

# Virtual Meetings - Zoom Best Practices

## Follow these best practices to make the most of your Zoom meetings:

- **Use the video option:** Have your video on unless you are experiencing connection issues. Plan ahead so you can join the Zoom meeting in an environment that is conducive to being on camera. Video is crucial in building trust and engagement in virtual communication. Don't skip this step just because you're camera shy.
- **Dress for your audience:** Dress as if the meeting was taking place in-person. Business casual in person means business casual on Zoom. And that means dressing appropriately from head to toe – as you may need to unexpectedly get up and be in full view of the camera during the meeting.
- **Stage your video area:** Keep in mind that people aren't just seeing you, they're also seeing whatever the camera is pointed at behind you. Arrange it so that your background is uncluttered and professional.
- **More light is better:** Video quality is dramatically improved with more lighting. An extra nearby lamp is usually helpful. Make sure light is plentiful and in front of you or to the side, not behind you - being backlit makes you hard to see.
- **Be aware of the camera angle:** Adjust your camera to be at around eye level – it is the most flattering angle. Especially take note of the angle of your laptop screen if using the built-in camera.
- **Stay on mute if you're not talking:** Background noise is distracting and decreases the audio quality for all participants. If you aren't speaking at the moment, hit mute until you do.
- **Look into the camera:** If you're presenting or speaking to a group, looking into the camera will give the appearance of eye contact with other participants. If you need to look at the screen, try to keep your focus toward the top.
- **Don't eat during the meeting:** It can be uncomfortable watching other people eat - or listen to them chewing, for that matter. Hold off if you can. If not, ask if it is ok or consider turning off the video and audio and explain why.
- **Stay focused:** Everyone prefers meetings that are efficient and productive. Don't make Zoom meetings go longer than necessary. Stay on task and keep the agenda and discussions focused. It is hard to be productive when several people are talking at once or when context and questions have to be repeated for those who "zoned out".
- **Only invite people who need to be there:** Is there someone who should be looped into the info being shared, but won't actually have anything to contribute? Consider looping them in via email instead. Save them, and yourself, some hassle by not including people who aren't necessary.
- **Learn Zoom features:** As a meeting host there are many Zoom features, such as screen sharing, white board, breakout rooms, and polling that can increase active virtual participation. Learn and practice using these features to get the most out of meeting attendees.
- **The host should be the last one to leave:** If the host closes the meeting, then the meeting ends. To ensure no one gets cut off or loses a last-minute point, stick around until everyone leaves.
- **Practice makes perfect:** To increase your comfort and expertise with these tips consider hosting practice Zoom sessions with a couple of colleagues. You can give and receive feedback on your physical environment, camera angle, and use of Zoom features.

Want some other ideas on how to facilitate engaging, effective meetings? Contact a member of the **Organizational Effectiveness Team**: [James Donnelly](#); [Lisa Marella](#); or [Kevin McCaffrey](#).

See the Zoom Video Conferencing Intranet Page for more Zoom information:  
[http://intranet.connecticutchildrens.org/body\\_dept.cfm?id=3736&fr=true](http://intranet.connecticutchildrens.org/body_dept.cfm?id=3736&fr=true)

