

# Tips for increasing participant engagement in remote meetings

*How can you achieve the same level of participant engagement you've enjoyed in your best face-to-face meetings?*

In meetings, it's easy to recognize great participant engagement. Enthusiasm, presence, dialogue, and action speak for themselves. Deep engagement not only makes for a satisfying meeting but also fosters innovation and productivity. Taking the time to design for meeting engagement is well worth it, because ineffective meetings affect the bottom line as well as [employee satisfaction](#). Here are some tips that will set you up for engagement success.

## 1 In advance, set clear expectations around meeting preparation and participation.

Communicate the following in the event invitation, reminder emails, or phone calls:

- Meeting purpose and desired outcomes
- Agenda with activity descriptions and timing
- What level of active engagement to prepare for
- Participant roles and responsibilities
- Technological requirements

## 2 Prioritize interactive activities.

Minimize time spent listening passively to one person presenting. One way to do this is to send out a pre-read. Actively engage participants in hands-on activities for much of the meeting (e.g., providing feedback, brainstorming, etc.). Online collaborative templates, break-out rooms, polls, and built-in chat functions can help you facilitate interactivity.



## 3 Start with a check-in and/or icebreaker.

Take into account the personal and social experience as well as the business function for a more successful meeting.

- **Check-ins** provide a chance for participants to share what's going on in their lives (work-related or otherwise). In this time of greater isolation, a personal check-in provides important context for all participants and builds connection, empathy, and engagement.
- **Icebreaker warm-ups** are a low-pressure way to prepare participants for productive tasks you want them to participate in during the meeting, as well as to give them a chance to bond as a team. ([See some of our favourites.](#))

## 4 Take breaks often if your meeting runs for more than an hour.

Participants may feel uncomfortable asking for a mental or physical break or may not even realize they would benefit from one. So build regular breaks into your agenda—and tell people about them in advance. This will equip them to pace themselves properly and relax. We recommend a 5-minute break every 75 minutes. And we like to cap 1-hour meetings at 50 minutes to allow participants to take a break before their next meeting.