



10 considerations around virtual meetings



1

Remember our personal circumstances differ

Be mindful that colleagues may need to leave or take a break during meetings. It should be explained that no one should worry if they need to jump off the call to tend to a private matter (eg see to a child or answer the door).



2

Check availability

Check the availability of your colleagues before booking in a meeting. It's simple and easy to do. Send an email or give them a call to see if they're available. If you are on O365 remember you can utilise the calendar facility on there.



3

50-minute meetings are the new one hour

Avoid back-to-back meetings where possible. If it can't be avoided give your colleagues a much needed 10-minute comfort break before they head into their next call. When you book a meeting, arrange a start time 10 mins into the hour (eg 11.10am) or an end time 10 mins before the hour (eg 4.50pm) to allow for this.



4

Encourage regular respite breaks during lengthy meetings

In meetings lasting more than one hour, ensure you give the option for breaks to get a drink and stretch your legs.



5

The 'what' & 'how' - Virtual Meeting Room expectations

If you're the chairperson, set etiquette expectations and explain functionality. If you're not speaking put yourself on mute to avoid background distractions. Encourage your participants to engage using video. 'Wave to speak' is an effective method in larger group meetings. Obtain everyone's permission first before recording a meeting or make it clear from the outset whether a meeting is going to be recorded or not.



6

Rest your eyes

Give your eyes a break from the screen by switching off your video intermittently for a few minutes in some of those longer meetings. During breaks, try to step away from your screen altogether and remove the temptation to get stuck into other work.



7

All voices should be heard

Ensure everyone has the opportunity to speak before a change of topic. Regular pauses are key in making sure no-one feels ignored. Try not to talk over one another as great ideas could get missed.



8

Timekeeping and punctuality is essential

Be polite and punctual by joining your meeting on time. If you join late, make yourself known at a convenient time or use the chat function to give your apologies. The chairperson is responsible for ensuring the meeting starts promptly and finishes on time.



9

Own your availability

If you are sent a meeting invite, be sure to respond so the organisers know whether to expect you. You may not be able to make every meeting, if you are unable to attend letting people know may allow for a change in time/date or for relevant papers to still be reviewed.



10

Identify whether a meeting is really needed

Before booking a meeting, consider 'do we really need to have this?'. Save time in your diary by sending an e-mail, link up with a quick phone call.

