

We all want meeting attendees to have a positive experience and are able to participate fully. The following best practices have been developed for meetings that involve remote participants and in-person, to maximize their experience and allow for optimal engagement.

	<h3>Meeting Owner</h3> <p><i>What is expected when you call a meeting</i></p> <p>The person who calls the meeting (i.e. sends out the meeting invite and creates the agenda), is the meeting owner. It is his/her responsibility to ensure a successful meeting. The meeting owner may choose to delegate some of the responsibilities (e.g. Virtual Ambassador, sending handouts).</p>		<h3>Virtual Participants</h3> <p><i>Enhancing your meeting participation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share your location: Let the meeting owner know ahead of time that you will be participating remotely, and where they can reach you. • Noisy background: If you are attending from a busy location, alert the meeting owner, so that they can take this into account when leading the meeting. • Using mute: It is good practice to use mute when you are not speaking for extended periods to reduce background noise. • Virtual ambassador: Ensure that you know who your “Virtual Ambassador” is so that you can contact them for support.
	<h3>Planning for Success</h3> <p><i>Plan ahead to maximize time</i></p> <p>Meeting Logistics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting details: Ensure correct log-in details, with a dial-in option if available • Agenda: Provide to all participants in advance, and include time allocations. <p>Support Documents & AV</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handouts: Provide to remote individuals the day before to allow time for printing if desired. • Powerpoint: Whenever possible, present using the online meeting platform to keep everyone on track. If that is not possible, provide the deck to remote participants the day before. 		<h3>Ensuring Representation</h3> <p><i>Maximizing remote participants' ability to participate fully</i></p> <p>Virtual Ambassador</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For meetings greater than 3 people, assign a “Virtual Ambassador”. • The virtual ambassador can support the remote employee by doing the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Share facial expressions or non-verbal cues being communicated if that person cannot see the other participants. – Take photos of flipcharts or other documentation being produced in the meeting.
	<h3>Speakers & Presenters</h3> <p><i>Making it easier to understand and participate</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who's in the room: The meeting owner should let remote participants know who is present at the beginning of the meeting if they cannot see the room. • Introduce yourself: The first time you speak at a meeting, please let the remote participant know who's speaking. • Presenters – take time to pause: Incorporate pauses in your presentation, to allow for questions. 		<h3>Sound Check</h3> <p><i>Understanding easy-to-fix irritations for our remote participants</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep those papers still: Shuffling paper creates a lot of noise over the microphone. Please avoid this. • Ripping paper from flipcharts: Sounds like a tsunami on the phone! Please provide warning to those on the phone. • Other ‘innocent noises’: Keep in mind that background noises sound much louder on a conference call. • Silence: Provide context to participants who cannot see what is happening in the room. (eg. person writing on a flipchart)
	<h3>Asking Questions</h3> <p><i>Involving remote participants</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaching out to remote participants: Make regular attempts to solicit feedback from remote participants. • ‘Elephants in the room’ or sensitive topics: In these cases, please do not ask remote participants to provide their input first as they may not have the benefit of non-verbal cues. • Participants on mute: When asking questions, allow for the time delay of virtual participants coming off mute. 		<h3>Wrapping Up</h3> <p><i>Ending the meeting when it has concluded</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings after the meeting (MAMs): When the meeting is over, please do not continue offline, as the remote participant cannot participate, and will not know what has been discussed. If, however, a discussion has continued, the meeting owner should ensure that the remote participant is informed.



Remember Your VIPs – Virtual Inclusion Principles



Virtual Ambassador

Who's taking on this role for the meeting?



Virtual Buddies on the Line

Remember to check in with our virtual participants first.



Context Needed

Remember to explain laughter, silences, facial expressions, gestures.



Who's Speaking?

Remember to introduce yourself the first time you speak at a meeting.



Make Yourself Heard

When speaking, make sure you are loud enough, and close enough to the microphone.



Warning - Flipchart Tearing

Ripping flipcharts is really distracting. Please provide a warning or mute the microphone.



Keep Those Papers Still

Shuffling noises are a major noise irritant.



MAMs

No Meetings after the Meeting!