Etiquette for Online Meetings

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Why Online Meetings?

▶ Covid-19 has made the use of online meetings an important tool in our everyday union work.

▶ There are similarities and differences between on-line and in-person meetings.

▶ The following slides highlight some ways to navigate the world of online meetings.

▶ This presentation should take no more than 15 minutes

Advantages of Online Meetings

▶ Online meetings are cost effective.

▶ They can create increased productivity by saving on travel time to the meeting, if people are not in the same location.

▶ They allow for immediate decisions to be made across vast geographical distances.

Modified from: https://meetingking.com/face-to-face-meetings-vs-virtual-meetings

Advantages of Face-to-Face Meetings

- ▶ Can better understand what a person is saying through body language.

- ▶ Ability to provide sensitive feedback or bad news to individuals on a one-to-one basis.

- ▶ Avoid people working on the computer while attending the meeting – there is a better chance of getting attendees' full attention.

Modified from: https://meetingking.com/meetings-vs-virtual-meetings/

Etiquette Tips and Tricks…

Audio and Video-Test Ahead

► Most online platforms allow you to test your audio and video settings to ensure they are working.

► Try out the platform to make sure you are familiar with the settings.

► Know where the video and unmute buttons are.

Lighting

▶ An extra nearby lamp can be helpful- video quality is dramatically improved with more lighting

▶ Make sure the light is in front of you, not behind you - being backlit makes you harder to see.

Introductions

Be sure to introduce all parties you are hosting at the beginning.

Just like a real meeting or social event, you wouldn't initiate a conversation between people who haven't met without introducing them.

Background and Environment

▶ Ensure that you have a work-appropriate background-you want attendees' focus to be on the meeting content, not a distracting area behind you.

▶ Try to attend the meeting from a quiet area that has minimal background noise and movement.

▶ Many online meeting platforms have a virtual background feature which is an easy way to eliminate distractions.

Background and Environment continued…

► Notifications from messaging applications, ringtones, and applications running on your desktop can be distracting, turn them off or mute.

► Mute your mic when you are not speaking and ask others to do the same. This will eliminate background noise and feedback.

► Mitigating these distractions helps keep the meeting focused and free from interruption.

Appearance

▶ Your appearance should match the expectations of your audience.

▶ With your co-workers or fellow members, it's best to match your video call look to how you'd normally look at a meeting.

Use the Chat Function

Don't talk over each other. Use the chat function to ask questions

- Participants can submit questions during the meeting without audibly interrupting anyone who is speaking.

- During a natural lull in the meeting, the presenter or meeting host can answer those questions at their convenience because the questions will be viewable by everyone in the chat message sidebar.

Practice Speaking to the Camera and Not the Screen

Our tendency is to look at the person on the screen, but you should look at the camera when you speak so the audience feels like you're talking directly to them.

Record Decisions and Next Steps

Just like you would if you were gathering for an in-person meeting, be diligent about taking notes, recording decisions, and confirming the next steps.

Include Everyone

▶ In virtual meetings, it can be common for the same few people to take the stage and do all of the talking.

▶ Hosts should make it a practice to ask people who haven't spoken in awhile to share their opinion.

8 Quick Do's

1. Do be courteous to other participants
2. Do speak clearly
3. Do keep body movements minimal
4. Do move and gesture slowly and naturally
5. Do maintain eye contact by looking into the camera
6. Do dress appropriately
7. Do make the session animated
8. Do be yourself and have fun

7 Quick Don'ts

1. Don't make distracting sounds
2. Don't shout
3. Don't make distracting movements
4. Don't interrupt other speakers
5. Don't carry on side conversations
6. Don't wear "noisy" jewelry
7. Don't cover the microphone

End on a Positive Note

Something subtle that you can do to improve Zoom meeting etiquette is to end the call on a positive note. You can do this by saying something as simple as "thank you so much for all your effort on this project" or "it's been a pleasure working with you all on this".

Doing so can go a long way in boosting the mood and overall feelings of the meeting.

Additionally, the meeting host should be the last one to leave the call, to make sure no one is missing any last-minute information or anything that someone may have forgotten to add or ask.

Resources

The web has many videos to help get you familiar with the platform you
are using.

Below are examples of introductory videos for some popular online meeting platforms.

Zoom
https://www.youtube.com/embed/ygZ96J_z4AY?rel=0&autoplay=1&cc_load_policy=1

Microsoft Teams https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CH2seLS5Wb0

Google Meet https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O8Y1vIfpbEU

Skype https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NRcb3uB3Jac