VC Etiquette Guide

Equality and Inclusion all reasonable steps taken to make adjustments to enable participation for all personnel, this can include choice of venue that is light and airy and we can tailor your meeting to suit your needs.

Prior to the meeting familiarise yourself with the system, whether it's a desktop app or a conference room, know how to make a call and control your volume, adjust the camera, mute and share a presentation, this will save time on the day.

Check your environment, close the blinds in a conference room and turn the lights on, what may be comfortable to you will be bleached out or too dark through the lens of a camera.

Send a pre-call email to all participants outlining the agenda, dial in details and any material they need to read.

Dial in on time or a few minutes earlier if you are the organiser, a lot of conference calls waste the first 5 minutes with interruptions from latecomers. Make sure you have your connection details to hand, including a contact number in case of difficulties with connection.

Introduce yourself and others at the start of your meeting and ensure you are seen and heard.

Background noise, if you can take the call in a quiet place or use a noise cancelling headset for when you are speaking and put on mute when you are not. In a conference room environment be mindful of cups and paper shuffling near desktop microphones.

Focus on the conference call, it is easy to be distracted with emails, messages, etc.

Don't interrupt, if there is no opportunity to submit a question through chat, write them down so you can ask when given the opportunity to do so.

Close the meeting on time with a follow up email with action items for participants.

Leave the room tidy, end your call and leave the room tidy, ready for the next meeting.

After your meeting did you have any technical issues that need to be resolved before the next session, report it.
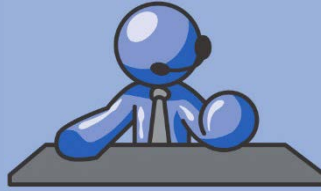
What kind of conference caller are you?

THE LATE JOINER
"Hello? Sorry, my dog ate the dial in details"

THE RAMBLER "If I talk for a long time, people will think I am very smart"

THE MUTE BUTTON IGNORER
background noise of dogs, typing, doorbell, office noise, etc

THE INTERACTION NO ACTION MAN
The call that never produces any actions "Opps – I thought I emailed everyone their action points?"

THE MUSICAL MAESTRO
Answering another call because no one will notice! Hold music!

THE AGENDA BENDER
"blah blah blah, anyway what were we talking about?"

THE CONFUSED
"you should all be on slide 23, no wait, slide 25?"

THE MULTI-TASKER
"just updating my facebook status to "on a conference call"

THE DISORGANISED ORGANISER
"here are the dial in details and agenda 2 mins before the call"

THE STUCK ON MUTE FRIEND
"oops – sorry, I was on mute for the last 5 minutes!"

Conference Call Etiquette

DIAL IN ON TIME or a few minutes early if you are the organiser, a lot of conference calls waste the first 5 minutes with constant beeps and interruptions from latecomers.

THINK ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND NOISE if you can't take the call from a quiet place, use a noise-cancelling headset for when you are speaking and put it on mute when you are not

THE POWER OF YOUR VOICE stand up for important discussions, this will help to project your voice

DON'T EVER PUT YOUR PHONE ON HOLD you will probably subject the rest of the call to your hold music or beeping

REMEMBER TO UN-MUTE YOUR HEADSET when you want to talk!

SEND A PRE-CALL EMAIL TO ALL PARTICIPANTS outlining the agenda, dial in details and any material they need to read

KEEP TO THE AGENDA and on time as much as possible

PARTICIPANTS SHOULD keep contributions as concise as possible, no one appreciates a rambling monologue!

IF YOU WANT EVERYONE TO FOLLOW the same presentation – try screen sharing

FOCUS ON THE CONFERENCE CALL, it is easy to be distracted with emails/facebook/online shopping etc

CLOSE THE CALL WITH A CLEAR SUMMING UP of next steps and follow up with an email with action items for participants

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