

Etiquette for Successful Virtual Meetings

As teams are becoming increasingly geographically dispersed, they are relying heavily on virtual meetings to communicate and collaborate. Having everyone follow a common set of rules will ensure that your virtual meetings are beneficial and productive to all. Below are just a few things you can do to ensure you are following the proper etiquette on your conference calls and virtual meetings.

Meeting Participant

- Stay engaged throughout the entire meeting, avoid the urge to try to multitask and stay focused on the topic at hand.
- Join the meeting on time or a few minutes early.
- Make sure you are in a quiet area. Limit the background noise (i.e. kids, pets, coffee shops, car noise, etc.). Make every effort to get to a location where others can hear you clearly.
- If joining after the meeting has started, wait for the conference leader to ask who joined. This will prevent you from possibly interrupting the presenter and further disrupting the meeting.
- Mute your phone when you are not speaking.
- When speaking, keep your points clear and concise.
- Never place the meeting on hold, simply drop and re-join when you can.
- Make sure you are clear on any action items assigned to you.

Meeting Coordinator

- Since everyone is remote and in many cases cannot see each other, it is the coordinator's responsibility to facilitate the meeting as effectively as possible.
- Send out the meeting agenda prior to the meeting. Be sure to include the expected outcome of the meeting.
- Conduct a roll-call at the beginning of the call. If a new person joins the call after the meeting has started, ask for their name at a good stopping point.
- If sharing your screen, make sure you are only sharing the desired document and log off of IM and e-mail or set it Do-not Disturb mode. Having IM's or e-mails from your wife or husband pop up in the middle of your presentation can be very embarrassing!
- Keep your attendees engaged.
- Review action items and assigned tasks at the end of each call.
- Provide opportunity for Q&A session so everyone is on the same page.
- Be mindful of everyone's time, start and end on time. Hold another virtual meeting if you are unable to go through the agenda items in one call.

As the coordinator you also need to be cognizant of a few more items to help ensure the meeting stays on track.

- If you are using an online collaboration tool, conduct a practice run to make sure the technology launches properly. Confirm if you are able to mute all participants and allow meeting attendees to “Raise their hand” to ask questions or offer comments.
- If you are using a conference call only option, be sure to confirm the conference dial in number is available. It will be quite embarrassing if another coordinator is using the same number for their meeting at the same time. You should also become very familiar with your Coordinator option. With an Operator’s assistance, you should be able to mute all lines or have the ability to drop any offending parties.

Following the tips above for your next virtual meeting will help ensure it goes smoothly with limited to no interruptions due to poor meeting etiquette.