Virtual Meeting Tips

At some point you will find yourself participating in a virtual or online meeting. The suggestions below will help you navigate through it. When participating in virtual meetings, you should consider what you would do in a face-to-face meeting and do the same on camera. This is a guide only, each meeting will dictate your demeanor.

Prior to the Meeting

Host:

➢ Test the online platform in advance with several people.
➢ When sharing a presentation or slide show, test in advance.
➢ Include the link to the meeting platform in the invitation along with a brief description of how to access it.
➢ A few days before the meeting, send a reminder along with an agenda and the link.
➢ When you know there will be a vote taken, consider creating an online voting form or have members vote in the comment box.
➢ If there will be a speaker, meet with the speaker online prior to the meeting. This is especially true if you have never met the person.
➢ If the meeting will be recorded and saved for later retrieval, inform participants.
➢ If you anticipate hosting more online meetings, consider purchasing a camera and a ring light (ask your children).

Day of the Meeting

Housekeeping

Host:

➢ Arrive early and check the technology before the meeting begins. Have a Plan B in the event there are problems.
➢ Start the meeting on time.
➢ Introduce yourself. With a smaller group introduce each person or allow each person to acknowledge their presence. Describe the people participating in larger group settings.
➢ It is okay to make some small talk in advance - the weather is always safe.
➢ Consider having some type of timer to indicate how much time a speaker has remaining or to bring the group under control. This can be simply red, yellow and green sheets of paper with the time remaining on it or if colored paper is not available white sheets of paper with the time remaining typed on it.
➢ If the platform has mute capabilities for the audience, use it when necessary.
➢ When immediate feedback is necessary, use of the comment box.

Participants:

➢ Check your technology before joining the meeting.
➢ Arrive at least ten minutes before the meeting's start time.
➢ If you know you cannot stay through the meeting or have to excuse yourself for a brief period, inform the host in advance.

During the Meeting

Dress for the Occasion

Dress: Consider dressing as if it is a face-to-face meeting. After all, you might need to excuse yourself and you would not want participants see you without shoes or worse.

Make-up and Jewelry: If you wear make-up or jewelry during a face-to-face, do the same with virtual meetings; however, be sure to find the right pieces for the camera.

Participants:

➢ Mute your line until you are ready to speak. This is important because background noise might cancel out another participant's microphone.
➢ Leave your camera on during the meeting.
➢ When you have a comment, and the group is not muted, either raise your virtual hand or raise you hand on screen and wait for the host to acknowledge you.

Location

➢ Decide in advance the best spot for the meeting.
➢ Remove any distractions from your meeting space, this includes pets, personal items such as mail, even people not involved in the meeting.
➢ Remove anything that would be considered inappropriate.

Body Language and Nonverbal Communications

➢ Stay focused.
➢ Give your undivided attention - look into the camera.
➢ Have all items ready for the meeting - paper and pencil, items to display, etc.
➢ Limit hand motions while talking - this can be distracting.
➢ Do not multi-task.
➢ Do not talk with other people in the room.
➢ Do not be tempted to use the monitor as a mirror.
➢ Do not eat during the meeting.

End Meeting

Host:

➢ End on time.
➢ End on a positive note.
➢ Summarize actions required of the audience.
➢ Summarize any follow-up items required of you.

Participants:

➢ Submit required items before or by the due date.