

Telework Guide

Virtual Meeting Etiquette 101

Tips for Meeting Participants

Key points:

- Stay engaged throughout the meeting.
- Avoid the urge to multitask.
- Keep yourself on MUTE when not speaking.

Before the meeting:

- Review the virtual meeting call-in details and your equipment.
- Make sure you are in a quiet area with limited background noise.
- Wear headphones or earbuds that link to your device to hear and be heard clearly.
- If you're joining a video chat:
 - » Make sure the backdrop is not distracting or cluttered.
 - » Dress appropriately.
 - » Ensure good lighting.

During the meeting:

- Join the meeting on time or a few minutes early.
- Mute your phone when you are not speaking. Do not put your phone on hold.
- State your name when you speak.
- When speaking, keep your points clear and concise, and enunciate your words.
- Sit up straight and be attentive. Do not eat, get up or wander away.
- Focus your attention on the speaker. Resist the urge do other work, check email or anything else distracting. Log off instant messenger and email. Close any unrelated tabs and programs.
- Take notes.
- Before the meeting is over, be sure you're clear on any action items assigned to you.

Tips for Meeting Hosts

Key point:

- Have a backup plan for the meeting if technology fails.

Before the meeting:

- Become familiar with the technology (audio and/or visual) with a practice run.
- Send out the meeting agenda beforehand with goals and expected outcomes.
- If you're leading a video chat:
 - » Make sure your backdrop is not distracting or cluttered.
 - » Dress appropriately.
 - » Be in a quiet space with no interruptions (phones ringing, doors, other people).
 - » Your energy and emotions come through your voice. Remember to look at the camera.
 - » Ensure good lighting.

During the meeting:

- If your participants' identities are unclear when they log on, do a roll call at the beginning of the chat.
- If a new person joins in after the meeting has started, ask for their name at a good stopping point.
- Mute participants as needed (noise, visual distractions, etc.).
- If you're sharing your screen, make sure to share only the desired document(s).
- Establish housekeeping rules for participants (e.g., do not put the phone on hold, keep the phone on mute unless speaking, ask to be acknowledged before speaking).
- Ask participants to hold questions or comments until asked or send questions or comments through the chat box.
- If more than one person begins to speak at once, ask one of them to wait until they are acknowledged before continuing.
- Encourage participation. Provide an opportunity for participants to ask questions, so everyone is on the same page.
- Call upon people by name to answer questions or give their views.
- Keep your attendees engaged and keep the meeting moving.
- Review action items and assignments at the end of the call.
- Stick to the schedule. Start and end on time.

After the meeting:

- Send an email as a follow-up after the meeting to all invitees. A written summary will help your participants remember what they heard or understand what they didn't quite hear.
- Include in your meeting notes a quick recap and information about who is doing what in terms of next steps. This is a good way to ensure that everyone stays on task working towards the same goal despite working remotely in different locations.