

# VIRTUAL COMMUNICATION CHECKLIST



## TECH

### Check Your Tech

Take time to test everything—your microphone, headset, software, etc. Remember Murphy's Law.

### Cameras On

If you're connecting with others and communicating complex ideas, rich media (a combination of audio, video, visuals) is best. Plus, showing your face helps communicate competence and warmth.

### Frame Yourself

Your camera should be at eye level—you don't want to be looking up or down. Your shoulders and upper body should be onscreen. Prop your laptop up with a few books and scoot your camera back. In the end, you should be framed onscreen like a TV news anchor.

### Mic Up

Always use a microphone and headphones. A simple set of earbuds goes a long way toward enhancing sound quality. Keep your mic on mute when you're not speaking.

### Reduce A/V Noise

Diminish audio noise by closing doors and shutting off noisy equipment. Get rid of visual noise by tidying your desk and removing distracting background items.



## VOCAL

### Project Confidence Vocally

You want to sound authoritative and full, not throaty—like you've swallowed your voice. Project confidence by finding a point across the room and sending your sound there with deep breaths supported from your stomach, not your throat.

### Engage with Vocal Variety

Variety in the pitch and tone of your voice helps keep your audience engaged in what you're saying. When your voice is flat and monotone, your audience gets bored. Practice by reading children's books or news headlines. *TIP: Record yourself. Do you sound engaging or monotone?*

### Articulate & Enunciate

You want your audience to follow what you're saying. This can be tricky online. Articulate and enunciate every word. *TIP: Watch your mouth onscreen as you speak. If you're enunciating properly, you should be able to see your lips moving.*

### Pause Frequently

Your audience needs time to process what you're saying, especially in virtual communication.



## NONVERBAL

### Maintain Eye Contact

This can be challenging in virtual communication. Remember to look at your laptop's camera (usually above the screen) or your webcam not down at your notes. This gives the appearance of eye contact. *TIP: Position your Zoom selfie window at the top of the screen below your camera.*

### Use Hand Gestures

Get your hands up and in-frame to use gestures to reinforce key points. This may make your hand placement feel a little higher than usual but your gestures will read onscreen for your audience.

### Sit Up Straight—Or Stand

Your posture helps you project confidence physically and vocally as the muscles associated with both breathing and speaking are engaged. If you can, try standing. If sitting, make sure your feet are flat on the floor and that your legs are not crossed (cross your ankles if needed).

### Smile

Last but not least, smile. Your audience will both see and hear your enthusiasm and warmth.