



A crash course in running productive meetings:

The before-during-after guide

A majority of workers say that they're having more meetings than they did 10 years ago, and more than half of those meetings (56%) are now either virtual or a combination of virtual and in-person. But are meetings getting better? We surveyed more than 3,000 people across geographies and generations to better understand the biggest problems with everyday meetings and how they can be resolved.

Here are 10 tips to make your meetings more productive and collaborative, whether you're running one or just participating.



Before





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TIP 01

Prepare your questions and share an agenda

The first step for a successful meeting is getting everyone on the same page, whether your participants are located across the building or around the world. Preparing an agenda and a list of questions ahead of time can help you be more engaged with the discussion at hand.

Make sure to include the agenda in an email and/or the body of your calendar invite, ideally 24 to 48 hours before the designated time. (And if you're the recipient of a meeting agenda, read it!)

TIP 02

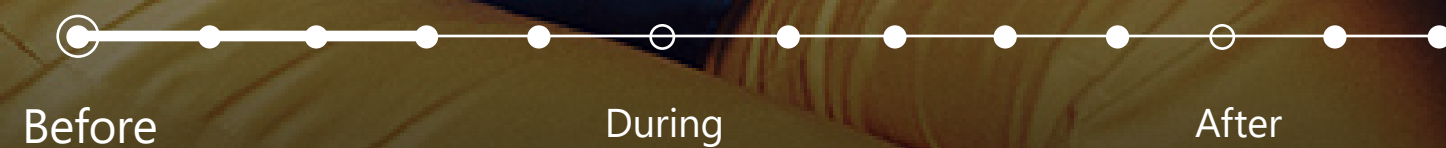
Test your tech

There's nothing worse than fumbling with conference room equipment and starting your meeting late. Skype Room Systems is a center-of-room control that brings the Skype for Business and Teams experience into the meeting room. Add HD video and rich audio, content sharing, and calling capabilities to make any space a Teams meeting space.

With Skype Room Systems, you can even use an HDMI cable to share in the room and it automatically shares to remote participants, without the hassle of any extra buttons.



Make any room a Teams meeting space.
[Shop for Skype Room Systems now.](#)



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TIP 03

Send invites that don't require a client or plug-in

Having to install a special client or plug-in can be frustrating when you're trying to join a meeting. With Anonymous Join in Microsoft Teams, you can schedule a meeting and send an invite to any valid email address, from Teams or Outlook.

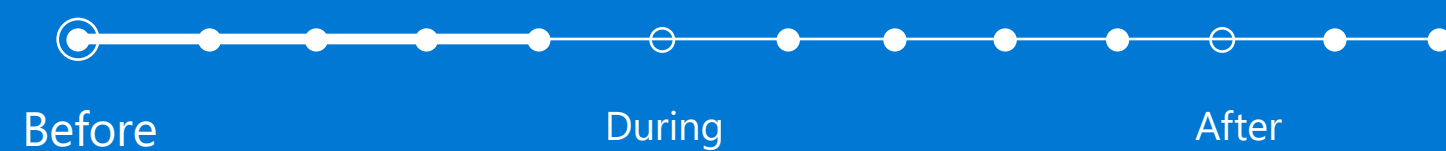
The recipient can just click on the link in their email invite, enter their name, and join the meeting. If someone wants to share their screen, they can install the desktop client and join anonymously.

TIP 04

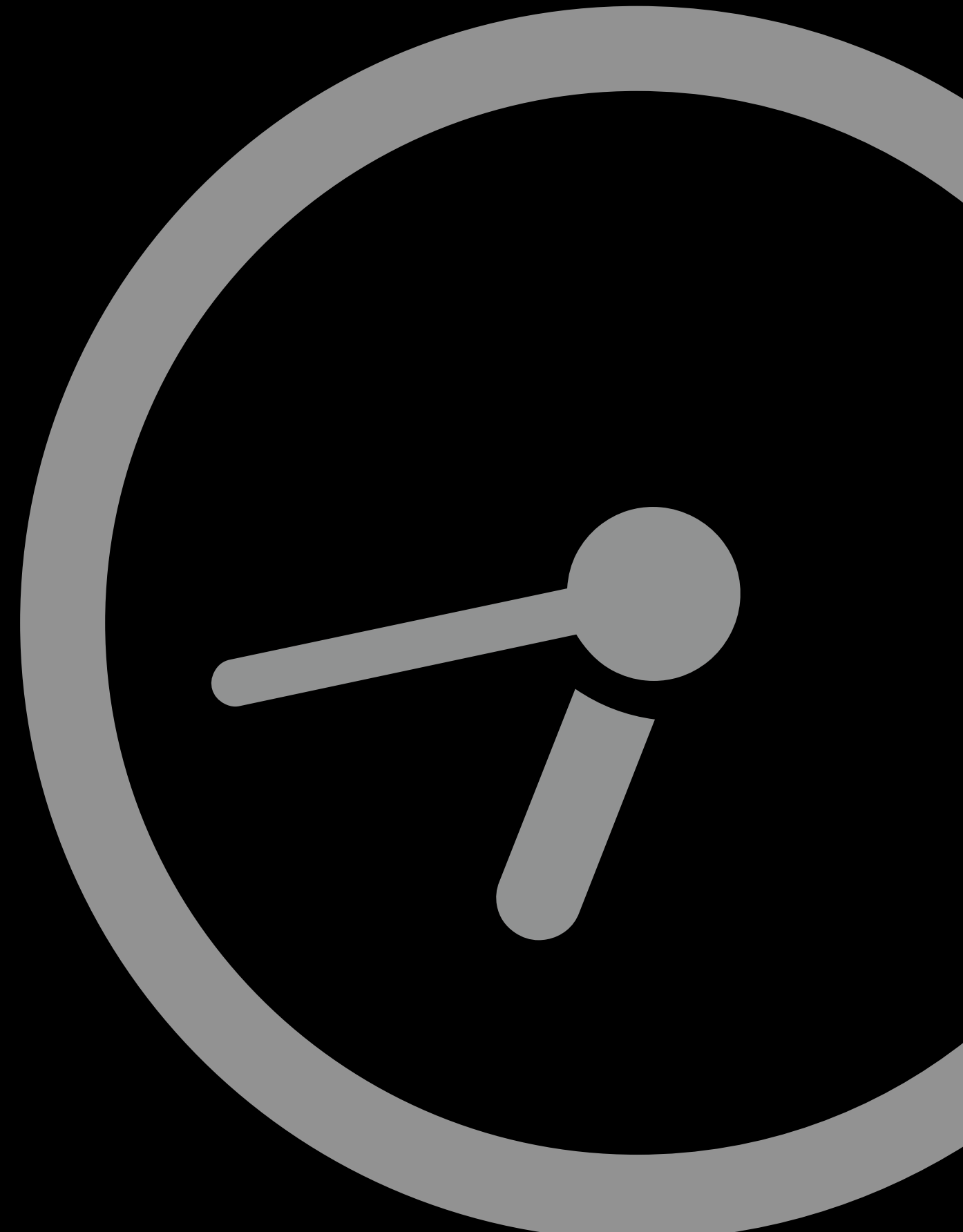
Use the lobby, especially for external attendees

You should start your meeting on time, but not before you're ready. With Microsoft Teams, attendees from outside your organization arrive in a virtual lobby by default, so you can control when they join.

This enhances privacy, but also gives you time to make sure you're ready to start. (You can also update the settings in Teams to allow anonymous users to bypass the lobby and join directly.)



During





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TIP 05

Practice good meeting etiquette

A few simple rules of etiquette can help any meeting run more smoothly. If you're presenting, turn off notifications to avoid oversharing (or use Application Sharing to share a specific window instead of your entire screen) and let others take over screen sharing if they've got something to show.

For large meetings, ask online attendees to mute their microphones. (In Microsoft Teams, anyone who joins a large meeting late automatically starts out muted.) Finally, appoint a timekeeper to manage the agenda if you're running a meeting with multiple presenters.

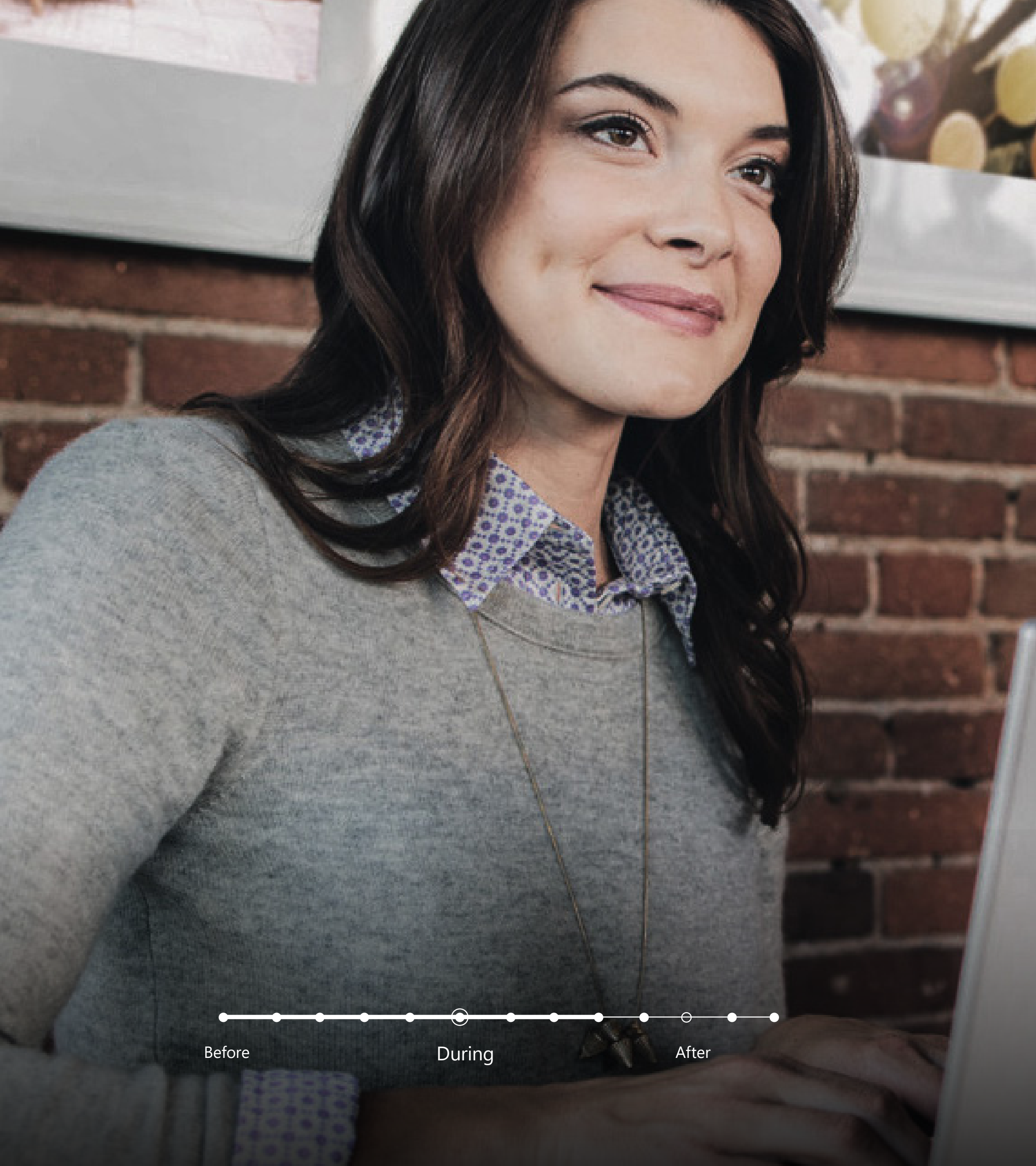


TIP 06

Record your meeting

Written minutes or a recording gives your meeting a legacy and lets people who weren't able to attend the meeting catch up later. It can also help resolve conflicts about outcomes or action items.





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TIP 07

Be a real person in virtual meetings

With online meetings, attendees don't have as many nonverbal cues to help them stay engaged. Keep the energy high to keep your audience tuned in. Turn on your video, too, so people can see you when you're speaking and know that you're actively participating.

Also, don't be afraid to inject some fun, e.g., with animated GIFs (integrated in Microsoft Teams), especially at the beginning of meetings.

TIP 08

Use integrated audio conferencing for attendees without internet

Not everyone has easy access to the internet, especially participants on the road. Calling in to a phone is an option, but that's another device to keep track of. Microsoft Teams allows participants to call in directly.

Audio Conferencing in Teams meetings supports dial-in numbers in 90+ countries and 400+ cities. You can also dial out to add attendees via their phone number.



After





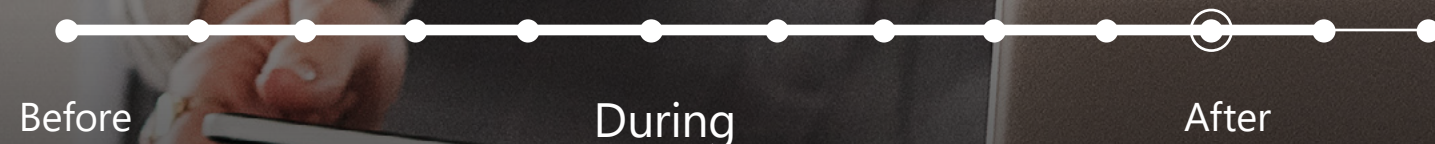
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TIP 09

Share a recap

Meeting recaps can be a valuable way to re-engage participants. Follow up with a brief summary in the Microsoft Teams project channel or email.

Remind participants of next steps and call out any key takeaways or decisions. You can also use the recap as an open-ended way to ask for more collaboration and input.



TIP 10

Troubleshoot technical problems for next time

If there were technical problems, take time afterwards to see if you can prevent the issue from recurring.

Microsoft Teams provides Call Analytics to help you and helpdesk professionals with troubleshooting. Detailed metrics can help identify audio quality issues, and you can search for specific calls and meetings. Teams even has Interactive Troubleshooting to detect common in-meeting issues, such as someone trying to speak while muted.





Learn more about running great meetings

See how Microsoft Teams in Office 365 provides a complete online meeting solution.

[Watch a webcast and demo](#)

The right devices can make your meetings go from good to great.

[Shop for meeting devices](#)

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