



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.



## Meeting Owner

*What is expected when you call a meeting*

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).



## Virtual Participants

*Enhancing your meeting participation*

- **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.



## Planning for Success

*Plan ahead to maximize time*

### Meeting Logistics

- **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.

### Support Documents & AV

- **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.



## Ensuring Representation

*Maximizing remote participants' ability to participate fully*

### Virtual Ambassador

- For meetings greater than 3 people, assign a “Virtual Ambassador”.
- The virtual ambassador can support the remote employee by doing the following:
  - 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.



## Speakers & Presenters

*Making it easier to understand and participate*

- **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.



## Sound Check

*Understanding easy-to-fix irritations for our remote participants*

- **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)



## Asking Questions

*Involving remote participants*

- **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.



## Wrapping Up

*Ending the meeting when it has concluded*

- **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

**CMC** Expect to Outperform...

Canadian Management Centre



## 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!