

DOs and DON'Ts for Virtual Presentations and Meetings

Many people are unaware of how they appear on camera. Here are some helpful tips to make sure you are showing proper respect to the audience and helping them focus on your brilliant ideas, instead of your distracting video feed.

Select an Appropriate Location

Locations, locations, locations! Some basic things to consider:

- Visual: You need a background free of clutter and including some personality – think solid colors and minimal artwork. You can use a pre-packaged background from your virtual meeting software, but only if it follows the same rule.
- Lighting: All lighting in the room should be located *behind the camera*. This may require you to rearrange the room! Turn off any lights located behind you, and shut any window shades to prevent light bleeding.
- Sound: Consider any noise that might arise that could disturb the meeting. If your dog likes to bark at a window next to your office, you may want to switch rooms.
- Connectivity: nothing is more important than making sure you have a strong wifi connection. Don't venture too far from your router.

Set Up Your Camera Properly

The wrong camera setup can ruin an otherwise great presentation.

- The camera should be set up straight in front of your face, directly aligned with your eyesight. If you are using a laptop on your desk, you likely will need to elevate the camera. We recommend using 3-inch yoga blocks for stability, but stacked books will do just as well.
- Your face should fill 2/3 of the screen. Viewers should be able to see from a few inches above your head to the top of your sternum.
- Make sure your face is appropriately lit. Remember to have *lights behind the camera* (not behind you!), and adjust the brightness/resolution of your camera as needed.

Be Professional

Make sure you're projecting the image you intend.

- Practice before you go live. Set up a test with a colleague to ensure your tech is working properly, there's no unexpected noise, and your background translates well to the screen.
- Remember good presentation techniques. Speak slowly and clearly. Don't move around too much. Watch your hand gestures and body language, including posture.
- Your attire should match the image you want to present. Wear business casual or nicer. Select solid colored clothes – but not white, black, or beige. Solid pastels are great.
- Choose your accessories carefully. And no baseball hats!

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- If you must use headphones, use earbuds – not headphones that cover your ears. For wired headphones, be mindful of when your microphone may be banging into your clothes, creating distracting friction noises.
 - Behave as if the event were live. Stay focused and continue looking directly into the camera even when you're not speaking. Lift the corners of your mouth to prevent looking bored. Don't look down at your phone or off in the distance when others are speaking.
 - Put your phone and computer on DO NOT DISTURB (DND) during the event. If you need, set a reminder to both enable DND before the event and disable it after.

Happy virtual conferencing!

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