

Equipment Basics

Like Real Life

- Can see and hear each other
- See documents
- Synchronous

Different from Real Life

- Must wait for others to finish speaking.
- Small noises are amplified by the microphone.
- Off task behaviors are magnified.
- Only see what the camera is pointed at.

Parts of the System

- Camera
- Microphone
- Codec, display, remote or touch panel
- Computer (device), controls

Camera Tips

- Set the camera for the closest frame of the entire group for a meeting or collaboration.
- Don't move the camera around unless necessary during the meeting or call.
- Check what you are sending using the picture in picture or local video options.
- Watch for back lighting issues.

Microphone Tips

- Place the microphone on a flat, hard surface in the center of the group.
- Do not place it behind participants or near any audio speakers.
- Do not pick it up and use it like a walkie talkie.
- Speak clearly. Don't mumble.
- Mute before moving the microphone...even on a mobile device!
- Keep paper away from it.
- Keep the microphone unmuted (open) during a point-to-point video conference.
- In a multipoint video conference, muting and unmuting are determined by how many sites are connecting and what the purpose of the meeting is.

What to do in a Video Conference

Video conferencing is a face-to-face, synchronous technology. There are some behaviors to be aware of when participating.

1. Audio

- a. If the other sites sound too quiet, adjust the audio on your video conference system, display/TV or external speakers.
- b. If the other sites say you sound too quiet, check to make sure the microphone is placed properly and selected in settings. Speak clearly!

2. Be professional.

- a. Make sure your background is not cluttered.
- b. Dress in solid colors. Sometimes patterns create optical illusions that are not flattering on camera.
- c. Be aware that "dangly" jewelry; such as earrings or bracelets can create noise that can be heard in a video conference.

3. Interactions

Interaction during a video conference should be facilitated a bit for maximum participation. If there is no facilitator leading the meeting, begin with a few words and wait until all are focused before proceeding.

4. Focus during the connection.

Multitasking does not project well via video conference. Turn off cell phones. Try to maintain eye contact with the camera, when possible.

5. Double check time zones.

Use an online meeting planner to help you.

6. Home Office or Coffee Shop

When connecting from a home office or public location, think about the audio video you are sending into the call.

- a. What noises can be heard? What images will be seen? What is your lighting?
- b. Dog, trains, vacuum cleaners, and children can be distracting to other participants.

7. Mobile Devices

In some cases, participants might connect via a mobile device (tablet or phone). In those cases, think about how to stabilize the camera and audio issues (outside has a great deal of noise).