



Leading Online Meetings

We have produced this short guide for anyone who is leading online meetings.

1. Purpose
2. Technology
3. Structure

1. Purpose

A meeting can have different reasons for taking place, but one sure way of risking failure is when the person leading it does not know what the specific purposes are, for this particular meeting.

Examples can include:

- Information/ updates sharing
- Decision making
- Problem solving
- Innovation
- Team-building
- Building morale

There can be a combination of these in any one meeting. It may be useful to group agenda items into these areas before the meeting starts.

2. Technology

Different platforms (Teams, Zoom, Skype, Whatsapp etc.) have different advantages and disadvantages, but here are some general points.

Audio and video: The quality of both audio and video has a big impact on engagement in all online events. Test your audio beforehand. If you decide to show video clips, ensure you have all the settings correctly configured (practise beforehand). Consider only using video if you are sure the Wi-Fi bandwidth of the participants (which you can't control) is sufficient.

Breakout rooms: This is a great feature of some platforms and allows for participants to discuss issues in small groups and then report back to the main group.

Security: Make sure as meeting host, you know all the security features (including meeting passwords, locking a meeting, removing a participant, controlling who can share screens, controlling who can speak etc.)



3. Structure

Any meeting needs planning in advance (including ordering agenda items and sending out the agenda in advance). Some extra points for online meeting success include:

Participation and interaction: Plan to use the interaction tools (polls, chat, hands up, Q+A, etc.) much more regularly than in face-to-face meetings to maintain and increase engagement. Talk through the protocols at the start of the meeting. Interactive quizzes and games can be fun too.

Anticipation: A good way to hook participants is to tell them of interesting/ useful things that will be coming up later.

Recap: Participants in online meetings tend to drop in and out of a meeting, much more than would happen face-to-face. Plenty of recap will enable everyone to follow what is going on.

Finally, **always respect others' time and don't forget to send the action points soon after the meeting** (we have a free downloadable template).