

VC Etiquette and Procedures

In this section, we will discuss best practices for a successful, respectful VC including:

- audio considerations
- video considerations
- courtesy considerations
- classroom considerations

Etiquette and procedures you put in place can truly make or break a course delivered via VC. By modelling and following a few simple rules, you can maintain classroom management in a VC course.

Suggestion!



Download checklists on VC Etiquette for students and teachers at:

<http://www.2learn.ca/vc>

📌 Audio Considerations

If you can't hear the problem, your site IS the problem!

When it is your turn to talk, remember to:

- ✓ speak clearly, but don't yell
- ✓ talk at your normal pace
- ✓ be conscious of time delays (there may be a slight time lag for your video feed to reach your students, and vice versa)
- ✓ keep any papers down from your face/mouth

Dealing with the microphone

- ✓ always assume that the microphone is on
- ✓ be mindful of the microphone... it picks up everything in the class
- ✓ position the microphone relatively close to you



COURSE DELIVERY MENTORSHIP RESOURCE GUIDE: GETTING STARTED

For more information, please contact the 2Learn.ca Provincial Team or Jocelyn Littlefair, 2Learn.ca Provincial Team Teacher at Jocelyn@2Learn.ca



- ✓ move the microphone away from electronic devices, such as speakers and metal
- ✓ be careful of echo, feedback and distortion:
- ✓ consider a lapel microphone if you plan to move around
- ✓ if using a desktop application (like PVX), purchase a headset with a microphone attached



Keys to Success!

MUTE your microphone when you are not speaking! It is important to remember that microphones pick up everything – foot shuffling, whispering, paper crinkling, fans and loud hallway noise.

🌈 Video Considerations

Most of the way we communicate with each other has nothing to do with the words we say... instead, our **communication relies on the way we move our body!** This is particularly true when you take part in a VC session. Show you are paying attention, even if your microphone is off. Your people at far sites can still see you!

To help get the right message across to remote sites, **both when you are speaking and when your students are talking**, remember:

- ✓ to frame yourself in the camera with a muted background
- ✓ to be aware of the clothing you are wearing; bright colours and strong patterns (like checkers or dramatic stripes) are not a good idea in a VC
- ✓ to speak to the camera when you are talking
- ✓ don't 'speak with your hands' too much... limit gestures



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Keys to Success!

To view online instructional videos on VC etiquette, go to:

<http://www.vcalberta.ca/resources.cfm>

Maximizing use of the video camera...

- ✓ Position the camera directly over the monitor
- ✓ Consider lighting when positioning your camera, particularly:
 - Blinds
 - Backlight, and
 - Natural light entering the room
- ✓ Ask your technician about picture-in-picture display to ensure you are sending appropriate video
- ✓ Use camera presets to:
 - limit 'jerky' camera motions.
 - snap quickly to a particular person who is talking.
 - return to original camera configuration quickly.

Courtesy Considerations

- ✓ Your facial expressions speak louder than words and are easily misinterpreted in a VC - be mindful of what your face is saying!
- ✓ Your posture matters: sit straight, don't slouch.
- ✓ Don't rest your head on your desk.
- ✓ Don't allow sarcasm in a classroom. Insist upon respect for others.



Keys to Success!

Limit side-conversations among students. Even when a microphone is muted, seeing the students talk is very annoying for the rest of the class, even if they can't hear them. There is an implied message that the speaker is not worth listening to.

Classroom Considerations

Before the course begins

- ✓ Select a “classroom techie”
 - This person should dial into the meeting room or remote endpoint at least 10 minutes before the meeting begins.
 - Include dialling instructions in every classroom

- ✓ Prepare an agenda and share it with each site
 - Prepare and disperse an agenda for each class; e-mail agenda to participants or post agenda on learning management system

- ✓ Obtain contact information from all sites
 - include e-mail address, cell phone number, location, technical contact information

- ✓ Plan for sharing PowerPoint or other such presentations with your students
 - Reserve or arrange for web conferencing applications (such as BRIDGIT, Elluminate or Adobe Connect) and make sure everyone has the connection details.
 - E-mail copies of the presentation in advance of the class, if possible.

- ✓ There are many rules for good presentations, please follow them.
 - Use large fonts with simple pieces of information in slides.
 - Use easy to read fonts (such as sans serif ARIAL over serif fonts such as TIMES)
 - Number your slides
 - Don't include too many details, but rather the titles of the topics and general notes that will be discussed.

- ✓ Plan for peripherals in advance
 - Set up the document camera, DVD player, interactive whiteboard or other peripheral device before the class begins to avoid hiccups.



While teaching in class

- ✓ Dial in early.
- ✓ Control the proceedings.
 - Take a role call to welcome all endpoint sites and individual students.
 - Quickly review ground rules (during the first few VCs in the course).
 - Direct conversations for individual students to answer
 - Request that all microphones remain muted unless students are speaking.
- ✓ For the first couple of classes, ask students to introduce themselves every time they talk
- ✓ Ask all classes to announce when:
 - they must leave the room
 - someone else enters the room but remains off-camera

Use gestures to communicate simple, general responses instead of opening the microphones every time. Use *thumbs up/thumbs down* to indicate understanding or to answer a question is a simple visual technique which works

- ✓ While sharing a presentation:
 - refer to the slide number of a presentation, if you are using one
 - switch often between sharing the slides and the video cameraIf you are sharing video with your students, keep video clips short and to the point