TOP TIPS

Smart meetings & emails

These tips are designed to encourage us to think about how we can plan and execute internal and external meetings more effectively and also drive down email traffic. We know there is no 'one size fits all' approach to this and this isn't meant to be an exhaustive list but we hope it provides a catalyst for change and prompts conversations on how we might change simple habits to remove some of the avoidable stresses in our working lives.

Meetings

- Meetings should start on time and attendees should arrive/log in on time, don't expect a recap if you are late.

- Where possible limit internal meetings to 30 minutes and external meetings to 45 minutes.

- Avoid emailing or checking your phone during meetings. It can appear rude and distracting for you and for others.

- Don't expect team members to dial into calls on non-working days or annual leave.

- Be considerate when booking meetings – avoid booking in back to back meetings.

- Avoid booking in virtual meetings/calls before 9am and from 5pm unless really necessary.

- Avoid booking in lunchtime meetings – if you have to, then check that attendees still have time for an adequate lunch break.

- Make sure appointments/reminders/FYIs are set to the correct status in your calendar e.g. free/out of office/busy as this will allow for better diary management/planning.

- Ensure only your own holidays are marked as 'holidays' in your calendar – your own diary should be marked as free where other peoples' holidays are noted in your diary - this will help when people are trying to schedule in time with you. **(Click here to find out how)**

- Consider arranging 'walking meetings' (using telephone or MS Teams where in person can't work) where possible (for internal/non-confidential meetings).

- Where possible wear a headset for virtual meetings – this blocks out background noise and gives better sound quality.

- Use a standard background or blur your background on video calls, it's less distracting for attendees.

- Once we have returned to the office please don't book rooms you don't need, this causes unnecessary stress for others who can't get rooms and remember to free up your booked room if the meeting for which you are lead is cancelled/changed.

- On return to the office continue to encourage use of meetings by Microsoft Teams to give attendees more flexibility.

Emails

- Encourage use of Microsoft Teams Messenger to restrict email traffic – raise awareness of available training and encourage sign up.

- Set up a team 'chat' on Microsoft Teams Messenger – this can cut out the need for some phone calls/meetings and is helpful for junior team members to be able to use and they will also pick up knowledge/information by following the chat.

- Pick up the phone – this can save time and helps build and maintain good relationships.

- Talk to your team about how they feel about out of hours email traffic and agree protocols.

- Be mindful that although it may suit you to send emails in the evening this may not be the case for the recipient.

- If it's not urgent save out of hours messages in 'drafts' until the morning or consider the use of delayed send for emails. **(Click [here](#) to find out how)**