SPEAKER GUIDELINES FOR DIGITAL EVENTS, INTERVIEWS AND MEETINGS

This document includes best practices for:

- Lighting
- Background
- Framing
- Appearance
- Where to look
- Sound
- Bandwidth
- Etiquette

TIPS FOR PROFESSIONAL APPEARANCE

Lighting

1. Make sure the main light is coming from in front of you, ideally at a slight angle towards the direction you are looking.
2. Avoid direct sunlight. If the sun is coming in through your window, you can soften it with a light white curtain. But avoid colored curtains, as they will color your face as well.
3. Consider that natural light changes quickly. The sun moves pretty fast, so if your picture looks good right now, it doesn't necessarily mean it will stay that way for the duration of the call.
4. Consider also that the brightness of your screen can influence your appearance, especially when not using natural light.
5. Putting a piece of white paper on the table in front / underneath you will reflect light upwards for a nice effect.

Background

1. Choose your background carefully. This can say something about you and your work. We encourage you to choose plain backgrounds or a wall full of books, a laboratory, or something relating to your profession or your theme.
2. Don't show a private or overly casual atmosphere.
3. Put a lamp in the background to make it livelier, if possible. Or choose a clear background like a wall or a curtain.
4. Blurring your background (e.g. in Skype) may help in privacy for those that have not-so- professional backgrounds. Virtual backgrounds (e.g. in Zoom) can also be used, but make sure to pick something that would not be distracting to attendees.

Framing

1. Find a good portrait position. You should have two fingers of space over your head in the frame. Set the lower frame line somewhere between your chest and your belly button. Do not come too close, and do not cut off parts of your head.
2. Check your gesticulation. Will you stay more or less in the frame?
3. The best camera angle is head-on and at eye level, so adjust the height of your camera accordingly (e.g. by placing a stack of books underneath your laptop).

Appearance

1. How does your hair look? Is there a reflection of light in your glasses so one cannot see your eyes?
2. Check your clothing and the background. If you wouldn't wear a sweatshirt to a meeting, don't do it online either! Simpler rather than patterned clothing is better. Avoid stripes or checked prints, as these can be distracting.
3. Avoid bright white shirts, as they "burn out" easily in the picture, making the video look poor or your face appear in shadow.

Where to look

1. Ideally, you fix a point directly left or right to your camera.
2. When using a webcam, place it near to the center of your monitor.
3. Try to not look at the center of your monitor, as this gives the appearance that you are looking down, and will give the audience the feeling you are not speaking to them.

Sound

1. Have the digital event open in one browser tab/page only. Having it open in multiple places can result in an echoing effect.
2. Check your sound before going on air. A clattering and hard-to- understand tone decreases the audience´s concentration. Use an external microphone if you can. Headsets work best.
3. Keep a pair of headphones nearby. Sometimes, they prove an easy fix to sound problems.

Bandwidth

1. Make sure you have a strong internet connection with an upload speed of at least 5 Mbps. You can check your connection at **speedof.me.**

Etiquette for Interviews and Speaking Engagements

1. Test your microphone and check your video before the meeting (see Tips for Professional Appearance below).
2. Familiarize yourself with the respective platform; read any guidelines sent to you by the organizer before the interview/call.
3. Make sure your inputs/outputs are on the correct device (headset, speakers, etc.) before joining the meeting.
4. Turn off all notification sounds on your computer and phone (Skype, new Email, chats, etc.) for the duration of the interview.
5. Set up your space in a quiet, undisturbed area (away from children, pets, background noise).
6. Get comfortable; don't adjust your camera setting, laptop, etc. during the meeting.
7. Give your full attention to the interview. Don't be distracted by emails, web surfing, work on another computer screen, etc.
8. Try to keep your microphone on mute if you are not speaking. But remember to turn it on when speaking!
9. When answering questions, try to look directly at the camera instead of the screen.

Etiquette for Meetings

1. Be prepared for the meeting. If you have a presentation, send it to the organizer in advance so that it can be shared before the meeting as appropriate.
2. Test your microphone and your video before the meeting (see Tips for Professional Appearance below).
3. Familiarize yourself with the respective platform; read any guidelines sent to you by the organizer before the meeting.
4. Make sure your input/outputs are on the correct device (headset, speakers, etc.) before joining the meeting.
5. Announce yourself when you join the meeting, but try not to interrupt someone speaking.
6. Identify yourself in the chatbox when joining as well. Depending on the composition of the participants, indicate your organization next to your name.
7. Keep the microphone on mute unless speaking (or requesting to speak).
8. Turn off all notification sounds on your computer and phone (Skype, new Email, chats, etc.) for the duration of the meeting.

9. Don't interrupt verbally. Use an agreed-upon signal to show you wish to speak.
10. Don't type while your microphone is on (the keyboard is often too close to the inbuilt microphone and the tapping can be heard and can be a disturbance to the meeting).
11. Be prepared for a video conference, even if it wasn't specified in the invite (people prefer face-to-face), and don't ignore the request to turn on your video. Should you not be able to for any reason (e.g. bandwidth), let it be known.
12. Refrain from eating during the meeting, as it disturbs other participants.
13. Set up your workspace in a quiet, undisturbed area (away from children, pets, background noise).
14. Be present and pay attention, sit up straight and don't let your eyes wander too much (don't be distracted by emails, web surfing, work on another screen, etc.).
15. When using the chats, make sure to send the message to the correct recipient (individual or group). Be aware that all messages might be saved and visible to others if the session is recorded.
16. If you plan on sharing your screen, make sure your computer allows for this function (in web browser or under system preferences on Mac).

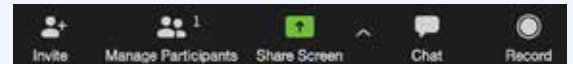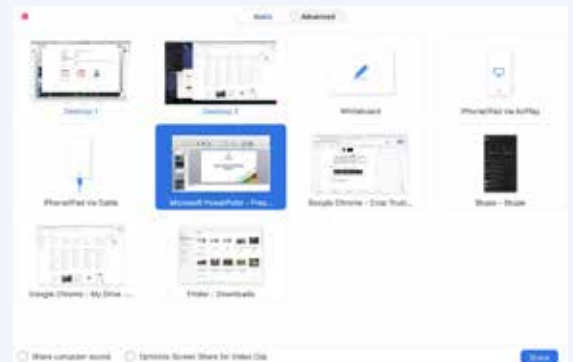Photos by Unsplash.com

USING ZOOM

Screen sharing

Make sure your computer allows screen sharing (you can check this in the web browser or in system preferences on Mac).
Zoom
1. Have your presentation application (PowerPoint, etc) open.

2. In the call, click the "Share Screen" button in the bottom menu.

3. You can select to share your complete desktop or a single application window.
4. In the bar at the top of your screen, you have the option to stop sharing.
5. simply click on the "screen sharing" button again.

Additional functions

Participant reactions
If enabled by the host, these reactions place icons next to your name to notify the host, e.g. raising your hand if you wish to speak.

Change your display name in Zoom
When joining a meeting in the web browser you will be prompted to state your name before joining. Depending on the composition of the participants, it is recommended to include your organization after your name.