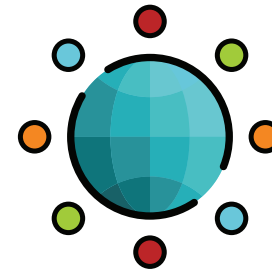
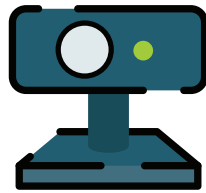


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7 DEADLY SINS of Virtual Presence

For Presenters & Participants

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DS Virtually
connect, communicate, collaborate virtually

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A Changing World, **A Changing Setting**

It may seem like a difficult journey to take face-to-face interactions into a virtual setting, but in a world of globalization and multinational corporations, we all face a growing need to produce and participate in online events. But eliminating physical presence does not mean we lose the ability to capture great success online!

The virtual environment should not be avoided, but *embraced*.

Why?

Virtual spaces have the power connect people, allow them to engage with shared content, and stimulate collaboration that would be unachievable in a face-to-face setting. **> See the ebook on this!**

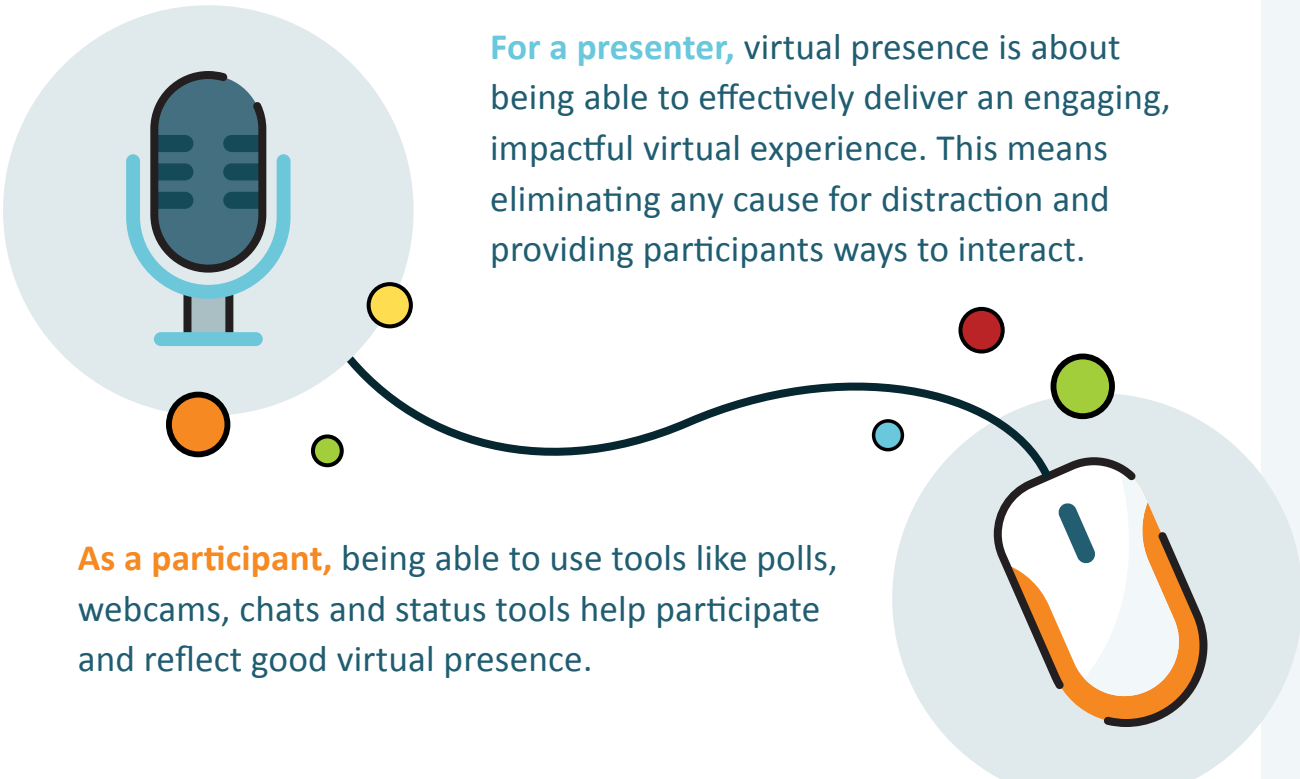
However, to achieve success online,
we **must** project our best **Virtual Presence**.



What exactly is **Virtual Presence**?

Virtual Presence is the ability to deliver an engaging, impactful virtual performance.

It impacts all roles inside the online environment:



For a presenter, virtual presence is about being able to effectively deliver an engaging, impactful virtual experience. This means eliminating any cause for distraction and providing participants ways to interact.

As a participant, being able to use tools like polls, webcams, chats and status tools help participate and reflect good virtual presence.



Try the platform that makes
it easy for the best Presenter
& Participant interactions:
Adobe Connect!

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The Challenge of Virtual Presence

Achieving good virtual presence for all roles leans heavily on the presenter and participants' abilities and willingness to engage with one another in the virtual setting.

The real key to strong virtual presence is the correct and confident use of conferencing technologies.

Beware! Technology defines the quality of your virtual space. Insufficient bandwidth can lead to lagging audio. A poor webcam may broadcast a grainy, choppy image. These issues cause disruption and distract from the presentation - choosing quality platforms and devices are essential.



Let's consider the areas where **technology** and **virtual presence** converge, and define the experience received by others during virtual events.

7 Deadly Sins of Virtual Presence

In the virtual setting it can be easy to wander into a path of mistakes and faux pas if you are uncomfortable. Good virtual presence is all about being aware of how to use the tools available appropriately. When considering tools and engagement during presentations, ask yourself, ***“How can we be successful together in this environment?”***



To effectively come together in a virtual setting, both presenters and participants should be aware of and actively avoid **the 7 deadly sins of virtual presence.**

New to running a virtual event?
Get help producing it!



MeetingOne technical producers make sure your live events run smoothly. [**Read More**](#)

Lacking Virtual Awareness

Achieving great virtual presence begins by understanding how *distance* affects an online event. The most obvious is **physical distance** which impacts the following three.

PROBLEM

Operational Distance

Distractions are inevitable. People will be distracted by their work and related operational practices.

Psychological Distance

We forget the importance of simple human interactions, like greetings, expected in the face-to-face setting.

Cultural Distance

Audiences around the world have different expectations of presenter status. The virtual setting can upend these norms.

HOW TO AVOID

Presenter: Keeping people engaged will reduce tendency to multitask.

Participant: Minimize potential distractions by closing out other applications.

Presenter: Be sure to welcome participants to your events.

Participant: Chat with other participants to help “warm up” the room and promote a comfortable environment.

Presenter: Take time to understand your audience’s cultural background.

Participant: Be aware & listen to how the presenter encourages participant interactions.

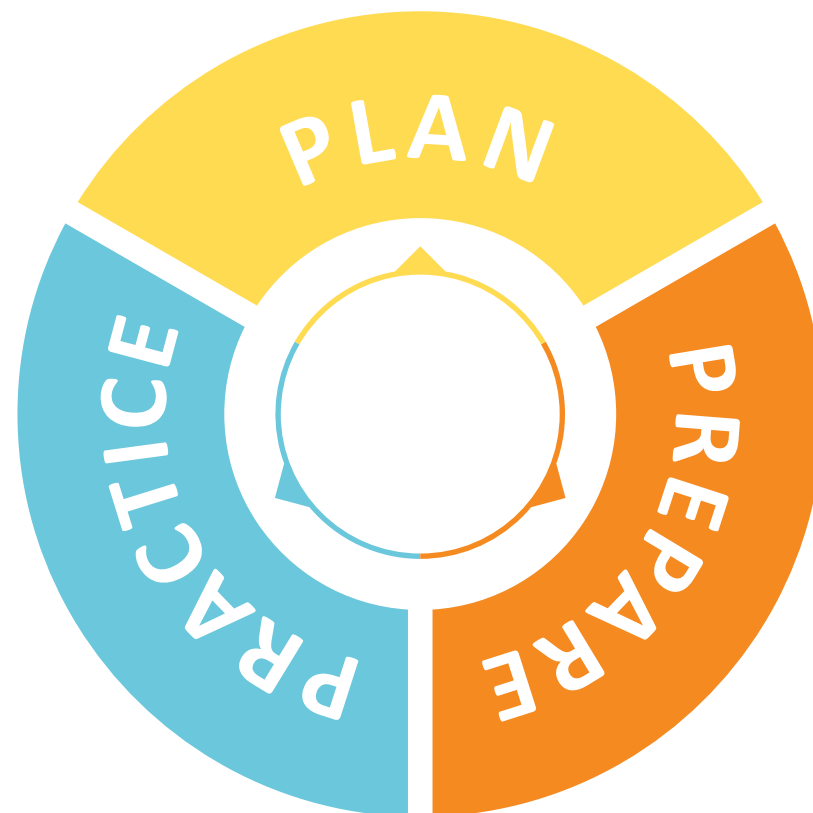
Unlikely to be Virtually Present

Too often, a presenter does not consider all that is required to be virtually present, and they fail to assess the platform fully. Participants are also guilty of not using the tools given to them to interact.

Like every good craftsman, a presenter must understand the virtual tools of their trade – and their platform. This may include chats, polls, Q&As, breakout rooms, and screen sharing. Navigating between these tools seamlessly is crucial to enhancing the participant experience.

It's equally important, then, that you follow the 3 P's of successful events: **Plan**, **Prepare**, and **Practice** what you're going to do during the event.

It's the Participants job to be virtually present and interact with the tools provided. When joining an event, look for chats, polls or Q&As right off the bat, so you know what opportunities you have to engage!



Not Being Vocally Present

It is important for anyone who will speak during an online event to have the means necessary to be heard. This can be impacted by the quality of the devices they are using, or even their flow and word choice!

Best Practice Tips for Being **HEARD!**

Be prepared & involved

Verbal graffiti – ‘ums’ and ‘uhs’ – can result from surprise or unpreparedness. Stay focused and engaged to avoid this.

Avoid idioms

Idioms impact foreign participants’ ability to process what’s being shared or discussed.

Use quality products

Purchase a well-made, reliable USB or Bluetooth headset to maximize voice clarity and avoid device failure.



Know the audio option best for your online event:
VoIP, telephony, or both!

← **Download this checklist** to help choose what is right for your event.

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Avoiding Being Visually Present

Be confident. **Get on webcam!** This is an important tool that bridges the distance gap by humanizing the virtual space. Present your best self on webcam by remembering the acronym: **DABL**



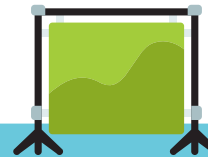
D = Distance

Don't be too close
or too far from your
webcam.



A = Angle

Be aware of where
you are looking and
where your webcam is
pointed.



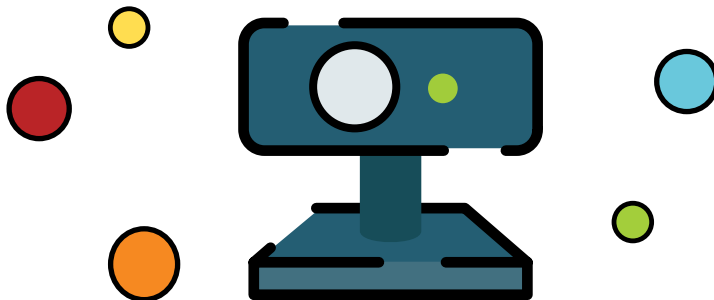
B = Background

A simple, quiet
background won't
distract others in the
virtual session.



L = Light

The right lighting is
key. Don't wash out
or vanish into the
shadows.



Participants:

Be ready to get on webcam
(without being asked twice!)
and follow the **DABL** rules!

Overlooking Audience Engagement

“Death by Powerpoint” happens when there is no time spent engaging; it’s not PowerPoint’s fault!
It’s important to watch out for mistakes that can impact engagement.

There are four factors hindering engagement we must be aware of:

1

Technical

- Tech doesn’t work / connection is poor.
- Audience can’t verbally participate, ask for help, or troubleshoot.
- Audience is unfamiliar with tool set.

2

Instructional

- Presenters haven’t explained how to use specific features or tools.
- Participants don’t understand what is required of them.

3

Cultural

- Cultural expectations differ about roles of presenter & participants.
- Some attendees may not feel comfortable participating.

4

Motivational

- Presenter is monotoned or dull.
- Questions not framed to drive interactions.
- Tools unavailable for participants to use.
- Audience surveying is minimal.

Overlooking Audience Engagement (Cont'd)

Manage audience engagement through effective questioning and instructions for virtual audiences to respond.
Choose technologies that enable participants to engage with your content.

Tips for better engagement:

Presenter - Help your audience - be clear about what it is you want to know, and direct in a way that ensures participants will use the desired tools to engage.

When asking questions virtually:

- Be Specific
- Nominate Participants to Speak
- Be Directive
- Use Closed Questions Carefully

Participant - Listen and follow your presenter's instructions and provide feedback if anything is unclear. Sharing your perspective helps the presenter ensure their content is valuable and being understood.



Always keep your multicultural audience's needs in mind!

Use these 7 Tips to hold better global sessions. **Get the eBook!** →

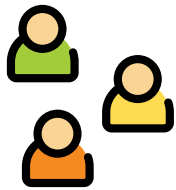


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Missing Interactions

Participants are too often guilty of multitasking during online sessions. A presenter can also be subjected to multitasking as they speak and review their notes. Multitasking means interactions are at risk to be missed.

It's a partnership. When **presenters** encourage participation, **participants** will interact.



Facilitate Conversations

Make efforts to ensure everyone is part of the conversation. Presenters should allow attendees to discuss content among themselves. Use dedicated chatting areas for discussions.



Avoid Continuous Lecture

Too much lecturing is a sure way to drive people to multitasking. Presenters need to encourage participants to share thoughts on how a topic relates to their personal experiences.



Leverage In-Room Features

Everyone needs to be ready to utilize platform tools throughout a presentation. Presenters should open polls, chats, and Q&A to their audience, and participants should respond.



Use Status Indicators

Status indicators are a great tool for communicating. Presenters should remind everyone to use these tools, and participants can use them to get a presenter's attention.

Forgetting Audience Empowerment

Successful online events achieve a goal. It is critical that presenters empower their audience with the right tools to achieve this goal. It is also critical that participants use what is given to grasp success.

Presenters must empower their audience:



Be clear about date, time, and location.

Reiterating session logistics in emails and on your event page will help confirm the correct time and location for participants.

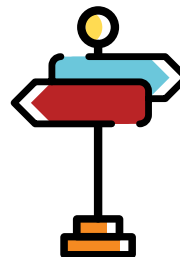
Provide Starter Guides

Before your presentation, send participants a document covering: Platforms used, in-room features used, and troubleshooting advice.



Set audience expectations before start

Share the session's goal to align participants. Direct them to shut down other applications. Explain what tools they should use to engage.



Participants must use what's given:

Read all information provided beforehand

Take the time needed to review content shared before the session. This can help you avoid day-of uncertainties and attend successfully.

Take notes to follow along

Taking notes helps your thoughts follow what is being shared and can help you retain focus to achieve the goal for attending the session.

Follow the presenter's given expectations

Expectations are placed to help you be successful. Display your best virtual presence - follow directions and test out the tools given. Ask questions before the start time!

Forgetting Audience Empowerment (Cont'd)

While setting expectations is a critical first step for reaching the desired goals of an event, we must also build strong connections through attention and the right intentions. Let's first consider presenter & participant attention.

Attendance in a virtual event requires a personal commitment to contribute and engage in the event. The ease with which this happens depends on a variety of factors that relate to our ability to be attentive.



Presenter best practices to hold audience's attention:

- Work to different strengths and thinking styles
- Make it relevant and be authentic
- Make it fun and interesting while keeping a good pace
- Encourage curiosity with interesting questions
- Connect with emotion by using stories
- Use good visuals and movement wherever possible
- Keep to the time schedule and agenda

Participant best practices for maintaining attention:

- Give yourself full permission to be in the event
- Don't be lured into multitasking
- Shut down any notifications or other distractions
- Tell colleagues you are not to be disturbed
- Review/explore in-event tools and content
- Ask questions and provide feedback as asked
- Be PART of the conversation, not just a listener

Forgetting Audience Empowerment (Cont'd)

Attention must be complemented by intention to ensure audience empowerment and the desired goals of an event are achieved. **Let's consider intention as it relates to presenter and participant roles.**

Where attention is about purposeful practice and being in the moment, **intention** is about meaning to do something purposefully and not by chance. Your strongest intentions are linked to the held beliefs and values.

Critical to **presenter** intention is understanding how it differs from goals.

Goals are based on a lack of something currently missing and are focused on the future. As a training goal example: transferring knowledge.

Intentions are more active. Your intentions impact your thoughts, actions and behaviors to align toward the outcomes you seek. With positive intention, your thinking is guided in the current moment and creates a performance mindset.

Keys to participant intention:

- Be fully present
- Listen and observe well
- Set an expectation for personal excellence
- Create personal and collective goals
- Be open minded and curious
- Be positive
- Be inclusive and engaging

Intention is paramount when transitioning to online training!

Help your classroom trainers become great online facilitators. **Get the eBook** →



Conclusion

Equipped with these **7 Deadly Sins of Virtual Presence** in mind, you can improve your own virtual presence and get more from a growing world of online environments.

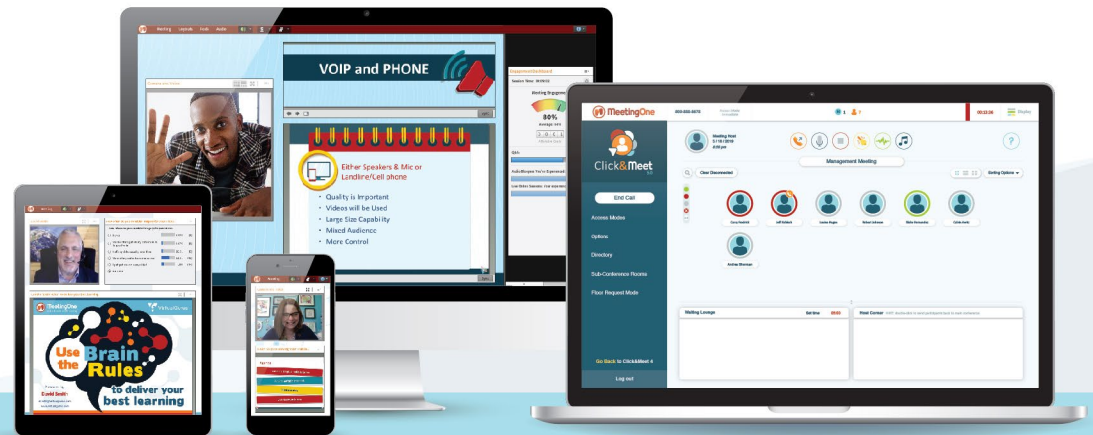
The virtual space is all about cooperation.

With good virtual presence, **presenters** and **participants** together can make incredibly impactful online events!



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Our thought-leadership resources are created to help you reach more mindful and strategic collaboration, training, and virtual events.

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