

It's everyone's role to help make meetings count. Creating energy and engagement requires more effort in the virtual world. Get people involved and keep people engaged by sharing tasks, rotated regularly, for example: someone to keep an eye on the chat box and sharing that into the conversation; someone to ensure the technology is working for everyone (for example, breaking into smaller breakout spaces during the meeting); someone to keep track of time against the agenda; and even, someone to find a funny way to close the meeting.

Use this guide to help create virtual meetings that people genuinely want to be part of.



THE CONNECTOR

Create the right environment in line with the conversations you want to have.

TIPS:

Positive ENERGY:

Connect with people first before you dive into work.

- Check-in with people first and what's 'on top' for them for a whole of self perspective.
- Have an icebreaker eg: get people to share something quirky about themselves.
- Start a meeting 5-10 minutes early for people who want a social connection boost.

Clear EXPECTATIONS:

Ground rules allow everyone to know how they need to show up.

For example:

- **Be real** – video / webcam on
- **Be curious, open and honest**
- **Be present** – tune in and manage distractions within your control.
- **Be patient** and understanding of others with extra challenges (eg: kids at home, time zone issues)
- **Be heard** but not at the expense of others
- **Be prepared** and ready to contribute



THE FACILITATOR

Have valuable conversations that benefit everyone.

TIPS:

Shared AGENDA:

- Outline why people are there and what the objectives and expected outcomes are.

Right CONVERSATIONS

- Keep the conversation flowing, especially when there is disagreement.
- Call on people who aren't contributing.
- Encourage feedback via chat boxes, polls as well as actual conversations.
- Stand up if that helps your presence, energy and voice.
- Adapt your facilitation based on, for example, opening the conversation for ideas and opinions, stretching the conversation past the easy thinking, or encouraging positive conflict.

Clean PROCESS

- Acknowledge how decisions will be made upfront eg: you, me or we.
- Create the expectation that once a decision is made, people align and commit, even if they disagree. Complaining afterwards isn't helpful.



THE ENABLER

Align on next steps and expectations, and ensure people have what they need.

TIPS:

Instil ACCOUNTABILITY:

- Create a shared understanding for expectations on goals, actions, responsibilities, timeframes, and ways of working.
- Create a team / project / initiative 90 Day Plan to help prioritise actions and align on what progress looks like.
- Have a 'check out' process to make sure people leave in a good emotional head space.

SELF-REFLECTION

- Is the virtual meeting environment you're creating the one you want (eg: inclusive, safe and engaging?)
- Have you and others aligned on what a great virtual meeting looks/feels like and is there a feedback loop that helps everyone take responsibility for creating it as they want it?
- Does everyone know how to use the technology and have the set up they need?
- Is pre-work / pre-reading going out early enough to enable high quality conversations when you come together?

SELF-REFLECTION

- Are you shortening meetings and/or doing them differently to help keep people engaged, eg: having more conversations than presentations.
- Does everyone feel like they can contribute? Does everyone feel listened to? What might be getting in the way of people speaking up?
- What cues can you read to assess how the meeting is going? Are you as aware of these cues as you need to be?
- Are there conversations you or others are avoiding? What's the impact?
- Is your facilitation toolkit where it needs to be? Is your balance of talking and listening right?
- Are you leveraging the technology options available to have better meetings, eg: virtual flip charts, virtual break out rooms?
- Are you adapting your leadership style and voice for the virtual world?

SELF-REFLECTION

- Are you reminding people about the big picture why which can help keep the journey alive?
- Does your team charter need to adjust for virtual working?
- Are you adjusting your expectations in line with individual circumstances?
- Are you giving people the support, resources and tools they need to work remotely?
- Do you need new tools to track progress and ensure people follow through? Are more check-ins required for some people?
- Are you acknowledging people enough and finding reasons to celebrate?

SELF REFLECTION NOTES

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