

Learn how to video conference: 8 web video conferencing tips

By Lyndsay Swinton

Learn how to video conference with these 8 web video conferencing tips to turn you from novice to natural in no time. I regularly use web video conferencing to keep in touch with people for both work and home life, and here are my 8 best tips.

But before we start, let's make it simple. Internet video conferencing is linking two or more computers so you can talk and see each other, live. You can also do cool stuff like write, draw or share files at the same time. Let's get back to the web video conference tips....

Web video conference tip 1 - Sweat the small stuff

Make sure you know how to use the technology BEFORE your meeting. That doesn't mean an in-depth working knowledge, just the simple stuff like how to switch things on, change volume, mute, join and leave the call, and perhaps most importantly, how to call in the technical cavalry.

Video conferencing tip 2 – Make friends with your tech support

Schmoozing your tech support is always a good idea, particularly when you're dealing with as many variables as video conferencing entails. When video conferencing works, it's a dream, but when it goes wrong or is in the hands of an incompetent, it's a major frustration for all parties. Make your techies your friend.

Internet video conference tip 3 – could you do it differently?

Until you become a video conferencing professional, the anxiety of using unfamiliar technology can overwhelm even the most level headed meeting participant. Could you use a [conference call](#) instead (less things to go wrong!) or Instant Messaging?

Online video conference tip 6 – how is it for you?

Before you launch into the meeting, make sure you can be both seen and heard. Take a little time to adjust settings until the technology becomes secondary. Don't struggle with wonky images or robotic speech – fix it quickly or revert to simpler audio only conferencing.

Web video conference tip 5 – blend the real and virtual meeting participants

The UK's National Health Service regularly uses video conferencing to link geographically dispersed people and ensure maximum public involvement during service consultations. This may mean that one or more meeting participant is actually on a screen, and not physically present in the room. It's vitally important that the meeting chair person or facilitator regularly includes the virtual guest in discussions, otherwise you're wasting a whole load of time, money and effort to have a mute voyeur.

Video conference tip 6 – move slowly and pause

Video conferencing is probably best avoided by energetic, impatient types – they will not sit still and definitely won't wait for people to "un-mute" before they respond to questions.

Video conference tip 7 – look 'em in the eye

It's hard to believe you've got a rapt audience if they're not looking you in the eye. It's tempting to look at the monitor and not the camera, giving the impression you're not paying attention. Keep it direct and more "normal" by making the camera you're friend. You don't look in the mirror when you're talking to someone in "real" life?

How to video conference tip 8 – relax you know more than you think...

Make use of all your "real world" [business meeting tips](#) and techniques. Be polite, be organised, have an agenda, use ground-rules, stick to timings, follow up with actions.... You know the drill. All you need to do is get your head around the technology and become familiar with it.

So now you know how to video conference, get online video conferencing today - if my pension toting parents and in-laws can do it, so can you!