

Member's Quarterly

Spring 2021 Edition

Perspective

Video Conferencing: It's Here to Stay

ZOOM etiquette: do's and don'ts of online meetings

We've all seen dogs, cats and kids bomb our Zoom calls and there have been more than a few embarrassing reveals on online meetings. One of the best recent Zoom moments was the Texas attorney who appeared during a hearing before a judge with a cat filter over his face. At least we're getting better at it and there are fewer 'you're muted' shout-outs in recent months. The pandemic may ebb and flow over the next year or so, but it's clear that video conferencing is here to stay for a long time.

That being the case, we thought we would bring you some tips for online meetings — some do's and don'ts that make up the etiquette of video conferencing.

For beginners, here are the basics. If it's your first time on a new program, download the platform or app before the meeting and review all the features that are available. There's lots of online video help if you need it. Then, show up early for your first meeting, at least 5 minutes before the meeting start time. Find a quiet space without interruptions or noise and one that has good lighting. You don't want to be a Zoom ghost. Make sure that the other participants can see your full head. There's nothing more annoying than talking to the top of someone's head.

During the meeting, mute your microphone when not talking and never talk over other participants. Wait to be recognized by the chair or host. Do not check your emails or text people while you are on the call. Treat it like a regular meeting. If something urgent comes up, turn off your video and take care of it. Then come back into the meeting as soon as possible.

Do dress for the meeting. You can wear your pajamas when working from home, but it's not a good look on Zoom. It makes you look unprofessional and that you may not be taking this business meeting seriously. People notice. Try to look into the camera when speaking. It gives the appearance that you are making eye contact with the other participants. Now that's the look you're going for.

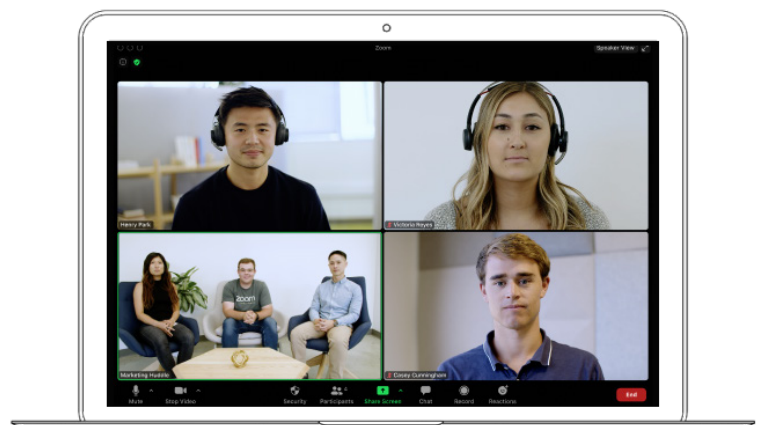
Don't eat during the meeting. Coffee and water are fine, but hold off on eating your soup or crunching your carrots until afterward. Make sure you mute yourself as required. If you think about doing something that might be considered private, don't make it public on a Zoom meeting with all of your work colleagues and your boss watching in horror.

Do try to stay focused — or at least look like you are. No one likes meetings and almost no one likes online meetings. Keep unnecessary conversations to a minimum. If you need to check in with another team



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member about something, send a chat message to get together privately later. If you are the meeting leader, only invite people who need to be there. Save everyone time and trouble by having a tight group who can get your business done as quickly and efficiently as possible. You can email others later with results or follow-ups from the meeting.

If you are the host, you should be the last one to leave a Zoom call. Just like the party at your house, wait until all the other guests have left, even those last couple of stragglers, before you turn out the lights. Thank everyone for participating and advise all the participants that you are going to close the meeting. That's their cue to hang up. You can leave the Zoom room open for a few minutes afterwards, but the official meeting is over and you too can go home or back to the kitchen for a snack.

One more piece of advice about video conferencing: Have a great Zoom call!

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