



ACE YOUR NEXT VIRTUAL MEETING

Top 10 Tips

KNOW THE PARTICIPANTS

- Do your homework BEFORE anyone logs in. Understand challenges, concerns and issues.

SET OBJECTIVES

- Establish clear goals for each event. Make sure everyone knows the purpose of the meeting before they dial in. If you send out an e-mail invite, tell them what to expect, why they are being invited and what if anything they can contribute to the call. You can also set time expectations.

SHARE YOUR AGENDA

- Before the call, send an email to attendees that includes specific discussion points. This allows them to think about what they might contribute or ask. If there is a q and a period, suggest they write down their questions in advance which will help them think and prepare.

ROUND ROBIN

- Depending on the number of people participating, and who knows whom, ask those on the call to introduce themselves so everyone knows who is attending.

HELP OTHERS PARTICIPATE

- As the host or facilitator, it's important to keep track of who is talking. This way, if someone is monopolizing the conversation, you can involve others by saying something like, "Mary, what are your thoughts?"

KEEP IT INTERACTIVE

- No one wants to hear you drone on forever. Try to break up your words with questions, visuals, examples, and input from others and audio or video when you can use it.

STAY ON TRACK

- If the discussion gets off track, as the facilitator you need to bring it back. Perhaps remind people that while you understand their concerns, in the limited time available today, the goal is x and it's important to get back to these points.

BREATHE

- Don't be afraid of the silence. People need time to think and process. As a facilitator it isn't your job to keep talking. It's their job to ask questions and participate. If the silence seems too long, then ask a question to bring them back into the conversation.

TALK TO ONE PERSON

- As a former TV reporter, I used to pretend the camera was one person. You can do the same. Visualize having a conversation with one person and look up at your screen or the room in front of you, not down at your desk.

NEXT STEPS

- Seek closure by agreeing on next steps. Is there another call? What do you want them to do next? Will you get answers to certain questions? Sum up the purpose of the call so they walk away feeling this was a productive use of their time.