



Virtual meetings

CAMERA, ACTION.

Our tips and ideas for video meetings

Most of us never really gave any thought to how we come across on camera. But then it was March 2020. Since the pandemic began, we meet more frequently through video conferencing than in person – and it's a real challenge to convince business associates or sell products and ideas through this medium. Today we're going to give you a few tips on presenting yourself successfully on a video call, and reveal what you need to know in terms of video etiquette.

Coming across professionally in a virtual meeting

+ Perfect framing

If you sit too close to the camera you'll appear slightly intimidating; too far away gives an impression of disinterest. (The microphone is also set up to work optimally when you're a certain distance from the screen. If it's too close to your mouth, the other meeting participants will hear every breath you take.) The picture should be framed to show your head and shoulders, along the lines of a classic portrait or close-up image setting. Attractive background and lighting are a good idea as well.

+ External microphone.

It's essential for the microphone to have good sound quality, because if the audio is clean and clear it comes across as more competent and immediate to the other participants. If you regularly have to give presentations in video conferences, it's definitely worth having an external microphone.

+ Look straight at the camera.

The same applies here: if you regularly take part in video conferences, it's worth getting an external video camera – and you should position it level with your eyes. Looking straight into the camera lens sends a signal that you're communicating at eye level.

+ Maintain eye contact.

This is one of the greatest challenges in video conferencing. Look into the camera lens as often as you can to establish eye contact with the other meeting participants, even if it feels odd at first. Stick a Post-It by the lens to help you look in the right place.

+ Adopt a proper posture.

Sit upright and make sure there's a slight gap between your arms and upper body. This will ensure that you come across as engaged and interested.

+ Appear friendly!

Abruptly freezing or fading out your smile because you're concentrating on finding the "Leave meeting" button doesn't leave a great final impression.



Rules for video conferencing

- + Check your tech ahead of the meeting.
- + Be on time.
- + Make sure all participants have access to the key documents.
- + Turn on the camera and make sure you won't be interrupted. That includes not bashing away on the keyboard at the same time – take notes by hand.
- + Good moderation makes all the difference:
- + If the meeting participants don't know each other, the moderator should introduce them individually.
- + Moderators should structure the meeting with a clear agenda and stop attention from drifting by asking regular questions or bringing the focus back to the main subject. Good moderation helps prevent monologues. Don't ignore anyone who wishes to speak. Putting hands up or a signal via the chat box can be useful here.

- + Present a tidy desktop.
- + Let other participants finish talking. That's one of the most important rules of etiquette in Germany. Incidentally the best way to deal with a monologue is to interrupt with a closed question relating to that subject.
- + Don't be busy with something else at the same time. The other participants will notice, it's irritating and on top of that not very polite.
- + Keep what you have to say – and the meeting itself – brief.
- + Give a short wrap-up, sticking to the main points, allocation of tasks and timing if relevant.

The chair for the perfect look

An office chair on which you can sit dynamically helps you appear involved in the video meeting and come across well. If you're sitting correctly, feel comfortable with your set-up and make sure you have an attractive background, you'll score points for likeability.

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