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THREE TIPS FOR BETTER VIDEO CONFERENCING

How to Look Like a Pro



TECH TIPS

By Kelly McNeil, TechBldrs, Inc.

Sitting in front of a webcam for hours a week is now normal (both for business meetings and personal calls, like virtually celebrating someone's birthday). Making a good impression during a video call is important, which means figuring out how to appear presentable on your colleagues' laptop screens, and learning the importance of camera angles, a good internet connection, and clear, understandable audio.

Want to master video conferencing? Here are our three tips to help you video call like the professional you are:

1. Don't rely on WiFi

An ethernet internet connection — aka a wired internet connection — is always better than WiFi. It's more stable, more reliable, and you won't have to worry about your signal strength. If you're connected to the internet via ethernet, your video call won't be interrupted by WiFi interference (like other devices using the same WiFi signal, or microwaves), which will minimize any chance at audio or video distortions during your call.

2. Audio is more important than video

You can look like a million bucks during a video call, but if no one can hear you or understand you when you're speaking then it doesn't matter. Make sure you have a good quality microphone and are set up for your call in a place with minimal background noises that could distract from you when you're speaking. A good microphone will decrease echo

and reverb and be noise-cancelling; we recommend the Blue Snowflake or Blue Yeti, or a Plantronics Voyager 5200 if you're looking for something in-ear.

3. Know how you look - and make sure you look good!

Preparation is important. You don't want to join a video call and immediately use your webcam as a mirror to make adjustments to your hair, lighting, or background. That's why it's important to know that you're set up for success ahead of time. How?

- **Place your camera at eye-level:**

People want to feel like they're talking to you, not your chin. You want to make sure your webcam- or your computer, if you're using a built-in camera- is at eye-level or a little higher and that you're in the center of the frame so you can avoid an unflattering camera angle (and you're not forcing people to look up your nose when you speak). You can easily give your laptop a little lift by stacking some books under it.

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TECH TIPS

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- **Light your face well:** Front-facing light allows everyone on a call with you to see you. Being well-lit helps you appear presentable, so make sure that you have either a strong source of natural light or a lamp or ring light behind your computer, facing you. It's important that the light is hitting your face straight-on, since being lit from behind can reduce you to a dark silhouetted blob on camera.
 - **Don't move around with your camera:** Once you're settled in for a video call, don't get up and walk around with your camera while it's on. It's a great way to give everyone on the call with you motion sickness, and an accidental tour of the inside of your house. In short, it's unprofessional and distracting. If you need to move, make sure you turn your camera off while you do so- and don't forget to turn it back on once you're settled.
 - **Choose the right background:** Our homes may be inherently less equipped for professional meetings than our offices, but there are better places in your house to take a call than others. Try to make sure your background is uncluttered and clean, and doesn't accidentally expose a sink full of dirty dishes or a pile of laundry that still needs to be put away.
- Using these tips, you're better equipped to present yourself in a professional light next time you hop into Teams, Zooms, or Google Meet for a video call. Being "good" at video conferencing is an important skill, especially now, when all your clients, co-workers, and friends see of you is your face on their computer screen. So start practicing!
- Still have questions? Want to know what else you can do to master the WFH environment? Call us at 610.601.8017 for advice or for a free employee phishing test, or check out our blog at www.TechBldrs.com/blog for more tips!

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