Firstly consider – do you need a meeting?
Can the work be done using MS Teams exchanges, Slack threads, or workflow management tools instead? These handy hints help consider the purpose of meeting and attendee numbers:

**Decision making**
Active facilitation 6-8 attendees

**Discussion meeting**
Active dialogue by attendees; 8 to 20 attendees

**Information-sharing meeting**
One-way communication from speaker; 2 to 2,000 + attendees

Source: Five Fifty: Meeting time | McKinsey

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**Principles**

Kit is a means to an end – meeting success will only partly depend on kit what really matters is inclusive chairing.

**Planning matters** – be clear about the purpose and intended outcome of the meeting.

**Meeting etiquette** – Make sure that the event invite includes clear dial-in or video call information.

**Set up to succeed** – Pick rooms with all the technology needed to enable hybrid meetings; Use rooms with speakers/screens so everyone is visible and can be heard.

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**Technology**

Ensure accessibility – use live transcript in MS Teams or zoom, translate options, and ensure content shared is digitally accessible for those with screen readers or other assistive tech needs.

Have a back-up plan – another way remote participants can join. Nominate a contact person, an alternate platform or even traditional dial-in number.

Ensure everyone can be heard – high quality speakers are important to allow everyone to be heard.

The basic kit isn’t enough - wide-angle cameras and speakerphones are a good idea.

Emphasise visibility – have two large monitors in the room so that remote participants appear in different parts of the room.
**Planning**

 Invite remote participants to access the meeting 10 to 15 minutes early – This allows remote participants to address any audio/video issues and eliminate distractions as others join the meeting.

 Designate an in-person participant to monitor the chat – They’ll be the eyes and ears for the remote participants in the meeting, providing them a way to ensure their voices are heard. It also helps monitoring any connectivity or audio issues that might occur.

 Think about breakout rooms – If the meeting demands breakout rooms, it’s worth the extra effort to integrate remote participants across several breakout groups to accentuate their equal status.

**Management and chairing**

 The chair needs support – Identify a contact person to support virtual attendees in accessing and engaging in the meeting.

 The chair should be a remote attendee – this helps make the meeting inclusive of virtual attendees.

 Active chairing matters – Draw remote participants in, keep them engaged. Take note of those not involved and ask them questions, to bring them into discussion.

 Give the floor to remote participants first – Ask remote participants for their feedback/questions before in-person participants.

 Avoid distraction – Avoid side conversations and ask that all attendees take turns speaking.

 Have a common protocol for speaking – Have all participants, raise their hands before joining in. The meeting chair should call for input or ask questions.

 Use the chat – Everyone should use the chat function.

 Stress clarity – Repeating a question helps to ensure that everybody understands and has heard what’s just been asked.

 Gain feedback at the end of the meeting – 1) What worked well; 2) What should we do differently next time. Share what you learn with colleagues to help their remote / hybrid meetings.

**Design**

 What do remote participants need to see in order to fully engage? - Faces of in-room attendees, shared presentations, physical documents, content created during the meeting on whiteboards or flipcharts, etc.

 Each remote participant should have an “in-room avatar” – a fellow participant who can be their physical presence as required. Having access to a single point-of-contact goes a long way to removing a sense of isolation from those in the room itself.

 Replicate what’s done in the physical room for remote participants – If you are brainstorming in the room on a whiteboard for example, do the same thing for virtual attendees.

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