



Tips for facilitating online meetings

With the Covid-19 crisis meaning many of us are now working from home, online meetings are commonplace and more important than ever.

After listening to a useful webinar by the team at 350.org, we summarised 10 key points below which could help everyone get more out of a meeting.

Here's hoping too that after this crisis, the use of on-line meeting forums will continue to increase and help reduce business miles travelled.

1. **Keep focused** – online meetings can mean your attention span is lower. As facilitator remind everyone to remove distractions such as mobiles, email notifications, music etc
2. **Switch on your camera** - encourage everyone to use the camera rather than just audio whenever possible – it helps to make everyone feel part of the meeting, increases focus/engagement and participants are better placed to read emotions and reactions
3. **Allow for introductions** – it is important to not just quickly jump into an agenda. Especially under this current crisis make sure you check the moods and wellbeing of participants
4. **Don't be too ambitious** - virtual meetings typically take longer and it is unlikely you will get as much done than face-to-face meetings
5. **Practice** – make sure as the facilitator you are fully familiar with technology/software before the meeting
6. **Keep it succinct** – online meetings should never be more than 2 hours. To make them shorter, consider what elements can be taken off-line such as feedback on documents, follow-up questions etc
7. **Prioritise the must-dos** – in case you don't get time to complete everything or the energy levels of participants drops off
8. **Engage with participants** – as a Facilitator, make a point of ensuring the session is participatory, for example by using polls or asking for feedback. Engaging frequently helps all to feel part of the session
9. **Use visuals where possible** – not everyone takes on information in the same way
10. **Allow for breaks** – although meetings should be as brief as possible, still allow for short breaks to stretch/grab a drink and keep all participants alert

Thanks to Shan Stephens (350.org, Edinburgh) and the rest of the 350.org team for holding the event, and for Linsey Cottrell for putting this sheet together. You can sign up for further skill sharing events from 350.org by registering [here](#).