

Tips For Successful Videoconferences

Successful use of Videoconferencing systems and equipment depends on how you USE the technology...
NOT on the technology itself

If you follow these guidelines, your videoconference will be a success!

Be Prepared

Before the videoconference, prepare and distribute an agenda to the remote sites. Preparing a written agenda helps you accomplish your goals in the time allotted. If you are going to tape the videoconference, set up your VCR and select **remote** or **local video** for taping via the user menu on the VTEL System.

Be Camera Conscious (Not self-conscious)

Before beginning a conference, check all cameras to be sure that important conference elements (such as the table where everyone will sit, whiteboards, and sketch pad easels) can be displayed as needed. Be aware of which camera you are using. If you switch to an auxiliary camera to show a whiteboard or a graphics stand; switch back to the main camera when the discussion turns to other topics.

Introduce All Conference Participants

At the start of a conference, introduce everyone at both ends of the conference, even those individuals who are not in camera range. If additional people join a conference while it is in session, take the time to introduce the newcomers.

Act Naturally

Use gestures, facial expressions, notes and graphics just as you do in face-to-face meetings. They add life to your meeting and keep your presentations interesting.



Don't Shout!

The microphones can easily pick up the sound of conversation, so you do not need to shout. Participants should speak one at a time to ensure that everyone is understood. Remember that the microphones should face toward the meeting participants and away from the audio speakers to ensure clarity and to avoid feedback.

Use Mute Only Within Reason in a Point-to-Point Call

When you mute your microphones, people at the Remote Site may become uncomfortable. Muted microphones are the video equivalent of “whispering behind your hand”. If you must hold a private conversation, ask the Remote Site’s permission before you mute, keep the conversation brief, and thank the Remote Site when you turn your microphones back on.

Keep Objects Away from the Microphones

Avoid coughing into microphones, carrying on side conversations, rustling paper, or tapping objects near the microphones.

Maintain a Reasonable Distance

Before the conference starts, decide what is a reasonable view of the participants at the other end. In most conferences, you will want your main camera to display participants in a sitting position, from the waist-level up, including the tabletop. If your camera is focused too tightly (from the neck up on one speaker only), you will have to pan and refocus the camera frequently from one speaker to another.

Share Materials with All Sites

If written, graphical or computerized information will be used during the meeting, communicate the information with all sites, either by sending it in advance of the meeting or by using the system to transmit the material during the meeting.

Keep All Sites Involved

Direct comments and ask questions of people at all sites to encourage participation. Nameplates in front of each participant are helpful.



Clothing and Hair

Clothing patterns and colors will contribute a large amount to the quality of the video your location produces. DO NOT wear clothes with lots of designs or patterns. Plain, solid outfits with bold bright colors, except pure white, black and red, look the best.

The one thing that is hardest for compressed video to code is hair. Be sure hair is neat and away from your face. If your hair hangs close to your eyes, it may cause shadows, which make it hard to see facial expressions.

And last, don't forget...

- ➔ Put other meeting participants at ease.
- ➔ Respect other people's time and schedules.
- ➔ Presenter should repeat questions to ensure all attendees could hear
- ➔ Use the system's capabilities effectively
- ➔ Your videoconferencing system is simply another productivity tool (i.e. phone, fax, and computer). Use it to enhance your work and make your job easier