

# ONLINE MEETINGS 101

## Etiquette



# Online Meetings

Circumstances have made the use of online meetings an important tool in our everyday 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 usually relatively cheap to run.
- They 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 when what a person is saying conflicts with what they might be thinking, through body language.
- Help to provide sensitive feedback or bad news to individuals on a one to one basis.
- Avoid people multitasking, e.g. working on the computer while attending the meeting – there is a better chance of getting attendees' full attention.
- Modified from: <https://meetingking.com/face-to-face-meetings-vs-virtual-meetings/>



# Etiquette Tips and Tricks

**This presentation will include best practices about the following:**

- Audio and video prior to the meeting
- Lighting
- Introductions
- Work-appropriate background
- Camera use
- Eliminating distractions
- Audio and video settings during the meeting
- Invitation to participants
- Hosting



# Test Audio and Video

- Most online platforms allow you to test your audio and video settings to ensure they are working.
- If you have time, try out the platform to make sure you are familiar with the settings.
- Know where the video and unmute buttons are.



# Lighting

- Video quality is dramatically improved with more lighting.
- An extra nearby lamp can be helpful.
- Make sure the light is in front of you, not behind you - being backlit makes you harder to see.



# Introductions

- Just like a real meeting or social event, you wouldn't initiate a conversation between people who haven't met without introducing them. The same practice applies to a virtual meeting.
- Be sure to introduce all parties you are hosting at the beginning to create a welcoming environment and stimulate engagement.

For ideas on icebreaker ideas and when to use them search the internet for sites like <https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/virtual-ice-breakers.htm>





# Backgrounds

## **Ensure that you have a work-appropriate background.**

- You want attendees' focus to be on the meeting content, not your messy or cluttered office.
- Settings with a work-appropriate background, reduces the chance that attendees will get distracted.
- 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.



# Look into the camera when talking

- Looking at yourself on the screen while you're talking, will seem like your attention is elsewhere.
- Direct eye contact into the camera while speaking gives attendees the impression that you are looking at them rather than off to the side. This creates an environment where people feel engaged and present in the conversation.
- Position your web camera and monitor at eye level so you can look into the camera and simulate eye-to-eye connection with the other attendees.



# Eliminate Distractions

- Notifications from messaging applications, ringtones, and applications running on your desktop can be distracting, This can make other attendees feel disrespected and undervalued.
- Mute your mic when you are not speaking.
- Mitigating these distractions helps keep the meeting focused and free from interruption.



# Settings

## Be aware of your audio and video settings

- Check whether your microphone is unmuted and that your camera is on to ensure that all attendees can hear you and see you when you speak.
- If you notice that someone in the meeting is speaking but their microphone is muted, you can alert them that they are muted by requesting that they unmute their audio.
- You can manage how you start and join meetings — with video on, entering a meeting muted, etc. — in your settings.



# Invites

## Only invite meeting participants who need to be there

- Inviting co-workers who don't need to participate or make decisions can be detrimental to the quality of the meeting.
- As a host you can send other stakeholders a summary of the meeting allowing you to limit the attendee list and keep the meeting streamlined.
- As an invitee, make sure to review any meeting invites you receive to determine whether you actually need to attend. If not, request a recording of the meeting or a summary to get the info you need.



# Host

## If you're the host, stick around

- The general rule for meeting hosts: Wait until everyone else has left the meeting before hanging up. This allows attendees to leave at their own pace and get any final words in before disconnecting.
- Some platforms will assign an alternate host if the original host exits first, but it might be seen as a sign of disrespect.



# Getting started 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](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=O8Y1vlfpbEU>
- **Cisco Webex** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5WywiTZEIS8>
- **Skype** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NRcb3uB3Jac>



# Feedback

**Please take a moment to share your feedback.**

1. Did you find this orientation useful?
2. Do you have any suggestions for improvement?

Thank you for your time. Please share your insight by sending a quick email to [education@opseu.org](mailto:education@opseu.org)







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