

Leading Effective Online Meetings

While many of the skills for leading in-person meetings apply to those held virtually, the format does provide additional opportunities and challenges. These tips will let you run an effective and efficient online meeting.

Meeting planning

Use an Agenda



An agenda keeps the meeting on track. Be sure to allow more time for items than you think you may need to allow for tech issues and waiting for responses.

Keep your invite list lean



Everyone attending should have a role. More people mean an increased likelihood of drifting off topic and the risk of less participation.

Distribute documents



Send out all relevant preparatory documents (agenda, minutes, data, etc.) far enough in advance for participants to prepare. If possible, attach them to the meeting invitation.

Prepare your environment

Test your webcam, your headset or microphone, meeting platform, and screen/video sharing ahead of time. Remove background distractions.



During the meeting

Establish ground rules

Remind participants to stay on mute if not talking, use chat for questions, raise their virtual hand to be recognized, and whom to contact if there are issues.



Summarize discussion often

Recap the conversation's highlights at regular intervals. This keeps things on track, allows participants a chance to collect their thoughts, and facilitates notetaking.

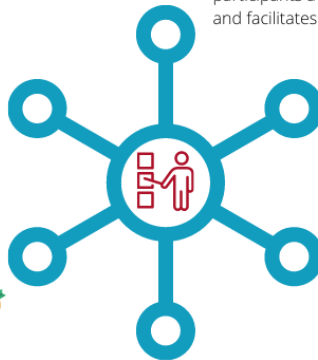


Take breaks

Allow individuals opportunities to shut their cameras off every 20-30 minutes, walk around, or take care of other needs.

Set the stage

Have participants introduce themselves, review the agenda, and charge/goals/objectives of the meeting.



Consider what you share

Consider how documents will appear. Spreadsheets and documents with small type can be difficult to see on little screens—always consider how a resource appears on a phone.



Expect quiet

A good rule of thumb is to wait seven seconds after asking a question or for input before trying to fill an awkward silence.

After the meeting



Distribute minutes/notes

Send a summary of the meeting to all participants as soon as possible. Be sure to outline action items clearly and explicitly with responsibilities and timelines.



Sources:

Ohio University Online Masters of Business Administration. July 29, 2022.
How to Lead Effective Virtual Meetings: Resources for Managers and Business Leaders.
<https://onlinemasters.ohio.edu/blog/virtual-meetings/>. Accessed August 12, 2022.

Aite C. July 20, 2022. How to run an effective virtual meeting. Hoppier. <https://www.hoppier.com/blog/virtual-meeting>. Accessed August 12, 2022.