

Good Camera Shots

You need to pay some attention to the way you look in a videoconference. Be aware that you are being seen on a television monitor - without falling into the 'Hollywood syndrome'. Following are some general techniques that should be followed.

Camera shots

- For an individual participant the best shot for the screen is from the waist up. If you are seated at a table you may want to keep the table top just out of camera shot – particularly if it is strewn with papers and objects.
- Your eyes should be one-third from the top of the screen.
- Your body should be in the centre of the screen.
- Allow some room around your body - if you are too close to the top or sides of the screen you may lean out of view.
- Long/wide shots can be used to show the entire group but should only be used to establish the environment. When someone talks they should be seen in a closer shot.
- Close ups may be overwhelming. They make facial expressions seem very large. This could be a disadvantage to you by conveying messages you don't really want to convey. However, you can use this shot to emphasise a point or indicate authority or concern.
- Use the system pre-sets rather than moving the camera around the room – set these before you join the videoconference.
- Avoid background clutter - this can be very distracting and can cause a poorer quality picture.

Using the camera

- A well set up videoconference room will have the camera positioned directly above the screen. If you look at the person on screen you appear to be looking straight at them.
- There is usually no need to stare at the camera. However, if you want to make a strong point, this will look stronger if you look directly at the camera rather than just at the screen.
- Try not to shift your gaze about the room - on screen this looks like you are avoiding people at the other sites. The same applies to constantly looking down at notes on a table.
- Small actions look large on a television screen eg shuffling, looking away from the camera, fidgeting with hands, ears, pencils etc are distracting and may indicate feelings you don't want to convey. You don't need to sit like a statue, but avoid large swaying movements.

Dress

- Normal business clothing should be fine.
- Wear pastel coloured clothes in preference to white.
- Don't wear overly detailed patterns (eg stripes, checks and florals) or bright, flashy jewellery that can reflect light. These can be distracting and may cause picture break-up if you're not using HD videoconferencing.
- Wear clothing suitable for the occasion eg a suit will convey formality; casual clothes convey a more relaxed atmosphere.
- Be careful with low-cut tops – especially if the camera is mounted higher than your chest area!