

Virtual Meeting Best Practices at a Glance

1. Only hold a meeting when collaboration is required – status updates can be done via email
2. Prepare: Design meeting process notes that will guide the discussion for each topic
3. Distribute the outcome(s)-driven agenda (not topic-centered) and pre-work at least 3-5 days ahead of meeting
4. Only invite people who can provide critical content, who need critical content, or are decision makers
5. Try to keep the meeting duration no longer than 90 minutes. If the meeting is going to be longer than 90 minutes, allow for a 10-15 min break every 60–90 minutes, depending on the length of the meeting.
6. Schedule meetings to end 5–10 minutes early to allow members time to get to their next meeting
7. Identify in your meeting invite any pre-reading and expectations on how to prepare
8. Start and end on time:
 1. Latecomers should be prepared to catch up on what they've missed during a break (if applicable) or after the meeting
 2. Notify the meeting leader before the meeting of late arrivals or cancellations
 3. If canceling, attempt to send someone in your place – the replacement must be well informed and up to date on the current issue or proposed decision to be discussed
9. Don't let co-located participants dominate – involve everyone in the discussion, especially if they are not in the room
10. Consider making the meeting completely remote to level the playing field for all participants
11. Enlist help: Engage participants by assigning roles in advance such as scribes, timekeepers, discussion leads, “chat” managers, etc
12. Use and referee meeting norms to foster supportive, respectful and inclusive collaboration
13. Distribute meeting follow-up notes (action items, summary of decisions made, etc.) within two business days following the meeting



Norms Specific to Virtual Meetings

1. No putting the call on hold or using speakerphones
2. Minimize background noise – place yourself on mute until you want to or are called upon to speak
3. All technology (mobile phones, laptops, etc.) is off or on mute – we will mute the audio and video to answer emergency calls only
4. Before speaking, identify yourself (for teleconferences)
5. Stay present – turn on webcams whenever possible
6. Stay focused – avoid multi-tasking during the meeting
7. Announce when you are exiting or entering the virtual room