

Virtual Presentation Setup Guide

Preparing the environment so your message,
not your setup, gets the attention

Virtual presentations often fail for reasons that have nothing to do with content.

Before your audience processes a single idea, they are already reacting to:

- Visual clarity
- Audio quality
- Eye line
- Lighting
- Environmental distractions

These signals quietly answer a question your audience never asks out loud:

“Is this going to be easy—or exhausting—to pay attention to?”

When the setup is working, the audience never notices it.
When it isn't, your message pays the price.

This guide is designed to help you remove unnecessary friction before you go live,
so attention stays where it belongs.

Important:

This guide is not about production value.
It's about *removing distractions that compete with meaning.*

Camera, Framing, and Eye Line

In a virtual presentation, your audience is not reacting to you. They are reacting to what the camera shows them.

Poor framing, awkward eye line, or inconsistent positioning quietly signal:

- Disorganization
- Distraction
- Lack of intention

Good framing does the opposite—it disappears.

Camera Position

- Camera is at eye level (not above, not below)
- Camera is stable and not resting on a movable surface
- Camera lens is clean and unobstructed
- I am centered naturally in the frame

Framing

- Head and shoulders are clearly visible
- There is modest space above my head (not cropped, not floating)
- Background elements do not compete for attention
- Nothing visually distracting appears in-frame

Eye Line

- I know where to look when I am speaking
- Notes or screens are positioned close to the camera lens
- I am not repeatedly looking down or away
- My eye line supports connection, not surveillance

When framing is right, attention shifts from the screen to the message.

Lighting and Audio

Audiences forgive imperfect visuals.
They do not forgive poor audio.

Lighting and sound shape how effortful it feels to pay attention.
When either one is working against you, your message has to work harder than it should.

The goal is not studio quality.
The goal is **clarity without distraction**.

Lighting

- Light source is in front of me, not behind me
- My face is evenly lit (no harsh shadows or glare)
- Overhead lighting is softened or balanced
- The light level matches the tone of the presentation

Audio

- I am using the best available microphone
- Microphone is positioned consistently and comfortably
- I have eliminated obvious background noise
- I have tested audio at normal speaking volume

Sound Environment

- Doors are closed. Notifications and interruptions are minimized
- Others in the space know I am presenting
- I have accounted for echoes or room acoustics
- I know how to mute or pause audio quickly if needed

When people don't have to strain to hear or see, they stay with you.

Protecting Attention

Once people can see and hear you clearly, attention becomes the scarce resource.

In a virtual setting, attention is easily divided — by movement, notifications, multitasking, or the pressure to manage multiple things at once.

This page is about removing the most common sources of **avoidable interruption** so attention can stay with the message.

External Interruptions

- Anyone arriving into my physical space knows I am presenting
- Unexpected interruptions have been minimized or planned for
- Background movement is unlikely once the session begins
- I know how I will respond if an interruption occurs

Digital Interruptions

- Notifications are silenced on all devices
- Messaging apps and email are closed
- I am not monitoring chats, texts, or side conversations (I should have a co-pilot for this)
- I'll stay focused on where to look so my attention stays with the audience

Self-Distraction

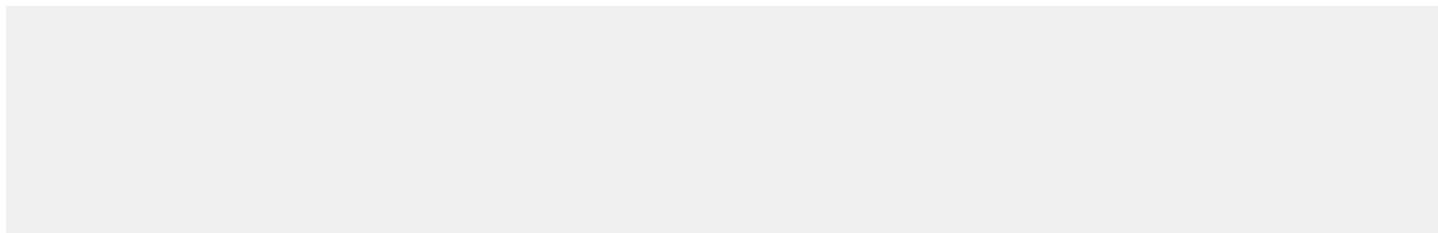
- I am not trying to manage too many things at once
- I am prepared to let minor imperfections pass
- I am focused on connection, not control
- I can stay present without monitoring myself constantly

When attention isn't being pulled elsewhere, the message can actually land.

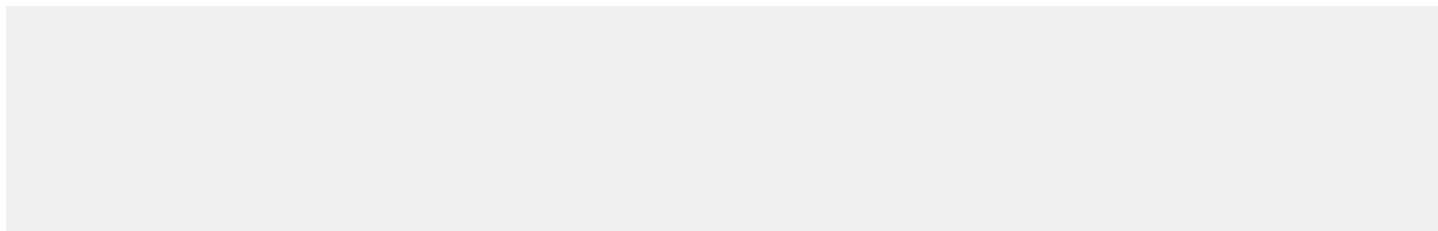
Reflection & Integration

Take a moment to reflect on how your setup influenced the experience.

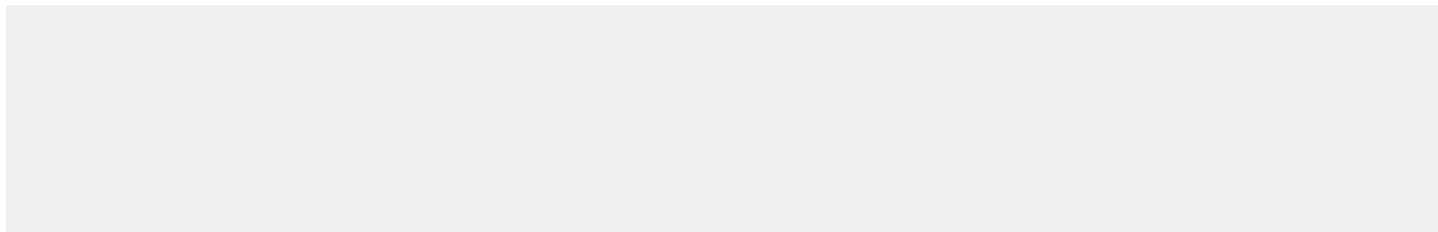
What felt easier for the audience because the setup was intentional?



What setup decision had the greatest impact on my ability to stay present?



What would I repeat—or simplify—the next time I present virtually?



When setup fades into the background, attention can stay where it belongs.