

Dear All

It's been a year and all of us have been on teams calls and zoom calls, communicating, presenting, listening etc. I am summarizing my learnings as I have watched hundreds of meetings on video format.

1. First things first, every presentation is an advertisement – in this case it's an advertisement for you – you are the brand. No one likes boring ads, ads without energy, ads that are boring and ads that are repetitive.
2. In a digital world, it's even more difficult to hold attention and to create impact, that's the challenge of the medium. Why is that so? It is so because the audience is fatigued over one year of web calls, they are easily distracted, they multitask like mad.
3. In a digital world, most people have switched off their camera either to save bandwidth or they just don't want to turn on the camera. In a physical meeting room, you can sense the interest in the room with eye contact, with peoples attention, the nodding of the heads etc. None of that is there as signals to decode on the web call. So, you just don't know if you are connecting.
4. So, it's all the more important that you need to raise your presentation game on the web. For every meeting of presentation in a physical world I would spend maybe 10 to 15 minutes of preparation, in a web world, I find that doubling in order to be sharp and precise.
5. The frame becomes important, your posture becomes important (you cannot come across as lazy, some people turn their head away and the audience sees their ears, these are bad images, some people look out of the window or door, again bad), your voice modulation becomes important, your listening skills need to sharpen, in some cases you need to multitask to see the chat board and pick comments and questions. All this requires synchronization, it won't happen in a breeze.
6. You have to have fewer slides and fewer matter on each slide. In a normal physical setting people are reading off a screen which is at least 6 feet by 9 feet in dimension, in a web world, people are reading off a diagonal 15 inch PC screen or a diagonal 7 inch phone screen. The charts, the no's, the matter will look very different. I have seen very few people adjust to this.
7. In a normal ppt, I would say a max of 24 words per slide, in a web ppt, I would say even less maybe. So, you need to hit the top 3 points and then talk around it.
8. In a physical ppt, you can ask people 'can we move ahead', in a virtual ppt, everyone is on mute and when you ask that question, no one will answer because everyone is thinking someone will answer that. So, pace yourself and don't keep asking till it's absolutely necessary.
9. If you have ten minutes, use a max of 2 maybe 3 slides, you will create more impact rather than rushing through ten slides. Shuffling slides in a physical meeting is different and people will engage with each other while you are doing it and many times it could be a welcome break, in a web world, that is not there and hence most people will experience deathly silence. So, it's better to have fewer slides, with fewer words and talk through it as opposed to pointing at it as you did in a physical world. If you run fast through a presentation on the web, you will discredit yourself, you will be like a singing salesman. David Ogilvy, the famous advertising guru said "No one buys from a singing salesman" Know your audience even better in a web world.
10. Time becomes fixed and not variable on the web. Because people have booked themselves back to back, so you have to finish on time by starting on time. If you don't, then you are stealing your colleagues time.

If you are the leader on the web call or the coordinator, then try and connect in some way or the other with as many people as possible. Also if your team is presenting, do a debrief for ten

fifteen minutes after the call to understand what was good, and what needed improvement. In a physical world, you would give the feedback sometime during the day, in a virtual world you might not connect with the team the same day again. So, build energy.

Thanks, feedback welcome

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