

TIPS FOR VIRTUAL MEETINGS

From Ed Davis of [Systems Support Group](#)

Over the last few weeks there has been a huge spike in people working from home and/or using video conferencing at their desks in the office. For many, this may be their first experience using these types of tools. My email today is meant to remind people of a few simple rules that need to be followed when using video conferencing. These are focused on the user. There are many other security related items for IT admins that may be rolling out these work from home scenarios. However, I am not addressing those here.

1. Watch what others can see. Check your webcam video closely before joining the video conference. What is visible? Family pictures, valuable items, dirty dishes, kids, etc. This is especially important when in a video conference with people you may not know.
2. The mic is on! Watch what you say. You should always mute your mic unless you are speaking. (you will not remember to do this) Others may come into your work area not aware that you are on a call and say things that should not be heard in public. I have developed a method to let my family know that I am on a call and do not disturb or at least be aware. It does work well with the dog or cat though.
3. Shut off other noise distractions - cell phone, home phone, tv, radio, etc. This can be very distracting in a meeting. Again, this somewhat depends on who is in the meeting.
4. Cover your webcam when not in use. Yes, hackers have been able to hack into webcams. They are not interested in a big black screen.
5. Do you need video? Yes, video conferencing is cool and it makes you look cool - wear appropriate clothing! However, not every meeting needs to have video, and not everyone in the video conference needs to have video. If you are a presenter, you may need to use video. Everyone in the call can see the video without having their video on. That being said, I do like video. It makes it easier to know when to chime in and gives you an indication of how the others are responding to the content.
6. Are you being recorded? Many video services allow recording. If YOU are the one recording you need to notify your audience, Others should notify you if they are recording. If so, you may want to turn your webcam off. Recording meetings can be very useful. But, that recording could potentially end up anywhere. You might be the next viral YouTube video star!
7. Use a good webcam and good audio stuff. You'll understand what I mean after you have been in a few video calls.

I love technology and want everyone to use as much as they need to for the tasks at hand. However, the bad guys are **always** hard at work trying to figure out a way to exploit our use of technology for monetary gain or to disrupt our businesses. A few simple tricks can make it much more difficult for them and protect you and your family.