Zoom Meeting Etiquette
Guidance for Supervisors during the COVID-19 situation

We are all adjusting to the current reality of managing a remote workforce and trying as much as possible to conduct business as usual during unusual times. Many of us are utilizing video conferencing through Zoom for team, 1x1, or other group meetings. We have heard from many employees that video conferencing has been extremely helpful in enabling our ability to connect with and “see” our colleagues face-to-face during meetings, in reducing feelings of isolation, and in enhancing communication by allowing us to see non-verbal communication/body language.

With all the benefits of videoconferencing, video meeting conveners and managers should also be sensitive and flexible with their participants and employees who may not feel comfortable, at all times, with having their video displayed during a meeting for a variety of reasons, for example:

- Some remote workers during this time may be juggling children who are home-schooling due to governmental directives or closed child-care facilities, or may have pets in the background and may prefer not to inadvertently display their children or other personal background images that may be distracting;
- Some participants may not be feeling at their best, and while not too sick to work may feel uncomfortable participating by live video image;
- Some may feel a level of discomfort or a lack of privacy in displaying their home workspaces that they are also sharing with other family members;
- Employees balancing work and home meetings may also be using lunch time to attend to children or other matters, or may be having lunch meetings during zoom calls and wish to turn off their video while eating;
- Some participants may have internet challenges and low bandwidth with other competing connections in their homes, making video participation challenging.

As managers, our goal should be supporting our remote workers, particularly in this unusual time where many are working in less than ideal circumstances and acclimating to new home workspaces. We should strive to remove as many barriers as possible for employees to participate and contribute as they are able. As such, HR offers the following guidance to managers in communicating expectations to employees and participants in video meetings:

- Managers can prefer and even strongly encourage participation with video on, while at the same time remaining flexible and encouraging employees to participate as they are most comfortable given their current circumstances.
- Managers can further assist employees’ participation by:
  - Encouraging employees to use a professionally appropriate virtual background. This may also help improve connections with less bandwidth, and helps maintains employee privacy of their home spaces.
  - Reminding all participants to mute themselves unless they are speaking
  - Asking employees to ensure that they have a professional photo in their settings to display when their video is off; and that they have edited their zoom account to display their name.
- Encouraging employees to spend some work time participating in Zoom training and availing themselves of the [Zoom support resources](#) through ITC.
- For larger meetings, meeting conveners can utilize the hand raising and other [non-verbal feedback](#) features within Zoom to control participation and ensure all have an opportunity to be heard.
- Your [HR Consultants](#) are also available for any particular questions you may have in managing and communicating expectations for remote workers.

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