

## **Executive Summary on Engagement in Virtual Teams**

This summary describes various methods useful for maintaining engagement between members in a virtual team, drawing from two articles from the journal *Organizational Development Review* and one from the *Journal of Participatory Medicine*.

### **Requiring Video Attendance Is Linked to Heightened Interaction**

One strategy that can be taken to increasing interaction and engagement within a virtual team is to require an enabled camera [1] [2]. According to Asna Jefferies in “Embracing, Designing, and Facilitating Virtual Dialogue” [1], this requirement allows for “greater social connection and visual cues [1, p. 51].” Jefferies is arguing that using video will allow the team members to interact more closely to what they would in an in-person meeting, facilitating engagement. Similarly, in “Best Practices for Virtual Engagement of Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Teams During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic: Qualitative Study” by Erin Thayer et. al. [2], Thayer argues that videoconferences increased team productivity [2, p. 1]. These arguments make direct interaction through video one way to maintain engagement in virtual teams.

### **Longer Virtual Meetings Lower Engagement**

An issue that does not appear within most in-person meetings is eye strain and ensuing conditions resulting from using screens for longer periods of time [3]. As mentioned in Celia Szelwach and Todd Matthews in “Being Present in a virtual World” [3], “Eye strain leads to visual discomfort and other physical issues such as blurred vision, double vision, stiff neck, headaches, backaches, and overall fatigue (Helander et al., 2020) [3, p. 77].” In other words, requiring attentive interaction for long periods of time is taxing and lowers the ability of team members to participate [3, p. 77]. By shortening meetings, virtual teams become less fatigued and can be more engaging.

### **Topic Usage for the Project**

These two topics represent two effective ways to increase engagement within a virtual team. The arguments should be considered for inclusion within the final presentation as recommendations to increase productivity. More research specifically into these topics may be necessary.

## References

[1] A. Jefferies, “Embracing, Designing, and Facilitating Virtual Dialogue,” *Organization Development Review*, vol. 52, no. 2, Spring/Summer2020 2020, pp. 50–51. [Online]. Available: EBSCOhost, search.ebscohost.com.libproxy.rose-hulman.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=144487643&site=ehost-live&scope=site. [Accessed July 31, 2021].

[2] E. Thayer, et al., “Best Practices for Virtual Engagement of Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Teams During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic: Qualitative Study,” *Journal of Participatory Medicine*, vol. 13, no. 1, Jan. 2021. doi:10.2196/24966. [Accessed July 31, 2021].

[3] C. Szelwach, and T Matthews, “Being Present in a Virtual World: Improving the Effectiveness of Virtual Teams,” *Organization Development Review*, vol. 53, no. 2, Spring 2021, pp. 75–82. [Online]. Available: EBSCOhost, search.ebscohost.com.libproxy.rose-hulman.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=149985207&site=ehost-live&scope=site. [Accessed July 31, 2021].