

3.3.23: Putting It Together- Communicating through Technology

Now that you've learned the basics about communicating through technology today, you must remember that it's always changing. A year from now there will be platforms and apps available that haven't even been thought of yet. Your main goal is to remember these basic ideas no matter what technology you use the following will remain the same:

- The point of the meeting is the content of the discussion or presentation, not the technology itself.
- Your colleagues' comfort level with technology will range pretty widely. Be patient with them.
- The app that's scaring or frustrating you today will eventually be as easy as email. Be patient with yourself.

A successful interaction using any of the technologies covered in this module meets a few basic criteria, many of which are designed to alleviate the kinds of bad surprises technology can sometimes involve.

In general, to ensure a successful interaction using communication technology, the host or planner has done the following:

- Practiced with the technology.
- Planned the scheduling of the meeting to include enough time for participants to download software, if necessary, and make sure it runs on their systems.
- Sent clear instructions to participants well in advance and done her best to simplify the process for them as much as possible.
- Created at least one back-up plan—preferably two—in case the technology doesn't work for everyone.
- Planned the timing of the meeting to allow not only for the content to be covered but also for the additional minutes needed to be sure everyone is up and running.
- Sent an agenda to participants that includes time for the technology.
- Learned how to present information, conduct discussion, and generate next steps appropriately and effectively within the technology platform being used.
- Conceived a plan to follow up with information, notes, conclusions, and next steps after the meeting has concluded.

The point of communication through technology is to get work done efficiently, and the best way to do that is to have a toolbox of possibilities that you feel comfortable with and that meet your needs. The ability to communicate through such a wide variety of channels opens up your work life and helps you be a better leader, employee, and colleague.

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