

## WHY THIS MATTERS?

As we start to transition back to in-person connections such as meetings or team events, it's important to recognize not everyone will be able to attend at all times. It's key that we continue to treat co-workers with empathy and respect as we move to a hybrid approach.

## VIRTUAL MEETING ATTENDANCE

There are a variety of reasons a meeting participant may be attending virtually:

**Work from Home Arrangement:** The individual may have been approved to work from home.

**Illness or Injury:** The individual may be on a remote working arrangement due to illness or injury and/or recovery.

**Family Status:** The individual may be working remotely due to family status reasons, for example, school closures, daycare closures, child's bus cancellations, caretaker responsibilities due to illness or injury of a family member.

**Personal Matters:** Home emergencies such as flood or furnace outages.

## GUIDELINES

### 1. Participants

- If a participant needs to attend a meeting virtually, it is their responsibility to contact the meeting organizer in advance of the meeting and advise they will be attending the meeting virtually.
- It's the participant's responsibility to ensure their manager is aware of circumstances preventing them from attending in person.

### 2. Meeting Host/Organizer

- It is recommended that meetings have a virtual link available in case participants are unable to attend in person.
- Even if no one has asked, you are encouraged to be prepared for last minute unforeseen circumstances.
- Ensure all meeting materials are available electronically and shared prior to the meeting (if possible).
- During the meeting ensure virtual participants can hear/be heard and include them in discussions.
- Respect the participants privacy and please don't ask why virtual attendance is required.

### 3. Meeting Participants

- Do not speculate/question or make assumptions as to why someone is attending virtually.
- If you know the reason someone is attending virtually, do not discuss it with others.
- Remember to be inclusive regardless of work location.
- Be empathetic and compassionate, in the future, you may also need to attend virtually.

### 4. All Participants: Please refrain from saying things like:

- "Participant" is attending virtually because their child is sick
- We've had to make this a virtual meeting because of "participant."
- Why is "participant" not in person?
- We would have liked to have gone or done this, but couldn't because of "participant" and having to be virtual.
- I apologize for not starting this meeting on time or needing a minute to email out the materials but I had to adjust for virtual attendance.
- "Participant" is never here, what's the excuse this time?
- Let me guess "participant" is "not feeling well" again?

#### Instead:

- Welcome all participants, in person and virtual
- When you have participants attending virtually, allow them to introduce themselves and ensure they can hear/be heard
- Be aware of your body language and facial expressions, you don't want to project unintended negativity towards the virtual participants.

## MANAGING HYBRID MEETINGS

- During the meeting, ensure everyone has an equal opportunity to speak/participate.
- Encourage people to log in from their own laptop, even if they sit in the same room.
- Use the online tool, ex. Chat Box, Whiteboard, Annotate, Poll, Raise Hand etc. to encourage participation.
- If there is a breakout room setting, do NOT organize people in a meeting room (for those working from an office). Request everyone to participate from their own workspace to avoid echo and technical problems during discussions.

## WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Human Resources, Health, Safety and Environment (HRHSE) offers a range of options for you to learn more about leading and working in the hybrid workplace. Visit the HRHSE website for tip sheets, resources, and workshops:

Designing Team Meetings in a Hybrid Workplace

[Strategies and Practices for Leading Hybrid Work Teams](#)

[Creating a Workplace that Works: Learning and Working in Hybrid Teams Workshop Series](#)

## RESOURCES & REFERENCES

Managing a hybrid work environment does not mean learning a new skill set; in fact, the “rules” of running a great meeting have not changed much over the years. It does mean being more intentional about how you design and run your meetings to allow for a productive, positive, and engaged experience for all your team members.

Below are a few resources to sharpen "your leadership competencies around planning and executing productive team meetings, regardless of meeting type.

### Articles

- Frisch, Bob and Cary Greene. "What It Takes to Run a Great Hybrid Meeting." *Harvard Business Review*. 3 June 2021.
- CIPD "Top Tips for Hybrid Meetings." Retrieved 5 November 2021.
- CIPD. "Getting the Most from Remote Working: Guides." Retrieved 5 November 2021.
- Jay, Anthony. "How to Run a Meeting." *Harvard Business Review*. 54/2 (1976): 43-57
- Sanaghan, Patrick. "10 Tips to Improve Your Meetings." *Academic Impressions*. 15 November 2015.
- Rogelberg, Steven, PhD. "The Power of You to Truly Make Meeting Work." Ted video, 13:00.

### Videos

- Academic Impressions. *Creating Equitable and Inclusive Meetings*. 60 min
- Academic Impressions. *Leading Effective Virtual Meetings*. 62 min
- Grady, David. "How to Save the World (or at least yourself) from bad meetings." Ted video, 6:32 min.

### Books

- HBR Guide Making Every Meeting Matter*. Harvard Business Review Guides. 2016
- Reed, Karin and Joseph A. Allen. *Suddenly Hybrid: Managing the Modern Meeting*. Wiley, 2022

Questions? Contact us at: [org.learning@ualberta.ca](mailto:org.learning@ualberta.ca)

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