



AD HOC CLEAN ENERGY POLICY TASK FORCE

Internet Collaboration Tools – Good Habits for Effective Virtual Meetings

A successful virtual meeting requires participants to be diligent about several behaviors. Accepting responsibility for and adhering to the following practices will help ensure a productive meeting and engaged participation.



Respond to meeting notices

Make sure meeting organizers are notified of who will or will not be attending. This way you won't keep attendees waiting to join the meeting. If a participant is only planning to attend a portion of the meeting, make sure the organizers know.



Arrive early

Arrive at, log into, or call in to the meeting early to ensure that all software and connections are working correctly. Watch user friendly overview video on virtual meetings to help familiarize yourself with the meeting technology.



Limit background noise

Mute phones unless speaking. Be aware of background noises (heavy breathing, typing, pets, children, traffic, etc.) interferes with another participants' ability to hear clearly or can overshadow the participant speaking. When unmuted and preparing to speak, please avoid rustling papers, eating, typing loudly, and all side bar conversations so that virtual attendees can hear clearly.



Identify yourself

Knowing who is participating and a meeting and who is speaking at any one time is critical to a successful meeting. Participants should identify themselves when joining a virtual meeting. In a virtual meeting, avoid making participants guess who is speaking by always identifying yourself when speaking.



Avoid multitasking

We know you are busy and have other priorities. In a "connected" world it is hard to keep participants from checking their email or otherwise multi-tasking even when they are sitting at the table. Participants should be responsible for giving the meeting their full attention. Turn off cell phones, resist checking e-mail, and stay with the meeting.



Speak clearly

Virtual attendees do not have access to body language and other non-verbal cues to help determine intent, meaning, interest or agreement. Speakers should speak slowly, clearly. Be as explicit about thoughts, opinions and feelings as possible. The only way others can know a virtual attendee's stance on something is if the attendee is very clear about verbalizing those opinions.



Don't let silence be taken for approval if that isn't the case

Speakers should pause often to allow others the chance to break in to ask questions or voice their opinion. Try not to speak while others are talking and avoid interrupting speakers. Ask for clarification on any point or issue that isn't clear due to issues with sound or lack of face-to-face feedback.



Be visual

Use your video camera to help create a life like meeting. We will get to know each other until we can safely meet face to face.



Be polite

Good manners are especially important as people work to overcome some of the challenges of meeting virtually. Remember that virtual attendees cannot see body language, so speakers need to be mindful of how attitudes come across without visual cues.



Make your presence known

Sometimes the chair or facilitator of a meeting with virtual attendees seems to forget about those who are not physically present. Most of the time politeness dictates that you would not interrupt a speaker or try to break into a conversation or presentation. But, if you are to participate effectively from your remote station, sometimes you must assert yourself.

If the speaker begins to fade out it is your responsibility to break in and ask for a remedy. If you want to ask a question or make a comment and there is no other way to indicate – you need to find a place to break in to and ask to be put into the cue for comments or questions. Don't sit quietly on the phone and then complain later that you were not given a chance to speak.



Be Prepared

Arrive at the meeting prepared and ready to engage. Review all advance material before the meeting. Ask questions about advance material or lack thereof before the meeting date. Keep contact information of staff support person nearby in case you have a problem joining the meeting or need to ask a question about a document received but do not want to interrupt the meeting. **The Staff Support Person is David Ingram at david.ingram@wilmingtonnc.gov or mobile 517.289.9804.**



Tutorial Videos

- 1) Animated Video 2.38 minutes: VIRTUAL MEETING NETIQUETTE: PARTICIPANTS TIPS, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UX3lsK0SKfM>
- 2) Instructional Video 16.28 minutes: Zoom Basics Tutorial - Participant View - Whiteboard, Breakout room, Screen sharing <https://youtu.be/Hd3fH3h6V00>
- 3) Animated Video 1.38 minutes: Video Conferencing Etiquette: The Do's and Don'ts <https://youtu.be/21cdJuV-WvQ>
- 4) Instructional Video 1.54 minutes: Online Netiquette with Zoom and Microsoft Meet Now <https://youtu.be/IYU3VxpJiJ0>

(ADAPTED FROM SAE INTERNATIONAL VIRTUAL MEETING BEST PRACTICES GUIDE)