

Making the Most of Virtual Meetings

Begin and Finish Well

Do a check in. Make it simple. Make it personal. Help people be present. How are you doing *today*? What has been one source of joy for you over the last 24 hours? And do a check out. It brings a sense of closure.

Design for Humans

Try having everyone participate by video. Give breaks. Be kind. Be curious. Be patient with background intrusions. Practice comfort with initial silence after a question.

Stoke the Energy

Make use of round-robins to engage everyone. Use small-group breakouts to boost comfort. Encourage and model non-verbal responses. Talk with your hands.

Make Friends with Technology

Try gallery view to see the whole group. Have people generate ideas using the chat function. Use the breakout groups for small brainstorms. Encourage playfulness with screen names and virtual backgrounds.

Read the Room

Pause to tap the wisdom of the group. Reading a virtual room can be harder than a real one, so sometimes you have to ask. Go where the group's energy is. Don't hesitate to make mid-course corrections. Use what you observe to redirect the flow and say why.

Embrace the Change

Approach virtual meetings like in-person meetings, only you're on video. Extend grace to folks feeling exhausted after multiple virtual meetings in one day. Welcome the advantages of virtual—a picture of the whole group, a different kind of listening, bringing the human in.

Prepare to Be Flexible

Use an agenda to create a reassuring structure for participants. Remind them you'll adjust to the flow of the conversation. Be clear about purpose at the outset: Generating ideas? Making decisions? Collecting feedback?

