

VIRTUAL TRAINING/MEETING ETIQUETTE

LOG IN EARLY

Don't wait until the last minute to log in. You will start off distracted, and you may forget to log in on time. Logging in five minutes ahead of time is good online meeting etiquette for attendees.

START WITH VIDEO ON

Video is a powerful way to maintain a human connection in a virtual setting. Starting a call with a bunch of blank screens is pretty cold and impersonal.



If you are uncomfortable sharing your background, apply a filter or a blur. "I didn't brush my hair" is not a valid excuse to keep your video off during a planned training session.

If connectivity or bandwidth is a problem, let everyone know you are going to turn your video off after saying hello.

TURN YOUR VIDEO OFF IF YOU NEED TO GET UP

Emergencies do occur — it's inevitable — and you will have to get up and excuse yourself for a moment from time to time (an unexpected bathroom break immediately comes to mind).

In those cases, virtual meeting etiquette all but demands turning off your video before you get up to deal with the situation. Then, when you return to the meeting (but before you turn your video on again) be sure that you're settled back in front of the camera as you were before you left.

Leaving and returning to the meeting this way is much less distracting to the other participants and provides a more seamless transition than walking out of the frame and back into it again with your camera still running.

MUTING

Staying on mute unless you have something to say lowers the fidelity of the conversation. It gives others fewer signals to interpret. Even picking up on a quick laugh or "mmhmm" is helpful to whoever is talking.

Mute yourself when not speaking if:

- It is a large call of ten or more people
- You hear a feedback echo
- You have noise in your background

DEALING WITH INTERRUPTIONS

If your cat, child, grandmother, or spouse walks into the screen, don't freak out. By this point, everyone's had this experience. It's just another reminder that we are all humans trying to figure this out.

SILENCE PHONES AND OTHER NOISES

Another valuable piece of etiquette advice is to silence phones and other noises that could occur and distract others.

You might not think about these noises during your normal day of working at home, but, should they occur while your microphone is on, they can cause others in the meeting to lose focus and forget what you or the speaker said.

Make it a point to silence such things as your:

- Mobile phone
- Landline phone
- TV
- Radio
- Computer notifications
- Clock alarms

CHAT SIDE CONVERSATIONS

Chat during meetings and training can be a fun way to augment the experience and make it more fun for everyone.

But it can feel disrespectful to the person leading. If you've ever been the leader, you know how hard it is to stay focused and keep folks engaged.

Here are a few chat guidelines:

- The chat should be available to everyone. Quick, private side conversations are bad online meeting etiquette.
- Don't make a comment that degrades someone.
- Be respectful of the meeting host.

RESIST THE URGE TO DO OTHER WORK

At some point you'll get the urge to check your messages, research a catch phrase, or get lost finding the perfect GIF response. Doing work while in a training means you won't be focused on either and both will suffer.

If you find yourself consistently distracted, here are a few things to try:

- Keep your hands in the video feed
- Take the call on a mobile device and shut down your laptop
- Always volunteer to share your screen for the group when required
- Change your atmosphere