



POLISHED PRESENTATION SKILLS WILL MAKE YOU A VIDEO STAR

A video meeting is just like a live meeting — almost. If you're used to conducting live presentations, you are already well on your way to becoming an effective video communicator. The techniques that ensure powerful live presentations and dynamic meetings also work for video communication.

However, video meetings and presentations do require some minor adjustments. Here are a few tips to keep in mind.

- 1. Be more than a talking head.** Your video system gives you the ability to share multimedia source materials such as video clips, Web sites, spreadsheets and other presentations. Taking advantage of this ability to communicate visual information will make your video meetings more engaging and effective.
- 2. Look 'em in the eye.** Eye contact is important in any presentation. In a video environment, eye contact comes from looking toward the camera — not the display. Make certain that your camera is positioned as close as possible to the top center of your video display. This will give the impression of strong eye contact, and help to build trust and understanding among your participants.
- 3. Speak up.** If you mumble and cannot be heard by the person seated next to you, the people on the other end will also have a problem hearing you.
- 4. You're in the spotlight.** Cameras and video displays tend to make everything "bigger." Nervous habits or little recurrent gestures will be magnified and a distraction to participants on the other end. Try not to rock, sway or fidget with paper or pens. Remember to relax. A video meeting is like any other meeting, except it includes people who are not physically present in your room.
- 5. The camera is always paying attention.** When you are connected in a video call, the camera and microphone will faithfully pick up all images and words. Smart remarks, quips and asides, or demeaning gestures such as rolling eyes, will be greatly amplified at the far end. You should assume that the other meeting participants can hear and see everything, even when the camera is not pointed in your direction.



HELPFUL HINT

Be sure to speak to, make eye contact with and engage all parties on your call.

6. **Cede the floor.** Secondhand noise is distracting and makes it hard to hear other speakers clearly. So mute the microphone on your side when not speaking. This keeps coughing, rustling papers and other noise from drowning out the speaker.
7. **You're not on TV.** A video conference is two-way communication — unlike television, which is passive and one-way. Be sure to build in opportunities to verbally engage the participants at the far end. Vary your source materials and provide visually interesting items that will elicit responses.
8. **Play to the crowd.** When you're in the middle of a presentation, it can be easy to forget that you are not just presenting to the people in your room but also to the participants at the far end. Be sure to speak to, make eye contact with and engage all parties on your call.
9. **Testing 1-2-3.** Be sure to test your system and source materials prior to your meeting. Do not assume that because the systems worked well in one type of connection, they will work for every connection. You may be connecting to a dissimilar and less capable system or into an unstable network — this may result in small difficulties that need to be worked out ahead of time.

Conducting Powerful Meetings

- Identify your goals for the presentation or meeting.
- Know who your audience is and what they want.
- Prepare an introductory overview (for a presentation) or agenda (for a meeting). Develop a conclusion to reiterate presentation points or confirm meeting decisions.
- Rehearse your presentation ahead of time.
- Don't just read your presentation. Look up from your materials every 5 to 10 seconds.
- Vary the volume and rate of your speech. Avoid a monotone.
- Allow time for Q&A.