⚒ UCI Work Reimagined Leadership Workshop

Guide to Effective Remote & Hybrid Team Meetings

Moving into a remote environment, people are faced with new challenges when it comes to ensuring that meetings are effective. Spending hours on the other side of the screen is challenging and it can cause what many researchers started coining as "Zoom fatigue".

Your Next Meeting:
To ensure you are participating in meetings effectively in a remote environment, follow the 5 pieces of advice below. For **your next meeting,** prepare by reflecting on the ideas in bold and contribute to their implementation and support them being implemented.

1. Show your face

- **Keep your video on as much as possible**: Human connection is critical to success at work and life, so make sure your partners can see you. A quick smile, bit of laughter or even the sight of a co-worker's dog can help to create the connection that is needed when working remotely.

- **Embrace the change:** We are all going through this together, so everyone is working remotely. Our clients, our teams, our partners. Don't lose sight of that and take some time each meeting to check in with your colleagues.
Reserving 5 minutes for "hey, how are you handling things?" conversations can be really powerful.

2. Did You Say Something?

- **Audio quality is critical when joining virtual meetings**: Make the effort to sound good to your partners, and care enough to hear what they have to say by using a headset, earbuds or microphone. Sometimes people shout into their laptop microphones and it can create a sense of fight or flight, causing unwanted and unnecessary stress.

- **Background noise is distracting, so block it out:** If you aren't speaking, mute your line. While your peers understand that you may be having to manage many moving pieces when working remotely, your sidebar conversation with your teenager disrupts the entire meeting. You wouldn't pick up a phone and talk during a meeting in a conference room, so try to avoid doing it on a virtual meeting.

3. Focus on YOURSELF

- **Play to your strengths:** If you thrive on watercooler conversation, be intentional about setting up time on your calendar to connect and just make small talk with peers. If you enjoy shutting your door and having time to think, disconnect from Microsoft Teams for a period of time to allow yourself uninterrupted thinking time.

- **Set boundaries for work:** Give yourself a dedicated space to work. And when you are working, focus on your work. Likewise, allow yourself the freedom to disconnect from work and focus on those things that need your attention. Now that your home is your office, you are always "at work". When you need to unplug, do so with confidence.

- **Create a new "commute":** Avoid rolling out of bed and jumping straight to your computer. Whether it's making a cup of coffee and sitting outside for five minutes or taking a walk around the block. Do what's best to keep yourself healthy, but find something that helps you wake up and get ready for the day.

4. Reflect on Purpose

- **Have an agenda:** Even it is a not too specific, ensure your meetings have a certain agenda with topics to discuss – if you haven't seen one, ask your manager for it. Structure creates focus, helps you keep meetings shorter and make the most of your time together.

5. Roll With It

- **Things will not always go according to plan:** Your computer is going to freeze. Your internet will go out. Your kids will run into the room when you are on an important call, and your dog will certainly bark at the worst possible moment. Realize that we are all in this together and your clients and fellow team members will understand.

Weekly assignment: Choose one of the above 5 areas to focus on during meetings over the coming week.

Stanford Research Reveals

	4 Causes of "Zoom Fatigue"	Solutions
	1. Excessive amounts of close-up eye contact is highly intense.	Take video calls out of full screen mode. Use an external keyboard to increase personal space.
	2. Seeing yourself during video chats constantly in real-time is fatiguing.	On Microsoft Teams, minimize screen & layer other windows over your self-view if possible.
	3. Video chats dramatically reduce our usual mobility.	Turn your video off if pacing will help you think and brainstorm. Stand up for presentations.
	4. The cognitive load is much higher on video chats.	Take an "audio-only" break in longer meetings. Turn your body away from screen periodically.

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