12 top tips from Inclusive Employers to make your virtual meetings more inclusive

1 Invite everyone to introduce themselves at the start of the meeting.

2 State your inclusion objective "we want to make sure that everyone on the call feels able to contribute to this meeting, you all matter."

3 Apply the same rules as face to face meetings – keep focused on the agenda. Consider putting your phone away and/or silent.

4 Jot down any ideas you have rather than interrupting others – then bring the ideas to the table.

5 Reflect, respect, respond, consider your responses, many of us are learning new ways of working and we might make mistakes. Understand that some people might be less familiar with this way of working and might need more support or time to get used to it.

6 If your camera is on, consider what is going on in the background and what people can see – they may be distracted if your husband is doing the Joe Wicks daily workout in the background!

7 Check in with people – just giving people space to think and then respond. If you have a meeting with a large number of people, consider that it can be an intimidating experience for some and that they might prefer to submit their ideas or thoughts as a follow up e-mail.

8 Offer breaks in the meeting so it doesn't feel too intense.

9 Don't overly rely on chat functions – some people may be worried about their spelling or may not feel comfortable to type things in the moment. Do however acknowledge that there might be communication barriers associated with sound quality.

10 Stay focused, some of us may have a tendency to want to bring up the things that matter to us but that may not be as relevant to a wider group of people – stick to the agenda. Consider what is essential to be discussed in a group environment and what can be picked up offline with individuals.

11 Recognise the input of people in a real and authentic way – "like your idea!"

12 Check if people have ideas about how we can all make virtual meetings more inclusive. Be prepared to flex the format and style of meetings depending on people's feedback.

For further information: Email info@inclusiveemployers.co.uk
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National Inclusion Week
2020 28th September - 4th October