



Video and Teleconference Etiquette

As we continue to transition to a remote working model, there are more meetings being conducted through video and teleconferences. To ensure these virtual conferences are as efficient and effective as possible, participants and facilitators typically follow this list of video conference etiquette tips.

Turn off distractions.	Cell phones, iPads, televisions, and anything else that might interrupt or distract you or your colleagues from the conversation should be shut off until the end of the conference.
Start on time.	The facilitator should start the meeting on time and lead the introductions with a roll call, which should include each participant's name and location.
You are on TV!	Because others may already have called into the conferencing system before you, assume someone can see and hear you the minute you log on. During a video conference the meeting participants can see everything you do. To minimize visual distractions, adjust your camera to fill the screen as much as possible with you, rather than the background of the room where you are located. Make eye contact with the camera, but don't be too close to the camera. Use natural gestures when you speak.
Set the scene.	Avoid wearing bright colors, all-light or all-dark clothing, or very "busy" patterns such as small checks or narrow stripes. Light pastels and muted colors look best on the screen. If there are windows in the room, close any drapes or blinds. Lighting can impact the quality of your video.
Get to know others.	Tell participants the best way to respond to or ask questions is to state their name before they begin.
Speak clearly.	Speaking clearly can ensure that everyone can hear you and fully understand what you are saying. Remember during conference calls, everyone is relying only on your conversation. It's also important for facilitators and participants to smile while speaking to spread enthusiasm and energy during the video conference.
Avoid side conversations and background noise.	In face-to-face meetings, side comments are rude and disruptive. In a video or teleconference, they can increase the sense of distance and detachment. Avoid shuffling papers or tapping your fingers near the microphone and mute your line when others are speaking. Every sound and motion you make can become magnified to remote viewers.
Do not interrupt.	Interrupting can be very confusing to everyone involved with the conversation, and it tends to cause audio problems.
Do listen to others.	Although you might have something to say regarding what someone else has said, be kind enough to wait until it's your turn. Focus on listening first then responding second.
Keep participants involved.	Always call on participants by name to acknowledge their question. During the meeting, ask participants for feedback and keep them involved. Change the activity or pace every 20 minutes. Be alert for signs of fatigue and take a break if energy is running low.
Multi-tasking can take your mind off of the topic.	When you are in a conference, you should be listening and taking notes. This will assure that you sound and look attentive and that you know what you are talking about when someone in the conference asks you a question.
Focus on the issue.	Going off on another subject could divert focus from the discussion at hand. Everyone gathered for the conference call to discuss a certain issue.
Wrapping up the conference.	When the conference is ready to end, the facilitator needs to clearly state that the meeting has concluded, thank everyone for their participation, and be sure they are the last one to hang up, so there will be no extra minutes billed.

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