



eSCRIBE Best Practices – Attending a Video Conference

So you're all technically set to participate in your meeting remotely – Good job! That means you're about 80% of the way to having a great remote meeting.

What's the other 20%, you ask? Well, our team has assembled some industry best practices to help facilitate your remote meetings in the most efficient way possible with the most professional public output.

The following sections outline some key best practices for you to consider as you prepare for and attend your remote meetings.

Technical Considerations

Internet Connection

A good quality audio and video output is heavily reliant on your internet connection, so we always recommend doing a speed test and sending the results to your IT (or our experts if you need another opinion) if you have any concerns.

If you can, hardwire your computer into the internet as opposed to using a wireless/WiFi connection. Even though the platform will work well on WiFi, there is a higher chance of intermittent connection issues with WiFi which become more obvious when streaming video. The quality is best on a solid wired internet connection, so wire in when you can. Otherwise, just make sure you have a serviceable WiFi connection.

Also – make sure that others in your household are not performing high traffic activities on the internet while you're in your meeting. Activities such as attending a video conference, playing online video games, or streaming movies and shows can significantly impact the quality of your available connection.

If possible, having an alternative means for internet connectivity in case you get disconnected is recommended for live webcast events. While this isn't always feasible, it is strongly recommended to use the dial-in number to connect with your video conference, in case you have a dropped internet connection, you'll still be able to participate in the meeting with audio.

A/V hardware

You will want to make sure that the video on your computer is enabled as well as your audio. This can be using the camera and microphone built into your computer or external devices but you'll want to make sure they are connected and working properly. When possible, try to use a good quality camera and/or headset instead of your computer's built-in ones as the quality is even sharper with higher quality hardware.

It is essential to test your audio and video before your meeting!



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During the Meeting

Look at the Camera

When speaking, look at the camera. This takes a bit of getting used to since you want to look at the other participants faces on your screen, but try to look at the camera when you're talking. One idea is to add a sticker beside the camera to remind you where to look. This tactic will mimic the in-person feeling of eye contact for the viewer. It's important to gauge reactions by looking at the screen, but alternating that with looking at the camera makes the audience feel like you're really talking to them.

Adjust your camera if it is too low or high. Your camera should be at eye level. You should also be at least 2 feet back from your camera. Avoid leaning in as to not be too close. You'll want the camera to capture your chest up and for your body to be positioned in the centre of the video.

Courtesy

Muting your microphone when you are not speaking is crucial to a professional audio output! Your microphone is sensitive and will likely pick up any background noise, and each microphone that is 'open' (unmuted) the sound gets worse in the conversation. If you aren't going to be speaking for a period of time, keep muted, and remember to unmute before you speak. This gets easier as you get some practice, and everyone is in the same situation!

Another important consideration is to remember to speak slowly and enunciate properly, this is not only important for audio quality but also incredibly important if your organization is using closed captioning services! If speakers do not speak at an appropriate pace or do not enunciate clearly, the accuracy of the closed captioning output will suffer.

Try not to multi-task during the meeting and if you do, please mute yourself as your keyboard typing may be picked up on the meeting audio.

Even though you are likely at home in front of your computer, always remember that you are on video. Refrain from private behaviour, side conversations, and eating during your meeting.



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Your Environment

Clean up the space behind you and where possible try to have a simple background (a plain wall, a potted plant, or a bookshelf works perfectly).

Try not to wear the same colour as the wall behind you so you don't look like a floating head. A reality is that not everyone has a home office setup, depending on the video conference tool that you have, there might be options to blur your background, or impose an alternative background image.

Lighting is most important! Make sure you are facing a light source rather than having the light behind or beside you. Try different lights until you are happy that there are no shadows on your face, but also try not to have 'bright spots' either, by moving the light (or yourself) until you have a good balance. If you have a window behind you, shut the blinds. Be comfortable! You may be in this seat for some time, so find a comfortable spot, get a glass of water and close the door if possible, before the meeting starts to minimize interruptions.

Find a quiet space to meet, shut the door, and mute yourself when you are not speaking.