



Tips & Tools for Virtual Speaking Opportunities

Presenting virtually can feel very different than presenting to an in-person audience, but the content and engagement you are delivering is more important than ever. Below is a quick checklist to ensure you are camera-confident for your next presentation.

Selecting your Equipment:

- Camera:** Ensure you have a working webcam – does not have to be high-tech
- Device:** Using a computer/laptop is always best. Avoid using iPads or tablets as the touch screen can be disruptive for your presentation.
- Microphone/Headset:**
 - Find a device that best captures your voice and not the sounds around you.
 - Avoid using airpods as they are built to capture ambient noise
 - Be mindful of your microphone's location. Ensure it is not hitting against jewelry or loose clothing which will add additional unwanted sounds.
 - Test your equipment in the space you are recording prior to going live.
- Internet connection:** Hardwire connection is always best but if you do not have access to that, ensure multiple devices are not sharing the same wifi when you are presenting.

Capturing the Perfect Video:

- Framing:**
 - Set your camera up at eye level and so you are centered in the frame.
 - You don't want to cut off your head, but you don't want too much blank space above you.
 - When looking at your image on the screen you should have about 4 inches visible above your head.
- Background:**
 - Choose a simple background with very little hanging on the wall behind your shot.
 - A blank wall is best when possible.
 - Be mindful of other distractions that may pull attention, such as moving ceiling fans.
 - Virtual backgrounds help hide your environment but can be distracting and is not always the best solution when presenting.
- Lighting:**
 - Light sources should be in front of you, not behind you, and should be balanced on the left and right to avoid shadows.
 - Natural light is great and less harsh if you are able to film in front of a window.
 - Be aware of any shadows that are created, and if you wear glasses watch out for glare on the lenses.
- Appearance/Dress:**
 - Avoid wearing jewelry that jingles or makes noise
 - Keep your outfit simple. Solid colors are best and should stand out from your background
 - Avoid wearing all black or all white
 - Stay away from fluorescent colors



- **Physical Space:**
 - Ensure you do not have moving fans or images in your space or overhead. This can affect those sensitive to motions.
 - Make sure your space is free of background noises or distractions
 - Be aware of echoes in your space. To alleviate this, consider adding more furniture or carpets/rugs to balance the sound.
 - Be sure all other devices are silenced and close out of programs that send alerts or notifications.

Preparing to Present:

- Remember your body language plays into your presentation
- Lean forward when speaking and treat your audience as if they are in the room with you
- Smile and connect with the camera
- Be mindful of eye contact – don't look down at notes.
- Speak directly and clearly!
- Be conscious of your hand gestures and how they come across on screen. You should look and feel relaxed and natural.
- Leave a sticky note on your computer that remind you to smile. Its easy to forget that when you are presenting.

Engagement:

- Consider adding in questions in polls or chat to keep the audience participating and engaged.
- Learn about what the platform has to offer before going live.
- Add some sort of engagement/interactive every 20 minutes of content.

Presenting:

- Begin with a short intro addressing goals and objectives
- Switch up your content format/slide every 3-5 minutes.
- End on time! This is crucial in a virtual environment.
- Summarize in 30-60 seconds at the end of the presentation to give a clear wrap up and closing.
- Prepare for Q&A:
 - How will they be submitted and monitored?
 - Will you answer any live? (Video or text only)
 - Who will be moderating those?
- Presenting with others:
 - Having more than one monitor will allow you to navigate a few windows at once
 - Ensure you are muted when not presenting
 - Address your presenter by name when you want them to answer or you are turning over the conversation
 - Plan out how long each presenter will take to create a timeline that works for your content and schedule.
 - Even when you are not speaking you are on camera – smile and be engaged!
- Rehearse ahead of time in the platform (if possible)! Practice makes perfect.
- Slide/Presentation:



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- Be mindful of your slide font sizes and word counts. Reading slides virtually is much more challenging than in person.
- Check to ensure your materials are accessible so that all attendees have an equal experience.