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Best practices for effective hybrid meetings [1]

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Best practices for meetings in general, like sharing an agenda in advance, still apply to hybrid meetings. There are unique challenges and benefits to hybrid meetings where several participants are in the same meeting room while others are remote.

Here are some practical tips to ensure an inclusive hybrid meeting.

1. Test the technology in advance of the meeting. Check the audio-visual set up for remote and in-room attendees.

2. Assign a facilitator to encourage engagement with remote attendees, checking to see that they can be heard and watching for questions in chat or hands raised.

3. Share presentations or documents in advance, if possible, and have one person sharing their screen so virtual attendees can see the information.

4. Make sure you include the call-in numbers and instructions for Zoom meeting links to allow those having trouble with computer audio to call in to the meeting.

5. Consider how remote participants will engage in each activity or exercise. Consider what tools or technology can increase their interaction with those who are in-person, such as using Microsoft Whiteboard for brainstorming.

6. Acknowledge all participants and set expectations at the start of the meeting for engagement. After leading your first hybrid meeting, ask for feedback.

Depending on the size and purpose of your meeting, you may determine hybrid is not the best approach. Some teams follow a “one remote, all remote” principle: If one person is attending remotely, then those in the office also connect online using individual devices. This allows everyone to have the same experience and to participate equally.

Ultimately, be flexible and resourceful if things don’t go as planned. Technical issues happen, but with preparation and inclusive expectations, you can still have a productive meeting.

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