VIDEO-CALLS

1. **Read the following text and answer true or false.**

| Meetings are moving entirely online, which means that we’re attending a lot of video conference calls. If you don’t have a lot of experience with video conferencing, it may take some getting used to. Here’s a guide to the do’s and don’ts of video conferencing.  SET UP YOUR SPACE: If you can, find a private place to take the call. If not, use headphones to minimize background noise. If you have roommates, partners, or family members who are also working from home (or just stuck at home), let them know beforehand that you’ll be in a meeting to minimize interruptions. Set up your device or camera so that it has a clear, unobstructed view of you. Don’t sit too far from (or too close to) the camera. If you’re using a separate camera, place it near your screen — it’s best to put the camera at eye level, so that when you’re looking at the screen, it appears as if you’re looking at the person you’re talking to.  STARTING THE CALL: It’s a good idea to test your video conferencing software before the call, especially if you’ve never used it before. Also, make sure you have a strong Wi-Fi connection and that your device is either plugged in or fully charged. Give yourself a few extra minutes before the call to set up and if possible, log onto the call a little early, especially if you’re unfamiliar with the software that your host is using. Once the call has started, check to see if everyone can hear and see each other. A good way to do this is by having everyone either check in or introduce themselves.  KNOW WHEN TO TURN OFF YOUR AUDIO AND VIDEO: Mute your side of the call if you’re not speaking. Your microphone can pick up a lot of background noise, so muting allows others on the call to easily hear who’s speaking. Also, if you need to get up or move around or do something else during the call (or if your toddler suddenly makes an appearance), it’s a good idea to switch off your video to avoid causing any distractions.  SIGNAL WHEN YOU WANT TO TALK: During in-person meetings, you can pick up on visual cues to help find the right time to speak. It’s a lot easier to accidentally interrupt on a video call. Wait for a few moments of silence before speaking up in case there’s a sound delay. If your company or team is going to have regular online meetings, it’s a good idea to decide on a system for asking questions, such as raising your hand or using chat to ask a question. If you’re running the meeting, it’s also helpful to call on people by name. Speak clearly and watch how fast you speak (and don’t forget to unmute yourself!). But speak at your normal volume — there’s no need to shout, and if you do, your co-workers may lower their volume and then miss something else.  SHARING YOUR SCREEN: If you do need to share your screen during a video call, take a few seconds to prepare before you hit that share button. Clear your desktop of any extra tabs or programs you may have open and make sure any private or sensitive information is hidden.    (Adapted from “The do’s and don’ts of video conferencing” by Aliya Chaudhry, 2020). |
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1. You don’t need a lot of experience to know how to make a video call.
2. It is a good option to use headphones to minimize background noise.
3. If you are using an external camera, place it next to the laptop on the table.
4. Introducing yourself is a good way of checking your sound.
5. Check that your microphone is off to avoid any distractions.
6. Do not switch off your video. It will cause a great distraction.
7. A good idea not to interrupt people when you have a question is to use the chat.
8. You don’t need to close any tabs while sharing your screen. People will focus only on what you are referring to.
9. **Look at all the cards below. They depict situations you may face while doing a business videoconference. Match the suggested answers (A-Y).**

| **1.**  **The video has some problems.** | **2.**  **You have problems hearing.** | **3.**  **You can’t identify who is speaking.** | **4.**  **You don’t understand something.** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |
| **5.**  **You need something repeated three times before you understand it.** | **6.**  **You need to temporally hang up.** | **7.**  **Someone needs to step outside.** | **8.**  **You want to talk about something among just your side.** |
|  |  |  |  |
| **9.**  **There is an interruption your side.** | **10.**  **Use a word that you are sure the other side won’t understand.** | **11.**  **Get a contribution from someone who hasn’t spoken (for a while or at all).** | **12.**  **You need to adjust your equipment.** |
|  |  |  |  |
| **13.**  **Someone takes a long time coming back from their break.** | **14.**  **Tell the other side they need to adjust their equipment.** | **15.**  **You need to email a document.** | **16.**  **Talk about a particular part or a document you all have copies of.** |
|  |  |  |  |
| **17.**  **You have a technical problem that takes you three attempts to solve.** | **18.**  **Someone leaves from your side and someone new comes in to take their place.** | **19.**  **Insist that people use their own names every time they speak.** | **20.**  **Interrupt someone.** |
|  |  |  |  |
| **21.**  **Go off topic.** | **22.**  **Take the conversation back to a previous topic.** | **23.**  **Suggest a break.** | **24.**  **Strongly but politely disagree.** |
|  |  |  |  |

| A.  “Just a second, I’ll move it.”  “If I just change this, hopefully…” | B.  “Can you give us a moment?”  “We need to discuss this, if you don’t mind. I’ll just turn off our mic for a second.” | C.  “Sorry. Can people identify themselves before they speak?”  “It might be easier if people said their names each time they speak.” | D.  “I’m afraid I can’t agree with you there.” |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| E.  “I’m afraid John hasn’t come back yet. I’m sure he’ll be back soon, but shall we start without him?” | F.  “Shall we take a breather?” “Does anyone else need a fag break?” | G.  “Just a second, I’m going to turn the volume up.”  “Can you try moving the microphone?” | H.  “I can’t see people at the edge of the room.”  “Your image has frozen.”  “The image and sound are out of synch.” |
| I.  “John has to go to another meeting, so Jill will take his place.”  “John had to rush off, but Jill has come in instead.” | J.  “John, did you want to comment on this?”  “We haven’t heard what Jill has to say yet.” | K.  “Can we speak a little bit more about…?”  “This brings us back to…” | L.  “The camera seems to be pointing in the wrong direction.”  “Can you try moving/ adjusting…? |
| M.  “I didn’t catch…” | N.  “Was that John?”  “Sorry. Who was that just now?” | O.  “By the way,…”  “That reminds me,…” | P.  “I have to take this, if you don’t mind.”  “I’ll just go and get the documents. I’ll be back in a second.” |
| Q.  “Can you explain what… means?”  “I haven’t come across the term… before.” | R.  “Let me try one last time.”  “There is one more thing we could try.”  “Third time lucky, I hope.” | S.  “Sorry, I still don’t get it.”  “Could you just say that one last time?” | T.  “I’ll send it to you now.”  “Just a second, I’ll find the document on my laptop and email it to you now.” |
| U.  “In the first section/ paragraph/ sentence/ bullet point…” | W.  “Can I come in here?”  “Sorry to butt in, but…” | X.  “Sorry, someone has just come in.”  “Sorry, there’s a lot of noise outside. Someone will go out and see what it is.” | Y.  “Maybe if we hang up and try again it will sort out the problem.”  “Sorry, I need to speak to this person for just two minutes. I’ll connect you again when I finish.” |

**Assessment 2a. (15 points)**

Prepare a job interview that takes place via a video-call. Remember to include 2-3 problems which can occur during the videoconference.

**PHONE CALLS**

1. **Put the following dialogue in order:**
2. Thank you.
3. Hello, this is Ms Sunshine. How can I help you?
4. Yes, the position is still open. Could I have your name and number, please?
5. Hold the line a moment, I’ll check if she is in the office.
6. Certainly, my name is…
7. Yes, Ms. Sunshine is in. I’ll put you through.
8. Hello, this is Ray. May I speak to Ms. Sunshine, please?
9. Hello, my name is Ray, and I'm calling to inquire about the position advertised on JobSearch.com

**2. Take a look at the following expressions and classify them as follows:**

- Beginning of the conversation **(B)**

- Middle of the conversation **(M)**

* End of the conversation **(E)**

1. Could you speak up, please?
2. I didn't understand what you just said.
3. Please speak more slowly.
4. Could you please repeat that?
5. I'm sorry, I don't speak …
6. Do you speak English?
7. Can you hear me clearly?
8. Could you spell that, please?
9. Please say each number separately.
10. Who is speaking, please?
11. Who would you like to speak to?
12. What number did you dial?
13. Oh sorry, I think I’ve dialled the wrong number.
14. Can I speak to Mr. X's assistant, please?
15. I would like to speak to somebody about…
16. The call is very urgent.
17. Could you ask Mr. X to call me back?
18. Could you call me back again tomorrow morning?
19. What is your phone number?
20. Just a moment, please!
21. Hold the line, please!

**Match the following sentences (1-10) with its relative situation from a to j.**

| * 1. Taking a break   2. Dealing with names   3. Trying to interrupt someone   4. Making sure everyone has a chance to speak   5. Talking about documents | * 1. Checking what someone means   2. Checking who said something   3. Talking about the sound   4. Talking about the image   5. Leaving the room |
| --- | --- |

1. “The one with the heading Personnel in bold” “Do you all have it (on the screen) in front of you now?”
2. “Sorry. Alex. I’d like to come in here if I may.” “Sorry, could I just jump in for a second?”
3. “Who was it who said…?” “Was that you, John?”
4. “Any reactions?” “I think maybe Dan has something to add.”
5. “Sorry, could I just confirm something?” “Sorry, I didn’t catch the last / first part.”
6. “There’s a bit of a delay/ echo.” “Can you move the microphone?”
7. “You’re out of focus” “You’re quite jerky”
8. “Let’s take five, shall we?” “Shall we take a comfort break?”
9. “Let’s first check who is with us.” “There are two Akiras, so please call me Aki and him Akira.”
10. “Richard has just come back in.” “Don’t hang up, I’ll be just a second.”

**Assessment 2b. (15 points)**

Phone call context 1: Buying devices/products related to your future job.

**Assessment 2c. (15 points)**

Phone call context 2: ask a delivery company to pick up a parcel you have to be sent to another place or customer.

In cases 2b and 2c **remember** to include:

* Greetings
* Ask to be put to/with someone or a department
* No answer/not available > leave/take message
* Spell an address or an email (data which should be included)
* Misunderstanding - Check you understood well