



Connecting as a Professional during Virtual Meetings

Virtual meetings mean YOU are leading even when you're "just" attending, like it or not! You are connecting, for better or not, with potential future employers, clients and teammates. There isn't a second chance to make a good first impression (as we seen with the accidental social media "stars" caught on camera in embarrassing moments).

GR8PM wants you to "create career value" so we decided to share some of best practices and tips.

Preparation

Preparing properly includes:

- Getting the lighting and audio right. If others have to struggle to see and hear you it (pardon the pun) reflects poorly on you. Don't be "backlit." Do have your face properly lit. Don't trust your computer's built-in microphone. Invest in a decent headset.
- Adjust your camera and chair so you are comfortable **looking head-on** into the meeting.
- **SMILE!** Smile a lot more than normal to overcome the technology intermediation affect.
- Check **what** is in the **background** to be sure it's professional. Remove clutter, NSFW artwork or "treasures" with the wrong tone.
- **Dress professionally**, even if it is business casual from the waist up! Consider what you will look like if you suddenly need to stand up. Be consistent with "your personal brand."
- Silence your phones, or better yet **put them in airplane mode** as a courtesy to everyone else.
- Turn off all **email notifications** so they don't embarrass you with a privacy breach or distraction.
- Join the meeting **early** because "*Murphy*" is lurking, hoping to inflict glitches as you try to login!

Attending the Meeting

Keep these guidelines in mind:

- Think like a servant leader and **serve your teammates**.
- Once you're in the meeting, **mute** yourself and open your microphone as needed.
- Remember, every professional speaker (*and a good many politicians!*) have had a "microphone on" horror story. **Beware** saying anything improper and **assume everyone will hear you**.
- **Manage video** by design, not by accident! Video demands bandwidth. Make sure you have it so you won't be distracting. Showcase yourself with good video and engaging contributions!
- Print a copy of all PDFs so your note taking is set to go and **error-proofed!**
- If you the **Chat Box** assume everyone will see it...even if you think it is private.

Technical Considerations

Technology. Love it or hate it but never take it for granted!

- Do everything you can to **hardwire** into your internet service. *Murphy* loves wireless connections!
- **Test** your headset (or microphone and speakers) **before** the session for echo or feedback.