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OFFICE OF DISTANCE LEARNING

Best Practices for online and remote DIY Videos

Looking for some helpful tips on how to be a video conference pro? Here are some best practices to ensure your setup meets quality standards. If you have any questions, please reach out to dgarbarino@fsu.edu. We want you looking and sounding your best!

Location

Your location is important because it sets the tone of your video conference call. Depending on the nature of your meeting, you can always play it safe by choosing a virtual background. Check to see if your video conferencing software has this capability. Stick with a neutral, non-distracting background for business-related video conference calls. When virtual backgrounds aren't available and you're using your webcam, be sure to keep these tips in mind:

- Choose a brightly lit room, preferably with some natural ambient light.
- Avoid sitting with your back in front of a window because it will create a silhouette.
- Bring a lamp near your face to reduce shadows in dimly lit areas.
- Ensure the room you choose provides plenty of privacy.
- Take a moment to stage a visually appealing background that has depth. Try to avoid plain blank walls.
- Use bookshelves, a decorated space, or your office as a background option.
- Keep the location tidy by clearing away distractions in the background.



Good example of location

Framing

- Sit in the center of the screen, allowing for some space at the top of your head and around the edges of the screen.
- Place books under your computer monitor or laptop to achieve the right camera angle. Only your upper body should be visible on the screen.
- Look directly into the camera while talking or addressing others. While this may be hard to remember, it will make a huge impact on your appearance.



Bad example of framing

Audio

- Find a room that's quiet and free from distractions. You want to avoid noisy devices, people, or loud public places.
- Sample your speakers and audio device before the meeting begins. If your computer's built-in microphone isn't strong enough, there are plenty of affordable external mics you can purchase.
- Restate any question being asked of you. For example, if someone asks, "How many points will be deducted from an assignment that's turned in late?" you would respond, "If assignments are turned in late, I would deduct 10 points for each passing day."
Reiterating helps ensure that attendees know the question being asked and the answer that follows it.

Appearance

- Keep your appearance business casual.
- Avoid small patterns such as plaid, herringbone, and pinstripe. These patterns are hard to see on a webcam and could be distracting.
- Glance into a mirror before the call begins to ensure you're looking your best.



Internet Connection

- Hardwire your device when possible, instead of using wireless or Wi-Fi.
- Sharing video in a large conference call could cause issues. If you're experiencing a lag in audio or video, ask your attendees to stop sharing their webcam video in order to reduce the bandwidth being used.
- We recommend using a desktop or laptop computer, followed by a cell phone or tablet.

For information on ways our media team can help you use video to enhance your online courses, visit the [Media Production Services](#) page.