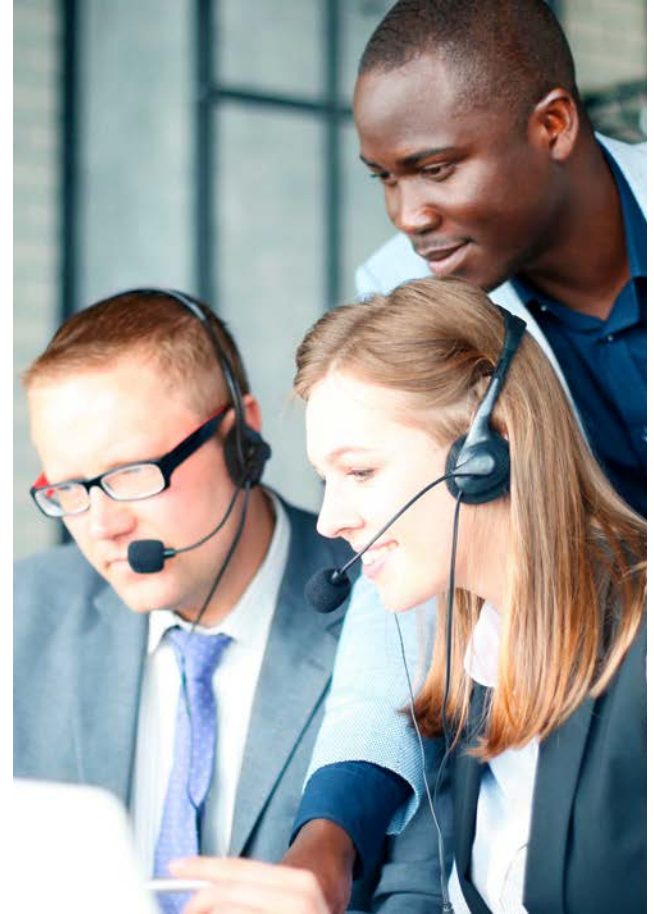


Guide to Successful Virtual Meetings

– focus web conferencing

Virtual meetings

- Virtual meeting is a collective term for real-time meetings at a distance using web, video, and audio conferencing. This guide focuses mainly on web conferencing.
- Virtual meetings can be a complement to or replace face-to-face (F2F) meetings. For some meetings, F2F is the best option. Both types of meetings are part of a good meeting culture.




This Guide to Successful Virtual Meetings

- Is intended to be used by anyone in the UN and can be distributed through IT, HR and all other departments interested in an efficient and sustainable meeting culture.
- Gives advise and tips to both those managing virtual meetings and those attending.

Many benefits with virtual meetings

- **Reduced environmental and climate impact** – with reduced travelling
- **Improved collaboration** – easier to involve busy and remote participants
- **Better productivity/economy** – reduced travel time/costs, improved project efficiency
- **Better work-life balance** – less time away from family because of travelling
- **Better gender equality** – business travelling is traditionally primarily a male activity
- **Higher accessibility** – less dependent on time and physical location
- **Strengthen regional development** – improving access in remote areas
- **Emergency preparedness** – meetings possible when travelling is not an option



1 Set-up 2 Preparation
3 Meeting 4 Follow-up



The Set-up

*Get the
infrastructure
in place*

The Set-up – part A

- Choose a meeting tool: Skype, Zoom, etc.
- Use a headset, preferably with a USB plug for best sound quality. Alternatively use a conference unit (e.g. Jabra).
- Use a camera, built-in or external. Video contributes to the social presence and significantly improves the interaction in the meeting.
- If possible, choose a network cable connection instead of WiFi. This usually results in a more reliable connection.



The Set-up – part B

- Use separate computers and avoid sitting in the same room as other participants in the same meeting.
- Place the camera at eye level in front of you and arrange so that your eyes are on the top half of the screen.
- Have a light source in front of you, and avoid having strong light behind you (e.g. a window or a lamp).





The Preparation

*What to do before
the meeting starts*

The Preparation – part A

- Make sure that:
 - The right people are invited and that they know why they are invited.
 - The meeting purpose is clearly defined.
- Assign someone (maybe yourself) to moderate the meeting – more important than in face-to-face meetings.
- Consider appointing a facilitator/side-kick for larger and more complex meetings. This will help you keep track of chat-discussions, etc.



The Preparation – part B

- When scheduling, keep in mind participants may be in different time zones.
- Send out an invitation with an agenda and meeting details well in advance:
 - Use calendar invitation (e.g. Outlook)
 - Give the participants clear instructions on how to join the meeting.
- Offer first-time users to test in advance, to check the connection and their equipment (at least one day before the meeting).



The Preparation – part C

- Encourage the participants to join 10-15 minutes prior to the meeting.
- Support the participants:
 - Check that they use the right microphone, avoid breathing-noise.
 - Try cameras and adjust placing and light, if needed.
 - Chit-chat and drink coffee. This will make the participants feel at ease.



3

The Meeting

Let's be productive

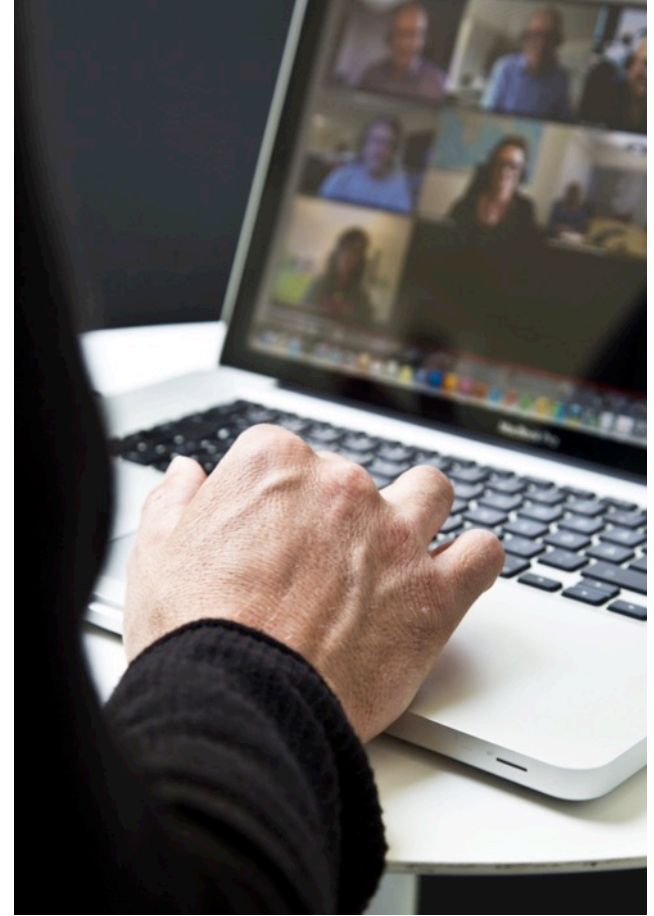
The Meeting – part A

- Start the meeting by summarizing the purpose and going over the agenda. Let the participants introduce themselves.
- Turn camera on (if possible) and look into the camera when you speak.
- If the connection is slow, turn camera off.
- In meetings without video, announce who is talking.
- When using video, encourage participants to physically raise a hand when they want to speak.



The Meeting – part B

- Use the chat function for enhanced interaction: questions, comments, sharing links, etc.
- Use the screen sharing function to show presentations, web pages, your desktop, etc.
- Use poll questions to collect opinions and engage participants.
- Mute the microphone during other participants' presentations to avoid background noise.
- Keep track of who is in attendance and if someone leaves/falls out of the meeting.



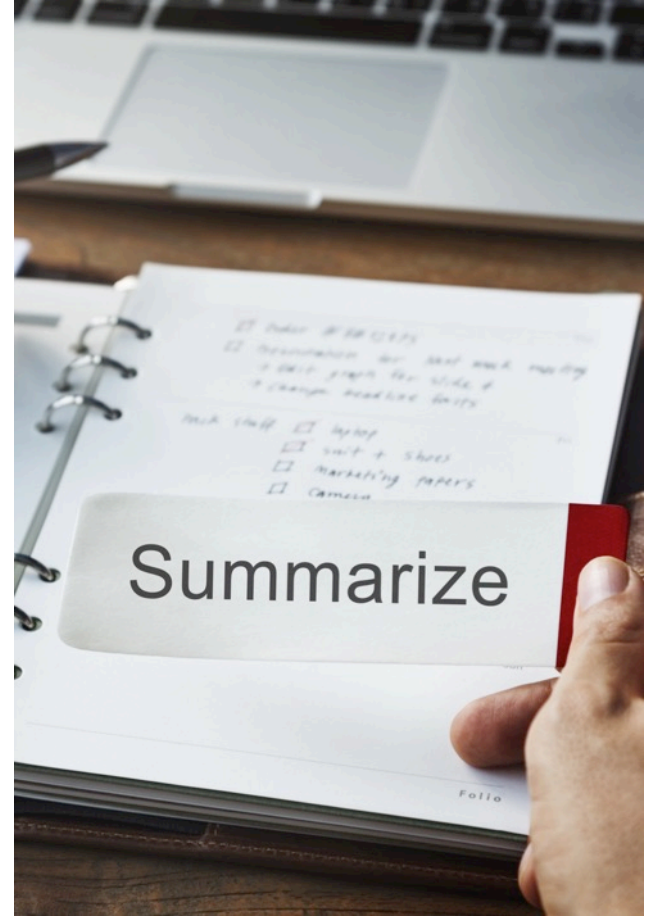
The Meeting – part C

- Take time to encourage participants to actively engage in the meeting, through speaking and/or chatting.
- Trigger interactivity by asking participants to answer questions or to comment on what you are discussing.
- During longer meetings, schedule in coffee breaks and initiate small talk during the breaks.



The Meeting – part D

- At the end, summarize:
 - Whether the purpose of the meeting was achieved.
 - What decisions have been made.
 - Who have been assigned tasks.
- Finish the meeting on time. If it looks like the meeting might run over, inform participants when it is likely to finish.



The Meeting – part E

- Additional guidance to the moderator (and side-kick when applicable):
 - Virtual meetings benefit from good moderation. All meetings do but here shortcomings become more evident.
 - Set the right mood. Obviously this depends of what kind of meeting it is, but it is often productive if we also enjoy participating.



The Follow-up

*Virtual meetings
offers improved
documentation options*

The Follow-up – part A

- Copy or e-mail the chat to yourself.
Use for meeting minutes and/or Q & A.
- Distribute documentation to the participants, e.g.:
 - Meeting minutes
 - Presentations
 - Recordings
 - Q & A:s



The Follow-up – part B

- Maintain a constructive interaction between meetings.
- Set a date by which to follow up on meeting outcomes.



The **Guide to Successful Virtual Meetings** consists of four parts:

- This presentation (pdf)
- One-page summary (pdf)
- 12 success factors to share with participants (pdf)
- Benefits and Successful Approaches to Virtual/Remote Meetings – a presentation with speaking notes by Dr. Peter Arnfalk, Lund University & REMM and Pontus Grönvall, Stormen Communication & REMM (PPT)

The **Guide to Successful Virtual Meetings** has been compiled by the United Nations Environment Programme, in collaboration with the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency and the REMM project (remm.se), run by the Swedish Transport Administration.

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