BASIC ONLINE CLASS AND MEETING ETIQUETTE

by:

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The pandemic changed many aspects of our lives. The restrictions of physical and social distancing took our liberty to mingle and interact with others.

Many schools and business around the globe closed down due to the after effect of lockdowns that the pandemic caused. And for those that managed to weather through the storm, things weren’t the same. Schools mainly Elementary, Secondary, and even Senior High School, now operate through modular learning which means that modules for subjects and lessons are made by teachers and then distributed to students via their parents. Children below fifteen years old are not allowed to go outside of their homes according to the initial IATF guidelines for the COVID-19 pandemic, thus parents and guardians are tasked to fetch and return the modules to schools every week or so. Colleges and Universities employ the use of online based sites and apps like Google Classroom and Zoom for discussion and submission of activities. BPO companies implemented the remote working arrangement for their agents, as well as other companies that are able to function outside of their company buildings and bases.

With all the activities and interaction shifted to online, it is very easy to forget proper etiquette and behavior in attending meetings and classes. Even with only a portion of yourself being seen through the camera, it is still very important to keep some rules and guidelines to follow, in order to maintain professionalism and correct atmosphere while conducting class or meeting.

The first thing that is good to consider is dress appropriately. On cam or not, you wouldn’t want to be caught in your pajamas and bed hair, would you? You don’t have to
dress fancy, just be put together in a decent outfit and clean is enough. Wear a good shirt, brush your teeth, and comb your hair, it is that simple.

It is also good to come in prepared and ahead of time. Being at home doesn’t mean that you will just login in the nick of time without the proper tools and materials. Let’s say the class is supposed to start at 9 o’clock, be ready at 8:30 or earlier. This gives you enough time to gather your thoughts and prepare the things you will need. Use this time to ensure that all the things you will need like papers, pens, earphones or chargers are within reach. Also keep a bottle of water or any refreshments nearby so that you wouldn’t have to stand up in the middle of the class or meeting to get a drink.

Check your device and apps beforehand to ensure smooth flow of class or meeting. Check if the internet, camera, or audios are working properly. Because there are far too many instances that meeting and classes are interrupted by technical difficulties.

Make it clear for other people in the house, if there is any, that a meeting or class will be commencing. If possible, leave a sigh by your door to reduce the chance of someone accidentally walking up on you during the meeting. If there are pets, keep them away from your work area. They can cause unnecessary disturbances. It is fun to watch all those videos where cats and dogs are popping in during live videos, but it is in a whole different story for it to happen to you while answering in class or presenting in a meeting.

While in the meeting or class, stay muted unless it is time for you to speak. You can’t hear it but even the smallest noises like the keyboard from your side can be load to the other participants. It distracts not only the listeners but the presenter as well.

Pay attention to the meeting or class. Do not multi task or open other applications or sites while on a meeting. It can be boring, yes, especially when the discussions are long and grueling, but paying attention saves you from being clueless and confused for a sudden recitation. In this kind of situation, the host will have to reiterate the statement or question which will further consume their time, thus consuming yours too.
In reality, online meeting/class etiquette is same as that inside of the boardrooms and classrooms only with additional techy things. All the things that you can’t do in person, you shouldn’t do via online. Do not speak over someone, talk clearly, be attentive, respect other people in the room/class, be mindful of the language you use, etc., etc. Some people thinks that the screen and the distance gives them a pass for being rude or disrespectful. It can be seen on videos circulating online of students bad mouthing their teachers in their online class. Remember, online doesn’t mean anonymity, meaning whatever is done online can be admonished out of it.

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