

Tips for Professional Videoconferencing & Telepresenting

Use these tips to help develop and maintain a professional videoconferencing image and prepare for clinical telehealth consultations.

Preparing a Professional Space (as available):

Lighting

- Face into the brightest part of the room (keep the bright light on your face).
- Avoid bright windows behind you or next to you. Although not ideal, cover any windows with blinds or curtains.
- Add lamps to create bright and diffuse lighting throughout your room.

Background

- What does the background say about you? Adjust your permanent background to the professional image you want to display.
- Keep the background behind you as simple as possible. Pick up clutter.
- Adding some depth between you and back wall can improve lighting and sound.
- Again, avoid windows in the background when possible.

Sound

- Select a quiet room with a door you can close.
- Avoid added sounds that your microphone might pick up, such as a fan, keyboard, open window, or someone else in the room.
- Keep the microphone as close to you as possible (or in the middle of a group).
- Consider adding an external microphone or use a headset for better sound quality.

Camera and Monitor

- Position your camera as close to the top of the screen as possible.
- Add distance between you and the camera. Increasing this angle can add the illusion that you are looking into the camera & minimize dramatic movements.
- Adjust the height of the camera and monitor so that the top of your head is level with the camera (avoid having the camera look up or down at you).
- On group calls, position the camera so that everyone in the room is visible.

Testing

- Remember to test your setup by video to see what you will look like on a call.

Continued

Maintaining a Professional Call:

- Consider what you wear. Shirts with stripes and checkers can cause visual “vibrations”.
- Close other computer programs to ensure you have enough computing resources and avoid distracting alerts.
- Test the call in advance, especially if you are using a new program. A download may be needed.
- Avoid using wifi when videoconferencing. Using a wire (Ethernet) will provide a more stable connection.
- Add your full name and organization when logging on (applicable for some videoconferencing software).
- If you have a camera, use it (no need to be shy).
- Make eye contact with the camera while talking.
- Make sure to introduce everyone joining the call in your room. Avoid people lurking in the background who are not introduced.
- Know how to mute your microphone. Keep your microphone muted when not participating during a group call.
- Prepare for unexpected phone calls, either on a desk phone or your mobile phone, and respond accordingly.
- Avoid typing while you are unmuted.
- Mute your video if eating, taking another call, leaving the room, etc...
- Give your name each time you speak during a group meeting (may be less important for a videoconference depending on the scenario).
- Utilize chat features to avoid interrupting speakers.
- Slow down a little. You may experience some latency issues with audio and/or video. Adding space while speaking can help improve the flow of the conversation.
- Keep an eye on your own video to see how you present during the call.
- Don't be afraid to address technical issues, but don't make a big deal out of it.

Facilitating a Call:

- When sending an invitation, include instructions on opening the videoconferencing program for new users.
- Don't forget to send a reminder about your videoconference or webinar.
- Review the features of the videoconferencing program when beginning a call with new users, including how to mute microphones and video.

Tips adapted from Jonathan Neufeld, PhD, and Northwest Regional Telehealth Resource Center [Telemental Health Toolkit](#).

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