

Digital Empowerment of Bank Morning Meetings

Yueran Zhang

Jinan Zhensheng School, Jinan, Shandong, China

Abstract: Based on the author's internship experience at multiple banks, it was observed that a common trend exists among various bank branches – the role of morning meetings is gradually weakening due to various reasons. This paper summarizes the inefficiencies observed in morning meetings, pointing out that the traditional functions of bank morning meetings are diminishing, the recognition among participants is decreasing, and the contribution of morning meetings to operational efficiency is limited. By analyzing the current situation, the paper delves into the underlying reasons, highlighting the rapid online proliferation of financial services, the inability of grassroots bank managers to adapt to new industry changes, and the youthfulness and increasing knowledge level of new-era bank employees as the main reasons for the weakening role of morning meetings. Based on the analysis, it further proposes that grassroots bank managers should be good learners and practitioners, and can enhance the quality and efficiency of bank morning meetings through digital empowerment. This will unleash new dynamics for this traditional management tool, enabling it to play a new role in the digital transformation of banks.

Keywords: Bank Morning Meeting; Management Level; Inefficiency; Digitalization

1. Introduction

Bank morning meetings used to be a compulsory course for bank branch employees at the start of each day. Every morning, under the morning sun, whether at the entrance of the business hall, inside the business hall, or at the branch counter, they would begin their busy and fulfilling day with a bank morning meeting. Morning meetings used to be the rallying call for grassroots bank employees to start their day's

work, the golden key to commence a day's tasks with full spirit, and the launch point for all employees to engage in marketing and service activities.

As one of the most widely used management tools in grassroots bank branches, morning meetings help to uplift employee spirits, boost morale, arrange branch tasks, and improve service quality. They are a powerful management tool for grassroots branches [1]. However, with the changing internal and external environments, bank employees are paying less and less attention to morning meetings, and the role of morning meetings in enhancing the management level of grassroots branches is increasingly weakening. Morning meetings are gradually becoming a tasteless tool that is difficult to abandon. How to hold high-quality and efficient bank morning meetings has become an important issue for grassroots branches.

2. Main Manifestations of Inefficiency in Bank Morning Meetings

Bank morning meetings, as one of the most widely used management tools at grassroots bank branches, should be highly recognized by branch managers and employees. However, in reality, the effectiveness of this management tool is gradually weakening. The positioning of "small morning meetings, big platform" is becoming marginalized and blurred. Grassroots bank managers find it hard to give up on but also lack enthusiasm for morning meetings, and their traditional functions are progressively weakening. The recognition of morning meetings among participants is decreasing, and their support for improving the operational efficiency of grassroots branches is diminishing.

2.1 The Traditional Functionality of Morning Meetings is Weakening

Currently, the continuous migration of banking services online has significantly increased the proportion of off-counter

services. According to the "2022 China Banking Industry Service Report" and the "2023 China Banking Industry Service Report" released by the China Banking Association, the number of off-counter transactions in financial institutions in the banking industry reached 450.644 billion in 2022 and 491.439 billion in 2023. The total amount of off-counter transactions reached 237.589 trillion yuan and 236.382 trillion yuan, with the industry's average electronic channel diversion rates being 96.99% and 93.86%, respectively. The significant increase in the number and amount of off-counter transactions and the diversion to electronic channels indicate a sharp decline in counter service traffic at grassroots branches. The intensified homogenized competition offline has put tremendous operational pressure on grassroots branches. Under this heavy pressure, grassroots branch managers increasingly use morning meetings as a platform for performance reviews and the issuance of marketing tasks. The stark contrast between high marketing targets and sparse branch traffic severely dampens the morale of branch employees. The traditional functions of morning meetings to boost employee morale, arrange branch work, and improve service quality are weakening.

2.2 Participant Recognition of Morning Meetings is Decreasing

Banking is an industry with high entry barriers, and grassroots branch employees generally have high educational backgrounds, mostly holding bachelor's degrees or higher. Many are campus recruits who have successfully passed multiple written tests and interviews. These highly educated and capable employees tend to be overqualified. Numerous empirical studies and meta-analyses, including recent domestic and international research, have confirmed that overqualification can lead to employee turnover and attrition problems [2]. When grassroots branch managers use morning meetings more as tools for marketing and performance promotion, these well-educated, capable employees find command-style, task-oriented management interactions uninspiring. They are skeptical of the grassroots branch's marketing methods and strategies, their goals for personal value

realization fall through, resulting in low recognition of morning meetings, and naturally, the effectiveness of these meetings is significantly reduced.

2.3 The Limited Role of Morning Meetings in Improving Branch Operational Efficiency

Business branches are the smallest operational units of banks and the lowest-level institutions managing currency operations. Many factors affect the operational efficiency of business branches. Bank morning meetings could originally enhance branch operational efficiency by motivating employees, implementing standardized service improvements, and scientifically arranging work tasks [3]. However, due to factors such as the online migration of financial services, the weakening of traditional functions of morning meetings, and declining employee participation enthusiasm, the role of morning meetings in improving branch operational efficiency is increasingly weakening. Many grassroots branches' morning meetings have become procedurally rigid, content-wise inflexible, and less effective. Both managers and the managed at many grassroots branches frown and worry at the mention of morning meetings.

3. Analysis of the Weakening Role of Bank Morning Meetings

For a long time, bank morning meetings have been considered one of the most important management tools for grassroots bank branches. The weakening role of morning meetings in recent years is the result of profound internal and external changes within the banking industry.

3.1 Firstly, the Rapid Popularization of Online Financial Services Has Severely Weakened the Role of Grassroots Branches as the Front Line of Marketing and Services

The convenience of online financial transactions and services has met the needs of customers to handle complex financial transactions from home with just a few clicks, resolving the pain points of customers spending a lot of time waiting at grassroots branches. Increasingly more bank

customers are adopting online services, making the bustling scenes at grassroots branches a thing of the past. Under this service model transformation, traditional commercial banks find it challenging to accurately reach and market to customers through physical branches and online banking channels they have built. The role of grassroots branches as the front line of marketing and services is severely weakened [4]. In the traditional financial model, banks waited for customers to come to them, with branches bustling with customers. Banks mainly considered how to retain customers with better financial services and how to market more bank products to customers who entered the branches. Under such circumstances, the traditional functions of bank morning meetings, especially in enhancing service levels, were fully utilized. However, the rapid development of technology has promoted the widespread adoption of online financial services, significantly increasing the rate of off-counter services and drastically reducing customer flow in grassroots branches. The traditional model of winning customers through services has failed, and the role of grassroots branches as the front line of marketing and services is severely weakened.

3.2 Secondly, Grassroots Branch Managers Have Not Quickly Adapted To The New Industry Trends.

Currently, technological innovation is burgeoning, profoundly influencing the development of the banking industry. Fintech and digital finance have become key directions for financial development. These profound changes are more occurring at the headquarters or provincial branches of banks and have not been effectively transmitted to grassroots branches. Grassroots branch managers still largely use traditional thinking and management to handle operations and marketing. Grassroots branches rely heavily on technical support from headquarters or provincial branches for digital projects and scenario development, mostly replicating and transplanting existing mature technology models. Therefore, they have certain requirements for related application scenarios and enterprises. When

it comes to custom projects and scenarios for local enterprises, grassroots branches often find it difficult to obtain timely technical support from headquarters and provincial branches due to their own insufficient technical development capabilities. There is still a long way to go for grassroots branches to empower their operations with emerging technologies [5].

3.3 Thirdly, the younger and more knowledgeable workforce at grassroots branches has become a catalyst for the weakening of morning meeting functions

The young bank employees who have grown up in the new era are lively thinkers, full of technological elements. They are always at the forefront of the times, firm supporters and practitioners of technological innovation. However, the currently rigid morning meeting procedures, stifling performance reviews, and traditional learning methods at grassroots branches make them avoid morning meetings, and thus the functions of morning meetings cannot be effectively played out.

4. Digital Empowerment to Improve the Quality and Efficiency of Bank Morning Meetings

4.1 Firstly, Using Digital Tools to Empower Grassroots Branch Operations

The state has proposed accelerating the construction of the digital economy, and financial work meetings have also emphasized the importance of digital finance. The digitalization process of banks is accelerating, with the total amount of off-counter transactions in the banking industry reaching 2308.36 trillion yuan in 2020, and the off-counter transaction rate approaching 90%. There has been a significant reduction in the number of ATMs, and bank branches are closing down consecutively [6]. In this context, grassroots bank branches must utilize digital tools to empower operations. Through operational empowerment, they can accelerate the standardization and intelligence construction of branches, gradually improve the equipment of grassroots branch staff, and enhance intensive management levels. Only by empowering grassroots branches digitally

will there be a solid foundation for the management functions of morning meetings to be effectively utilized [7].

4.2 Secondly, Using a Digital Panoramic View to Efficiently Arrange Work Tasks

The rapid development of financial technology has significantly enhanced the data analysis capabilities of the banking industry. Banks can leverage data mining, machine learning, and artificial intelligence technologies to deeply analyze the operational data of grassroots branches [8]. Grassroots branches can present operational data analyses through more intuitive forms such as tables and charts on large screens or PADs, making task arrangements clearer and more understandable. This clarity in task arrangements makes it easier for new-era bank employees to accept, leading to more targeted, proactive, and efficient task completion [9].

4.3 Thirdly, Using Digital Tools for Precise Marketing to Enhance Employee Achievement

The sharp decline in branch traffic has forced bank branches to transform their marketing strategies. Banks need to conduct in-depth analyses of existing customers and target groups, deeply mine customer data, and continuously optimize marketing models to provide intellectual support for grassroots branch employees. Grassroots branch employees urgently need more financial technology support to make their marketing efforts more focused and professional, thereby making marketing outcomes more effective. The more financial digitalization empowers grassroots employees in marketing, the higher the likelihood of their marketing success, and the stronger their sense of achievement [10].

4.4 Fourthly, Using Digital Tools for Learning and Summarizing To Enhance Employee Satisfaction

New-era young employees place more emphasis on participation. They are supporters and practitioners of technological innovation and should be encouraged to take the stage in morning meetings, using digital tools filled with technological elements for learning and evaluation. More participation

from grassroots employees, combined with current technologies, greatly enhances the sense of ownership among grassroots employees, fully unleashing their potential, and naturally significantly improving the quality and efficiency of morning meetings.

5. Conclusions

Bank morning meetings were once a very important management tool. However, with profound changes in the internal and external environments of banks, the traditional functions of morning meetings, such as invigorating employees, boosting morale, arranging branch tasks, and improving service quality, have weakened. Digitalization offers grassroots branches a great way to enhance the quality and efficiency of morning meetings. Branch managers need to assess the situation, adapt accordingly, and actively embrace digitalization. By using digital tools to empower the operations of grassroots branches, employing digital panoramic views for efficient task arrangements, leveraging digital tools for deep data mining, and utilizing digital tools for learning and summarization, they can empower grassroots employees in marketing. Truly, digitalization will continue to make morning meetings a tool for improving operational efficiency.

References

- [1] Bai Jianping. Improving Seven Aspects to Enhance Branch Service Quality. *China Urban Finance*, 2012 (7):67.
- [2] Chen Lanlan, Jiang Xinhui, Wang Maolin, Wang Yanling, Chen Nannan. Alleviating the Turnover Intention Caused by Overqualification: The Triple Interaction of Organizational Belonging and Belonging Needs. *Management Review*, 2024(6):169-182.
- [3] Wen Yi. My Views on Strengthening Branch Morning Meeting Management. *Modern Finance*, 2019(3):56.
- [4] Yang Gangqiang. Digital Transformation of Commercial Banks and the "Second Growth Curve". *Fujian Finance*, 2024(5):42-46.
- [5] Pan Qimin. Investigation and Reflection on the Digital Transformation of Grassroots Commercial Banks: A Case Study of Yingtang. *Financial Technology Era*, 2024(6):70-78.

- [6] Meng Yuting. Research on the Development of Commercial Bank Branches. *China Market*, 2023(24):68-71.
- [7] Zhao Guoqiang, Deng Guoping. Empowering Operations with Digital and Intelligent "Wings". *Agricultural Development and Finance*, 2024(4):26-27.
- [8] Li Lingyu. Research on the Status and Countermeasures of Digital Transformation of Small and Medium Commercial Banks. *Modern Commerce*, 2024(13):149-151.
- [9] Li Haokun. Exploration of the Digital Development of Commercial Banks in China. *Journal of Changchun Financial College*, 2023(3):17-23.
- [10] Lin Chun, Ge Xindi, Sun Yingjie. Digital Transformation of Commercial Banks and the Enhancement of New Productive Forces. *Financial Theory and Practice*, 2024(6):1-8.