

# Tips for an Effective Virtual Meeting

A successful virtual meeting depends on good planning and preparation.

## Participants

- Be on Time – A number of systems have to link up which takes time. Better to start that process before the official start time.
- Be mindful of your surroundings, both video and audio. If you are working from “home,” you will want to check what your world looks and sounds like from the point of view of the other attendees, facilitator and leader. Barking dogs, discussions with other occupants, distracting wall hangings, etc., should not be part of a business meeting and you will embarrass yourself.
- Use a headset. This is the easiest method to ensure some level of decent communication. The microphone and speaker are right there.
- Mute your microphone when you are not talking. This helps to keep background noise to a minimum. It is possible to mute the microphone in two places. You can push the microphone icon at the bottom of the meeting window and you will be in mute. The participant window will also show that you are muted. This is the preferred method. Depending on your phone or headset, you can also mute at the device. This may not be visible in the participant window.
- Make it a point to participate and don't plan to just listen in. You were invited to the meeting because your input is valued.
- Stay seated and stay present. It will be tempting to multitask, drift to other things and shift focus from the meeting at hand. It is somewhat annoying to listen to pounding on a keyboard as someone is speaking. Avoid this temptation. Being in the moment and being present will make a more meaningful meeting.

## Facilitator/Presenter

- Know your tools – WebEx is the current ITD standard for virtual conferencing. It has a number of capabilities other than connecting a group of people for a meeting (video conferencing). It has the ability to share all manner of content, it has a chat room function, and the capability to use polling for group input and associated analytics as well as white boarding.
- Have your material ready and an agenda for the meeting.
- Plan the meeting with specific opportunities to engage all attendees.
- Online polling, white boards, etc.
- Call on individuals as needed to ensure input
- It is very helpful to have a meeting proctor. This is a person that can answer or call attention to chat questions as well as managing the polling instead of having one person lead the meeting and attend to these meeting functions.
- Start the technology 5 minutes early. This gives the machinery the chance to create the connections, and gives those punctual folks the opportunity to login and be ready.