

Meeting Tips

A videoconference meeting is no different from any other meeting - it requires careful planning and organisation, good meeting management skills, clear communication, ground rules and techniques that encourage participation and feedback. The following will help to ensure an effective videoconference meeting.

- Check the room layout of the videoconference site to make sure that it is suitable for your requirements. Discuss these requirements with the videoconference site co-ordinator and arrange changes if necessary.
- Test all equipment and links. Know who to contact if you have technical problems during the videoconference. Ensure that all other participants know who to contact.
- All participants should receive advance copies of any relevant material eg reports, figures. Don't waste valuable time during the videoconference reading material that could have been read beforehand. An agenda should be prepared and forwarded prior to the videoconference.
- If participants are to prepare a report or presentation they should be advised of this beforehand. Ensure they know how to present effectively via videoconference (refer to *Presenter Tips*). Ensure they forward copies of reference materials to all other participants.
- Participants should be advised of the necessary equipment and documents that they should bring to the meeting.
- Arrive early and set up camera pre-sets:
 - close up of the chairperson
 - close up of anyone who will be presenting
 - groups of 2-5 people depending on how many pre-sets your system allows.
- Mute your microphone before you join the videoconference – don't forget to unmute when you speak. Don't discuss people or issues while you are waiting for the call to connect or disconnect – you never know just when the connection is made or ended!
- The chairperson's role in a videoconference is to assume leadership and direct proceedings:
 - initiate the roll call
 - ensure first time users are comfortable with the setting
 - establish videoconference etiquette
 - clarify the meeting objective
 - set and follow the agenda in a timely fashion
- If the meeting is a multipoint videoconference the chairperson should:
 - establish a system for interruptions eg call your name and site location
 - not allow one person or group to dominate – interact frequently with all sites
 - solicit participation from those who are not contributing eg ask a direct question or name a person and ask for a comment
 - not allow 'we/they' situations to develop as they will hinder useful interaction
- If fully involved with directing the meeting the chairperson may need assistance in operating the keypad/remote control. Delegate this as a special role for another participant or, prior to the meeting, arrange for the videoconference site co-ordinator to provide assistance.
- If you wish to make a recording of the videoconference, ensure that you have permission from all participants to do this.
- Finish early if necessary - don't use time needlessly. You can arrange a videoconference for another time or arrange to send information to the participants before progressing further.