Video call etiquette: what NOT to do

With video calls still standard practice in many people's working lives, experts are urging workers to stop making common mistakes.

The tech experts at TelephoneSystems.Cloud have shared seven common mistakes many video callers are making.

Proper preparation is essential to ensure every video call goes smoothly. Good lightning, a clear background and working tech are all important parts of video call success.

Juliet Moran from TelephoneSystems.Cloud said: "So many of us still rely heavily on video calls to communicate with colleagues and clients - so making sure you are on top of your video call etiquette is essential.

"Video calling can make it harder to judge tone and body language, so making sure you come across in the best way possible is essential to leaving a good impression.

"There are some mistakes lots of people make, like forgetting to check their microphone or clear away the mess in their background.

"Other mistakes, like relying too heavily on notes, having a distracting tab open on your laptop or sitting in an area with poor lighting can completely de-rail a video call.

"That's why we wanted to share some of the most common mistakes. Even if you have been taking part in or hosting calls for years, you may still find yourself committing some of these video call sins."

Here are the biggest video camera mistakes, according to TelephoneSystems.Cloud:

1. **Don't have a bad background**

When prepping for any video call, make sure to find a clean, quiet area of your living space. It is always best to have a clear, unobstructed background to avoid appearing unprofessional. You should also ignore the temptation to use the themed backgrounds.

2. **Don't rely on your notes**

Much like when you are giving a speech, you want to keep your listener engaged by talking directly to them - rather than talking while looking down at your notes. Having a tab with your notes on the screen can be a great way to refer back to a meeting agenda or talking points mid-call, but again you want to make sure you are engaging more with your audience and not fumbling with other things on your laptop or computer.

3. **Don't stare at your reflection**

Think of a video call like an in-person interaction and make 'eye contact' through the camera. Staring at yourself can make you seem nervous and unsure, but holding a good

level of eye contact with the camera can completely change how you are viewed by others on the call.

4. Don't get distracted by pop ups

Make sure to mute emails and personal messages before hopping on to a video call. The last thing you need is to be getting distracted by notifications throughout your call. This can completely take you out of the conversation and create uncomfortable moments for anyone else on the call.

5. Don't forget to test your camera

Ahead of your planned video call, it is best to test your camera to avoid awkward re-adjustments when you join the call. Make sure your laptop or web camera is in a position at eye level or the level of your forehead. This way anyone else on the call isn't positioned as looking up at you.

6. Bad audio

Being heard is critical for any video call - which means you should ensure your microphone is working and at an appropriate volume to make sure you can be heard clearly.

7. Lighting mistakes

Where you sit during your video call can really impact your lighting. Sitting in front of a strong light source like a window can make you back-lit and throw the focus of your video off. Instead, sitting yourself facing the window casts a nice amount of natural lighting on your face.

ENDS