

Virtual Meeting Toolkit

A GUIDE TO TECHNOLOGY BEST PRACTICES

Some organizations are designed for remote work. For others, the COVID-19 pandemic has forced employees, boards, and company leaders into an uncomfortable transition.

According to Diligent users, almost all meetings now have a virtual component. Running an effective in-person meeting can present many challenges (e.g., technology, preparation, flow), which are only compounded in a virtual setting.

Whether it's a lack of engagement or security, poorly executed virtual meetings can lessen productivity, weaken camaraderie, and (most importantly) compromise sensitive information at all levels of an organization. As video conferences become an increasingly important collaboration tool for boards to senior leadership teams, organizations will require advanced security protocols to protect the most sensitive and confidential information from leakage or attack.

"A seat at the table" has quickly become a seat in your home office. In this guide are several best practices to ensure your virtual meetings are effective, engaging, and secure.



Why Video?

Many of us shy away from using video, but it's one of the most important ways to make virtual meetings effective.

Here's why:

- ▶ Video conferencing is more engaging than audio conferencing. Making virtual eye contact is the next best thing to gathering in person.
- ▶ Humans process visual information significantly faster and better than text or audio. The human brain processes images 60,000 times faster than text, and 90 percent of information transmitted to the brain is visual.
- ▶ Visual elements affect people both cognitively and emotionally. For teams that are geographically dispersed, the emotional connection is key for deeper engagement.

Types of Virtual Meetings Conducted by Diligent Users

- Board Meetings
- Executive Sessions
- Meetings with Investors
- Committee Meetings
- Peer-to-Peer Meetings
- Meetings with Consultants or Trusted Third-Parties

Considerations, Tips, & Best Practices



TECHNOLOGY

- ❑ **Select a video conferencing platform.** Whether it's Zoom, GoToMeeting, Webex, or Microsoft Teams, there are a wide variety of platforms available to support video conferencing (all similar in functionality). Consult your IT team. If they don't already have video capabilities in place, they can make a recommendation based on the organization's current infrastructure.
 - **Diligent Boards supports split screen technology to view the meeting materials alongside the video conference.**
- ❑ **Determine supporting tools.** In addition to the video conferencing platform, consider the tools that are needed to securely deliver meeting materials, support communication, and increase engagement and productivity throughout the video conference. We recommend leveraging a secure file-sharing and messaging platform—and ideally, these platforms would integrate.
 - **Check out Diligent Secure File Sharing and Diligent Messenger, both of which integrate with Diligent Boards.**
- ❑ **Train attendees and administrators on the platform.** For larger, more important meetings (especially at the board- and executive-level), don't skip the trial run. Make sure your attendees understand how to properly utilize your meeting platform and all its features. Consider having a quick training session prior to your first meeting for all attendees unfamiliar with the new platform.

Diligent Virtual Meeting Tools, Defined:

- ▶ **Diligent Boards:** Provides a secure and central location for board books and sensitive meeting materials, along with the tools to review, discuss and collaborate. Voting and questionnaires can also be completed through this app.
- ▶ **Diligent Messenger:** A secure, encrypted messaging platform (accessible on phone, iPad or desktop) that resembles both SMS texting and email. Allows boards and senior leadership teams to securely communicate in groups or one-on-one. Integrates with Diligent Boards.
- ▶ **Secure File Sharing:** A virtual data room that integrates with Diligent Boards. Ideal for M&A, crisis communication, or sharing sensitive documents with permissioned third parties (e.g., auditors, consultants).
- ▶ **Secure Meeting Workflow:** A workflow tool that allows permissioned users to collaborate on documents and presentations collectively within a secure, encrypted environment.



SECURITY

- ❑ **Do not send video conference links via email.** Most video conferencing systems are hosted on the cloud, which means they're not encrypted; yet, a more pressing security risk is failing to protect the link itself. Links generated for your private video conference meetings should be treated like a sensitive document. Avoid sharing video meeting links in email or calendar invites, where they can be forwarded or intercepted.
 - Diligent now enables users to share video conference links securely in their Diligent calendar.
- ❑ **Avoid video chat features.** Most video conferencing platforms have an interactive chat feature. While convenient, this feature is both impermanent and unsecure. Any messages, links, and documents should be shared via the supporting tools as identified above.
- ❑ **Consult your GC before recording.** Most video conference platforms have a recording feature. This is frequently used to record the meeting for anyone who could not attend in real-time. Make sure you understand the legal ramifications of recording a virtual meeting before doing so.



ETIQUETTE

- ❑ **Set ground rules and circulate beforehand.** Meeting moderators are responsible for outlining the rules of engagement. These should include important reminders around “general etiquette” (i.e., mute when not speaking, use a phone line for clearer audio connection). This document should also include guidelines on process and forum: how motions will work, how to alert the moderator when you have something to say, etc.
 - Diligent Boards provides a central location to share all pre- and post-meeting materials.
- ❑ **Consider your surroundings.** Adjust your setup so that you face a window or are exposed to plenty of light. Make sure your background is professional, your attire is work appropriate, and background noise is limited.
- ❑ **Don't multitask.** Close other programs and avoid checking email or typing during the meeting. If you take notes, consider writing them down. Maintain eye contact and stay focused on the individual speaking.
- ❑ **Consider time zones.** In a remote work setting, teams can be dispersed across the globe. Consider the time zones of attendees when scheduling.



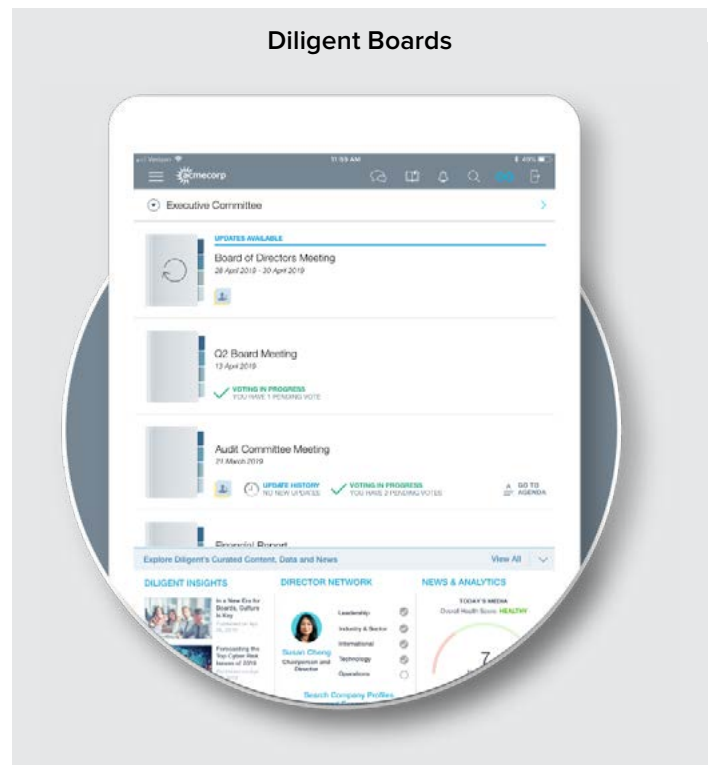
ENGAGEMENT

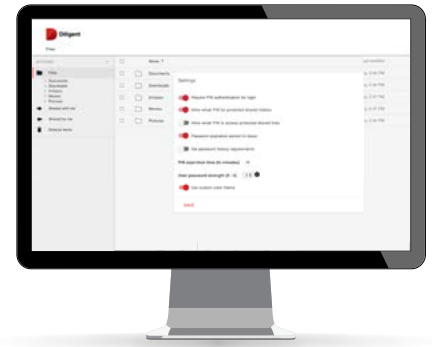
- ❑ **Set the agenda ahead of time.** With virtual meetings, a clear, well-designed agenda is more important than ever. Outline discussion topics, as well as any pre-read materials required for meeting attendees. The agenda should also set clear roles for each attendee and specify meeting objectives.
 - **Diligent Secure Meeting Workflow** enables meeting owners and administrators to collaborate on documents in a secure workflow environment.
 - With **Diligent Messenger**, reminders and agendas can be shared securely with attendees prior to the meeting.
- ❑ **Adapt meeting for virtual formats.** Most boards and leadership teams will need to adapt their typical meetings to match a virtual format—particularly with regards to length. As the number of virtual meetings increase, ensure meetings are targeted and timelines are efficient. Consider that additional, related meetings will likely follow as a result.
- ❑ **Encourage personal connections.** Remote working can be isolating. Consider a virtual icebreaker or starting each meeting with a personal touchpoint.



FEEDBACK

- ❑ **Learn and apply.** Ensure your organization has a method for collecting virtual meeting feedback from attendees and apply those lessons learned going forward. In times of uncertainty, seeking these insights not only offers an additional touchpoint but ensures that meetings become more efficient overtime so your team can focus on the task at hand.





How Diligent Supports Your Virtual Meeting Workflow

MEETING PREPARATION

- Determine agenda, attendees, and any materials that need to be prepared.
- Consult IT if any technology assistance is needed and provide training for attendees.
- Leverage **Diligent Secure Meeting Workflow** to collaborate with permissioned users as documents are being assembled.



MEETING MATERIALS DELIVERY

- Share agenda, pre-read materials, and virtual meeting “ground rules” through **Diligent Boards**.
- Send video conference links securely through your **Diligent Boards** calendar.
- Leverage **Diligent Secure File Sharing** to share sensitive files with trusted third parties.
- Send last-minute meeting reminders to attendees with **Diligent Messenger**.



MEETING PROCESS

- Use the **Diligent Minutes** module to record meeting notes and identify action items.
- Leverage Voting features within the Diligent Boards app for engagement and motions.



MEETING FOLLOW-UP

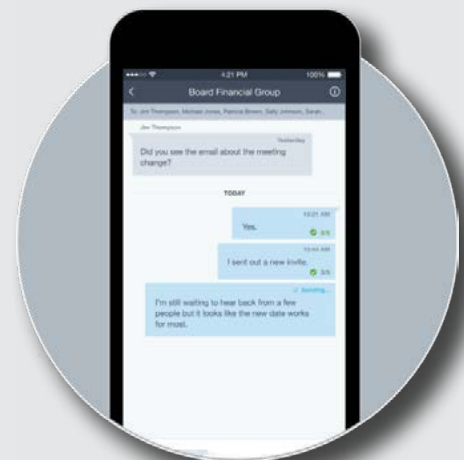
- Draft action items and assign to owners with timelines.
- Distribute follow-up materials and vote to improve meeting minutes securely within the **Diligent Boards** app.

BOARD COMMUNICATION (Before, After and Between Meetings)

- Centralize all attendee communication (including documents and link-sharing) using secure, integrated tools.
- Leverage **Diligent Messenger** for all attendee communication, including large groups, small groups, and one-on-one conversations.



Diligent Messenger





About Diligent

Diligent is the pioneer in modern governance. Our trusted, cloud-based applications streamline the day-to-day work of board management and committees, support secure collaboration, manage subsidiary and entity data, and deliver insights that empower company leaders to make better decisions in today's complex landscape. With the largest global network of corporate directors and executives, Diligent is relied on by more than 16,000 organizations and 650,000 leaders in over 90 countries. With award-winning customer service across the globe, Diligent serves more than 50% of the Fortune 1000, 70% of the FTSE 100, and 65% of the ASX.

Ready to See Diligent's Virtual Meeting Tools in Action?

For more information on how Diligent solutions work together, contact our team.

[REQUEST A DEMO](#)