



Virtual meetings in the office

How to host inclusive hybrid meetings

Hybrid meetings are here to stay. But when half your team is in-office and the other half is virtual, the remote participants can fade into the background all too easily.

Whichever videoconferencing tool you use, here are 5 pro tips for helping every participant—virtual and in person—feel seen and heard.



Get everyone on the same page.

Before the meeting even begins, level the virtual playing field by sending out slide decks or other relevant files ahead of time. Or, if you have specialized resources and can plan ahead, mail them to remote employees beforehand.

★ The gold star goes to . . .

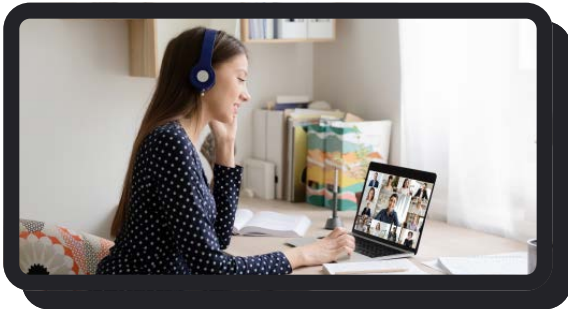
Microsoft Teams!

When you create an event in Microsoft Teams, a corresponding group chat is created with all the invitees. It's the perfect place to add agenda items and share relevant files before the meeting.



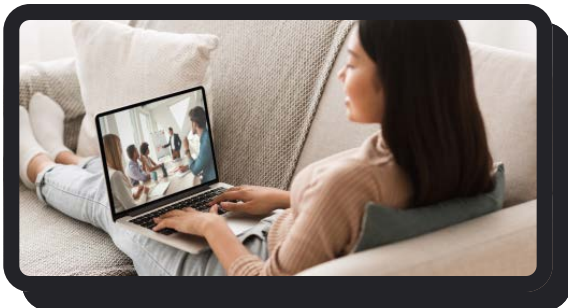
Leverage participants' physical and digital presence.

Make sure all participants can see and hear each other—whether they're physically present or not. Explore different setup options, depending on your meeting space, technology, and group size.



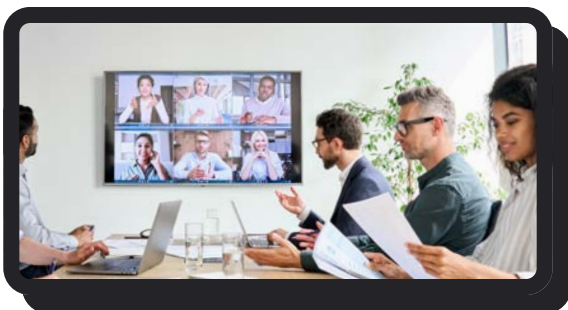
Have all participants log into the videoconferencing app.

Keep cameras on but mics off to avoid echoing, and unmute when needed.



Designate multiple cameras to track the in-person presentation.

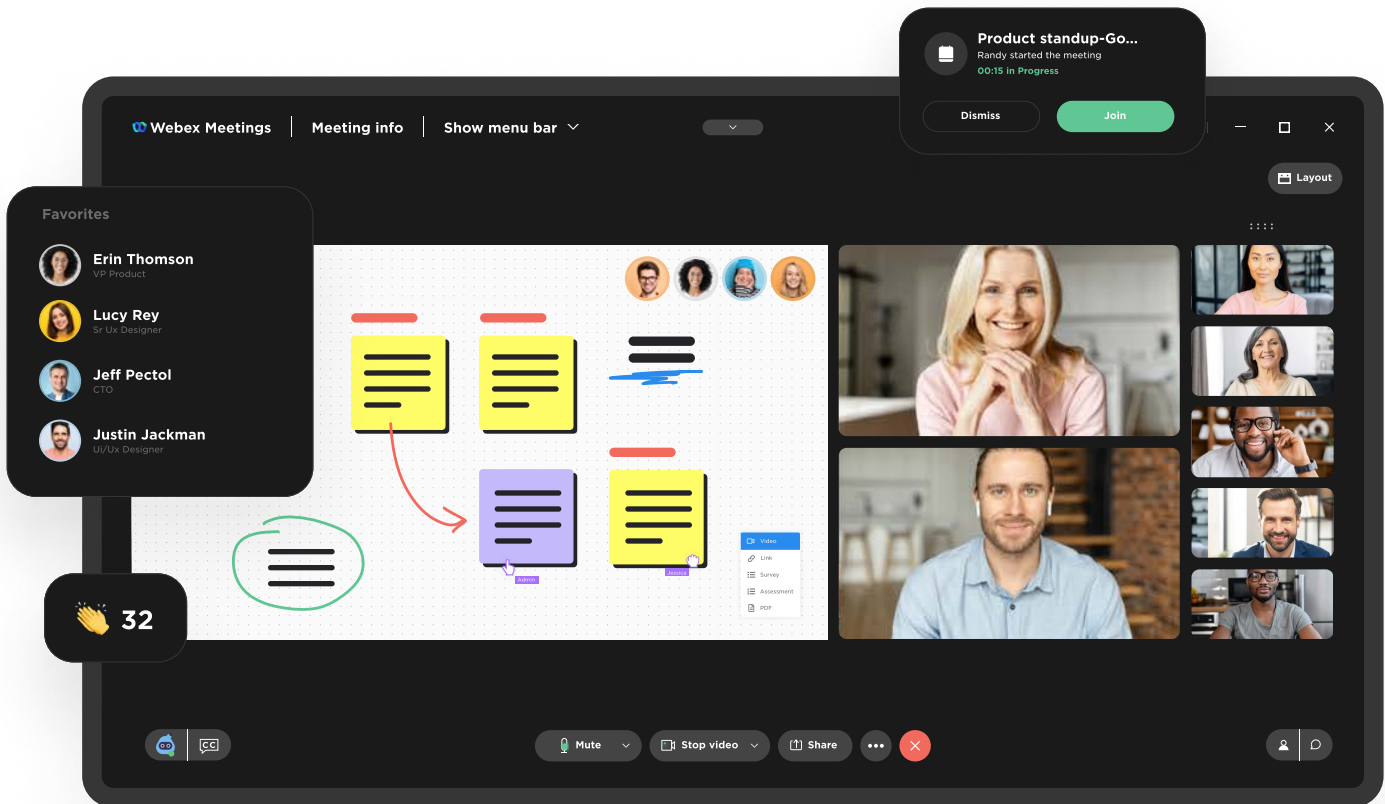
Focus cameras track the presenter, any visuals, and the room at large—and be sure to mic the presenter.



Display virtual participants' video feeds on an in-office screen

A large screen can help give virtual attendees a life-size presence in the room.





Go virtual with your visuals.

Display your presentation, video, or other visuals in your videoconferencing app—just remember to share your screen! If you're sharing anything with audio, include the system or browser audio so remote participants can hear it clearly (instead of getting a garbled second-hand version).

Create a more collaborative experience for everyone by replacing physical whiteboards with virtual ones. Zoom, Webex, Microsoft Teams, and other videoconferencing apps include virtual whiteboards that allow all participants to add their two cents.



Monitor virtual engagement.

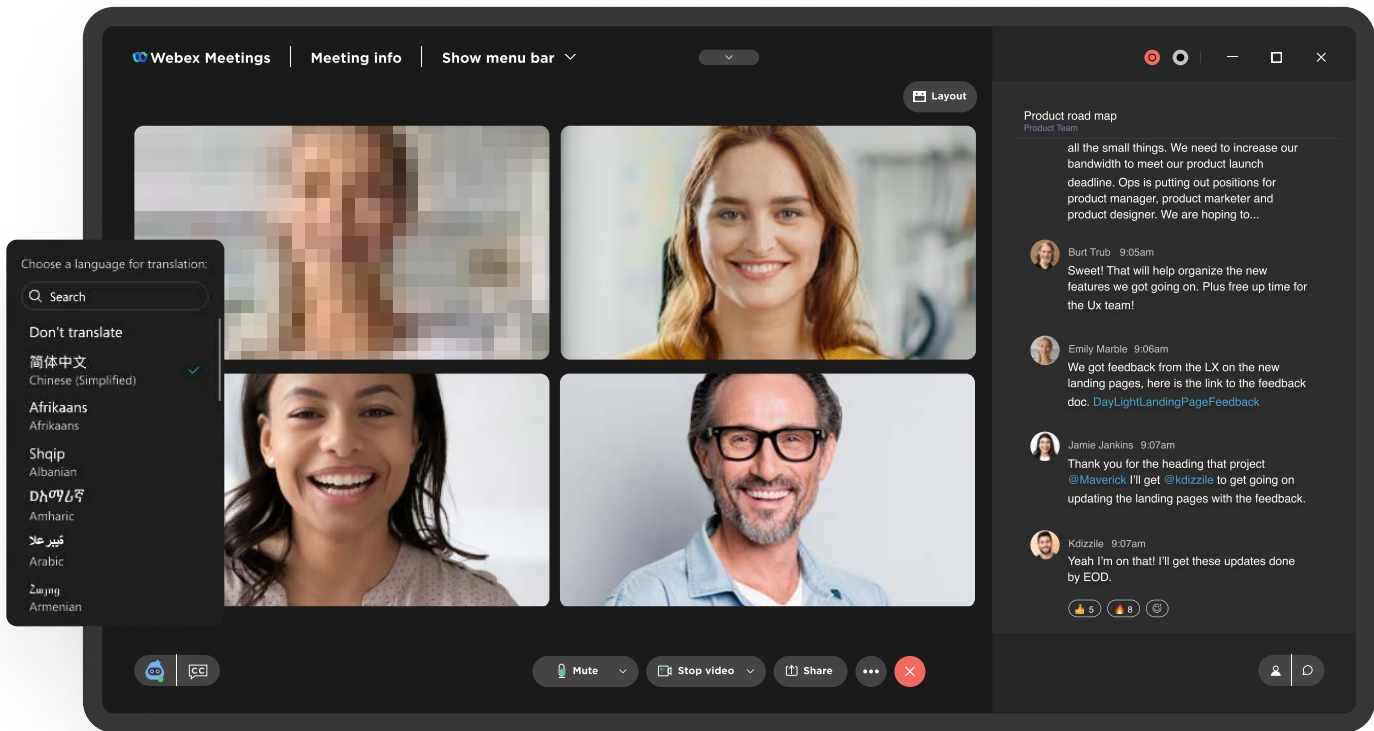
Leverage in-meeting chats to allow people to ask questions or make comments without interrupting the presenter—and give quieter employees a place to speak up (metaphorically speaking).

Most apps also feature live polls or Q&As to facilitate communication between the presenter and the audience, as well as emoji responses to raise a hand, give a round of applause, and more.



★ **The gold star goes to . . . Zoom!** While most videoconferencing apps include a handful of preselected emoji responses, Zoom gives users way more than just the standard emoji response options. Whatever emotion you want to convey—from quiet amusement to complete horror—there’s an emoji response in Zoom for that.



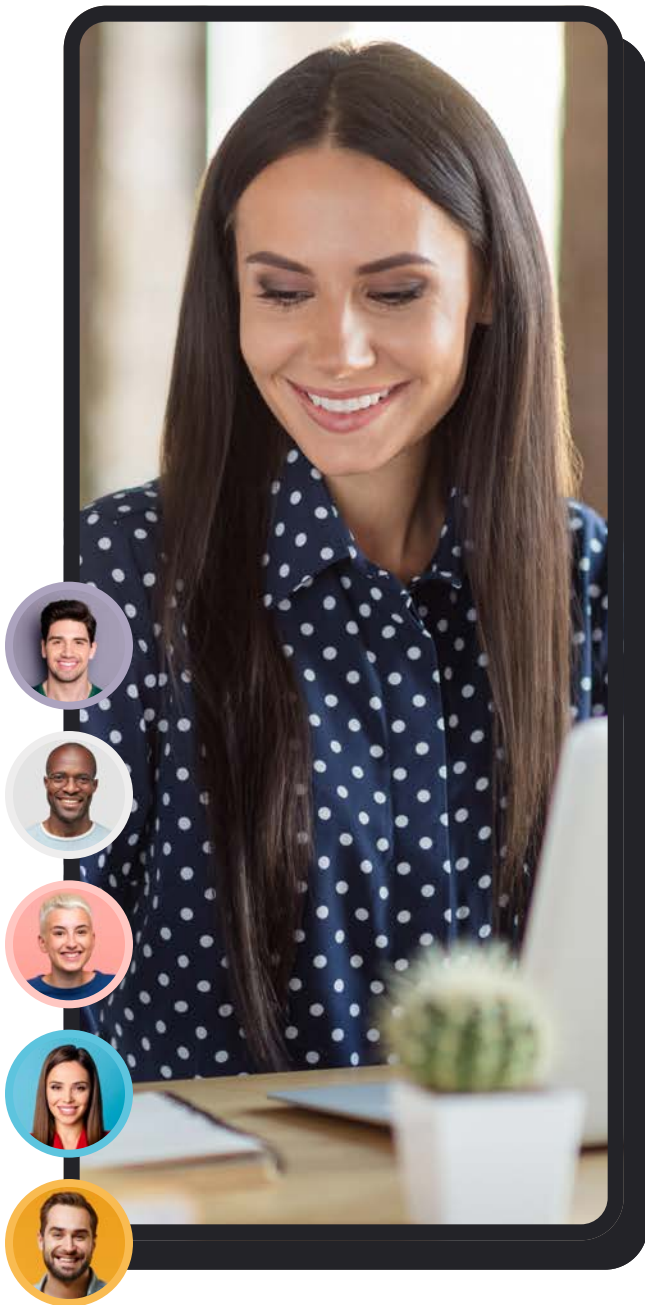


Keep things accessible for everyone.

Live captions are a huge asset in online meetings—but even in-office meetings can take advantage of this feature. Just have everyone tune into a videoconferencing app, then turn on live captions to help everyone track the conversation (whether your tinnitus is acting up or you're logging in from a noisy environment). Plus, most apps use those captions to compile a transcription you can use for later reference.

★ **The gold star goes to . . . Webex!** When it comes to live captions and live translations, Webex goes above and beyond the call of duty. Its real-time translation tool includes over 100 different languages—including American Sign Language.





Get hyped about hybrid meetings

Hybrid meetings aren't a compromise. With a little forethought, they can provide much-needed facetime for your whole team and become a bonding experience.

If your team needs a solid videoconferencing app—or if you want to configure your existing app for better in-office virtual meetings—check out our collaboration training options.

[Get collaborating](#)

