

Effective Virtual Meetings

14 Tips

- 1.** Send out an electronic agenda before the meeting starts.
- 2.** Assign clear roles such as a moderator, speaker, tech support to ensure minimal glitches during the meeting.
- 3.** Create a live, editable doc so everyone dialed in can contribute notes in real-time.
- 4.** Have a clear business goal for all virtual meetings and ensure all meeting activities line up to it.
- 5.** Make eye contact with the camera when presenting.
- 6.** Ask that all attendees mute their mics when not speaking to reduce background noise.
- 7.** Strongly recommend all attendees turn their cameras on to encourage organic connections and accountability that everyone is engaged.
- 8.** Consider a combination of resources for attendees to interact with to maximize engagement and win their attention (i.e. recorded and live video, articles, decks, etc.)
- 9.** If your platform allows, consider planning breakout sessions for participants to interact and work together.
- 10.** Use polls throughout presentations to make the meeting more interactive.
- 11.** Promote discussion by asking the group open-ended questions and intersperse these throughout the meeting to keep everyone engaged.
- 12.** Incorporate social media and encourage your groups to post what their set up looks like and mention you/your event hashtag.
- 13.** Order catered lunch for remote attendees to keep them engaged and feel appreciated.
- 14.** Do additional communication to engage attendees prior and create more of a connection with the topics/speakers/attendees.

Anatomy of a Great Meeting



Before:

Determine structure and purpose.

- Who needs to **attend**?
- What is the **objective**?
- How much **time** is needed?
- What **preparation** will help?
- What is your **role**?
 - Are you there to push a group to a decision?
 - Are you responsible for making a decision?
 - Are you seeking information?

Communicate in advance.

- Develop a **written agenda**; assign owners to each item.
- **Send agenda** and supporting materials in advance.
- **Set expectations** for in-person or video attendance.
- **Set context/framing** for meeting (Why is this meeting being held?)
 - By email if possible.
 - By phone if needed to engage key stakeholders.

During:

1) Start/finish on time.

2) Assign a note-taker and a time-keeper.

3) Provide context/framing at the outset. (Why are we here?)

4) Manage the discussion.

- Make asks early and be specific.
- Keep discussion on topic.
- Use active listening strategies to keep attendees engaged.
- Save off-topic ideas for later.
- Set time limits for discussion.
- Acknowledge attendees mind-sets and interests verbally.

5) Follow the agenda.

- Set goals and objectives for the meeting and for each agenda item.
- Establish owners for agenda items.

6) Review next steps and establish accountability. (Who will do what by when?)

7) End early when possible to enable timely arrival at next appointment.

After:

FOLLOW-UP

Send brief notes to meeting attendees and people who were absent, focusing on decisions made, action items and owners.

DEBRIEF

Review what worked and what didn't and note that for next time.