

5 Tips for Virtual Meetings

Define your purpose

A virtual meeting, otherwise known as video conferencing, allows participants to gather for business, learning, or social networking from remote locations regardless of weather, travel limitations, or to prevent the spread of illness. As with any meeting, in-person or virtual, convene for a reason and clearly communicate the purpose to the participants ahead of time.

Select appropriate platform

Numerous platforms are available for online virtual meetings, such as GoToMeeting, Zoom, WebEx, Digitell, Skype, Adobe Connect or Google Meet. Select the one that best fits your organization's technical needs and capabilities, budget, security concerns, and ease-of-use for participants. Make sure everyone has access and equipment to join and fully participate.

Provide instruction

Until all participants have maneuvered the meeting platform successfully, be sure to provide clear instructions. This includes how to join the meeting, navigate the platform, how to contribute to the conversation, and use functions such as mute, screen share, chat, Q&A, and more. A prior practice run for those new to virtual meetings is a welcome gesture for all.

Designate a host

Meetings are more successful when someone fills the role of moderator or host. This individual sends out the meeting invitation. They welcome participants upon "arrival" and make sure the meeting runs smoothly. They direct the entire meeting including introductions, going over the purpose and agenda, leading discussions, keeping track of time, and summarizing outcomes.

Solicit full engagement

Meetings are most successful when all participants contribute and engage fully in discussions and decisions. Organize the meeting to allow for adequate opportunities for engagement. Prepare participants ahead of time so they have the information needed for discussions, and structure the agenda and utilize the technology to allow everyone to have a voice.