull context from the same stream instead of summoning it in a meeting.

- Keep it to real movement — a shipped thing, a decision, a learning — not manufactured updates.

This is CARE's **Awareness** lens: the digital hallway, standups without the meeting, and roll-ups that read as a byproduct of lateral sharing rather than its purpose.

Sources

1. Clive Thompson, "Brave New World of Digital Intimacy," *The New York Times Magazine* (Sept 2008).

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