

12 TIPS TO ELEVATE YOUR VIRTUAL MEETING

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2020 and Our New Virtual Reality

Right now, our workforce must be forward-thinking, fiercely adaptive problem-solvers. With nearly all workplaces moving to remote operations for the foreseeable future to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, we're confronted with a seemingly formidable challenge: how do we keep projects moving forward using virtual meetings as a leading communication tool?

Making Virtual Meetings Work

Our current remote reality dictates a rapid dependence on virtual communication. A recent survey indicates people's biggest complaint with virtual meetings and teleconferencing is when two or more people speak at once; background noise is a close second. There is definitely an art to hosting a successful virtual meeting. Here are top tips to elevate your virtual meeting to produce a successful and rewarding experience:

1. Make your virtual meeting feel like an in-person meeting. Dress the part – yes this means you should brush your hair and put on pants. Part of dressing the part is feeling confident, so get dressed as if you were going to the office or a client meeting.
2. Practice with your virtual platform well in advance of your meeting. Ensure you understand the functionalities of the software. Set up a test run – even multiple test runs! Use your laptop rather than your phone to connect. Use a good microphone. Raise your webcam to eye level and look at the camera, not the screen. Create a professional setting with natural lighting if possible and a neutral backdrop.
3. Distribute a detailed agenda to participants ahead of the meeting.
4. Establish a singular leader for the call and announce her/him as the facilitator. Note: the facilitator is in charge, moves the agenda forward, and calls on participants to speak. Let her/him do their job.
5. Set expectations on your agenda by assigning agenda items and clear roles to participants to help prevent people talking at the same time.

ABOUT ELEVATE MARKETING ADVISORS

Elevate Marketing Advisors develops marketing and business development campaigns to invigorate your brand, differentiate your firm, and drive business to your bottom line so you stay focused on design and delivery of your discipline.

We are driven to help people and firms realize their beyond through relationship, advocacy, and an elevated client experience. We do this through a daily commitment to our guiding principles:

- Embrace Authenticity
- Reject Mediocrity
- Invest in Relationships
- Deliver with Intention
- Have Fun and Kick Ass!

12 Tips to Elevate Your Virtual Meeting, *continued*

6. Call in several minutes prior to the designated start time so you (the meeting organizer) are ready to go when the meeting is scheduled to start.
7. Mute your line when you are not talking so no background noise is heard. Nothing sounds more unprofessional than a crying baby or barking dog in the background. Use “hold” only if you know that your system does not play hold music during your absence.
8. In larger meetings or when you don’t know all participants well, announce yourself before speaking. State your name, company, and role.
9. Listen. Be present, pay attention, and take notes. DO NOT MULTI-TASK. You may miss out on something critical.
10. Speak slowly and clearly so you are understood. Bring energy and inflection to your voice so you are interesting and easy to listen to. This is virtual. Your voice is critical.
11. Practice being concise. This is not the time to ramble or tell long stories. Communicate clearly and on point.
12. As facilitator, recap and ask for questions periodically or when topics change to help keep your participants on track and on agenda.

Virtual meetings, when approached with foresight and intention, can be as productive as in-person meetings. When you come to the meeting prepared, organized, and with a clearly established agenda, you’re poised to capitalize on this communication tool – that will likely be more of a staple in our business lives than ever before.

For firms already shifting in-person interviews to virtual to meet the demands of clients, we’re here to help. Our presentation coaching team is ready to deploy virtually to coach your team.

For assistance and to inquire about our newest webinar: *Tear it Apart and Make it Better – Get the Most Out of Your Virtual Meetings* as well as coaching for virtual project interviews, contact Jen Newman (jen@elevatemarketingadvisors.com) or Dena Wyatt (dena@marketingevolutionsinc.com).