VIDEO CALL ETIQUETTES

Interviews, interaction and conferences are very common these days as they save the cost of a meeting personally. But for an effective video conferencing or interviews, the following things must be kept in mind -

Testing the Equipments

Do

To be adequately prepared for any meeting involving technology, it's important to test the equipment setup. Typically, there is a test process you can run through to ensure your app or browser interface are connecting properly to any attached equipment (camera, speakers, microphone, etc.). A test call confirms that you can see and hear users and they can hear and see you.

Also, it's good to be aware of your default video settings when joining a meeting. Some web conferencing tools are set to automatically join video to the conference. These default settings can generally be adjusted to meet the user's preference. However, if you are unable to adjust the settings within your tool, a post-it note strategically placed over your laptop's webcam can offer a simple solution to avoid potentially embarrassing situations.

Don't

Don't delay meeting start times and waste other people's time by not being prepared with the right devices and a good connection.

And, don't get caught on "candid camera." Chances are, we have all been in a meeting where someone was unaware their video feed was turned on. While the degree of potential humiliation can vary greatly here, depending on what is going on in the background, at the very least, unintended video footage can be disruptive to your meeting.

Gear Up with the Proper Equipment

Do

When joining a video conference individually, from a laptop or mobile device, make sure you are properly equipped with a headset or earbuds that contain a microphone as well as a mute button. In a group video conferencing situation, make sure the room has a high-quality sound system, output screen and projector, so no one has to strain their vision or hearing when collaborating on shared data.

Don't

Trying to use a laptop speaker and microphone to interact with participants instead of a dedicated audio system is a big video conferencing faux pas. When you join a video conference with just laptop speakers and mic, there is generally too much background noise and feedback for those on the other end of the call to hear you clearly. Not to mention the distraction you might be creating for those in cubicles or offices nearby.

Camera Positioning

Do

Be sure that your camera is properly positioned on the main monitor you will be using for the video conference. Make sure it's in a stable position and focused at your eye level. Doing so allows for more direct engagement with the other meeting participants. Also, be sure you have good lighting; natural side lighting is usually the best.

Don't

Don't allow your camera positioning to become a distraction to other participants on the call. A camera that is pointed too low on your body or pointed somewhere else in the room can be both distracting and unflattering. And without proper lighting, you may either be ghosted out (too much light from the wrong angle), or too dark to see if there is not enough light in the room.

Appearance

Do

When attending a video conference, the rule is to dress as if you were in the office. Doing so shows respect and professionalism to your peers and prospective clients. A lot of people feel that an advantage of working from home is that you can dress in sweats and a t-shirt or your comfiest pajamas. While some of the time that might be ok, this is not one of those times.

Don't

Don't forget that appearance is not limited just to you. Be aware of the condition of your surroundings. Messy piles of paper on your desk? Piles of laundry? Stack of dirty dishes? Anything else offensive or distracting behind you or in view of the camera? Let's be honest - to the people on the other end of the call, an untidy work area conveys a lack of professionalism and can cause a major distraction.

Limit the Amount of Multi-tasking

Do

Eliminate distractions and focus on the meeting. Turning off notifications, closing or minimizing running applications and muting cell phones, streaming radio, etc., are all basic etiquette rules.

Don't

We'll point out the obvious here: while we're all guilty of occasionally multitasking during audio and web conferences, in a video conference, everyone can see you. Responding to another email? We can see you. Checking your cell phone? We can see you doing that too.

Beyond general, work-related multitasking, eating and personal grooming are among the common offenses committed during the course of a video conference. While we could list thousands of activities that should be avoided, using equal parts common sense and common courtesy will go a long way here.