

Best Practices for a Successful Online Meeting

With Zoom, a successful video conference can be just a few mouse clicks away, but there is always room for improvement! Check out our tips below on how to avoid online meeting hiccups and make sure that your video conference is a success!

What do I need?

- 1) **A headset.** You might think they look a little strange, but besides an internet connection, there is no more important factor in any conference than audio quality. When you start speaking, the last thing you want to hear is your own voice talking back to you. If you can't get your hands on a headset, at least use a pair of headphones to eliminate that dreaded echo. Your fellow participants will thank you.
- 2) **A webcam.** It isn't much of a video call if your fellow participants can't see you! Quality webcams are inexpensive and can be purchased at almost any electronics store or online. Most laptops come with them. Webcams almost always have a microphone embedded.
- 3) **A reliable Internet connection.** Your network connection is everything. Wired connections are preferred, but strong wireless connections are fine too— just maybe not the public WiFi at your local coffee shop. Recommended speeds for a group video call are 3 mbps upload, 3 mbps download.
- 4) **A good computer.** This one is pretty obvious. Everything you see in a video conference is put together through a process called video rendering which takes a lot of processing power. While you don't need the absolute latest and greatest hardware, in the era of HD video your old laptop from 2005 just won't cut it. **Minimum** computer requirements are a 2Ghz dual core processor and 4Gb of RAM.



What do I do?

- 1) **Find a quiet place.** Remember that microphones can pick up an awful lot! That corner seat at the coffee shop might seem quiet to you, but the whole meeting might be listening to every chair squeak.
- 2) **Mute your microphone when you're not speaking.** If you're engaged in the conversation, you'll want to keep that microphone on so you can speak comfortably, but if you're not speaking for extended periods, eliminate the chance of audio echo by remembering to mute!
- 3) **No windows!** It might be a beautiful day outside, but in this case it's better to tell than to show. Sitting in front of a window sends your camera's backlight compensation into overdrive as it battles the sun to capture an image. The sun always wins and you'll end up looking like a shadow. Remember it's fine sit by the window, just don't point your camera there!
- 4) **Lights... Camera...** Lighting is a big deal in any video call. Don't hide yourself in the shadows or your camera won't pick you up! If it's a bit overcast outside, or nighttime, turn the lights in the room on—just make sure that the light source is above or behind the camera!
- 5) **Tidy up!** Optional, but remember you are on video! The whole meeting doesn't need to see your dirty laundry.
- 6) **Test first!** Before you start the meeting, go into the settings menu and make sure you test out your microphone and can see yourself on the video tab!

If you're having trouble with hosting or participating in a video call, get in touch with UIT by emailing askit@yorku.ca so we can help you out!