

10 Tips for attending a virtual conference

Learn how to use ZOOM

Our virtual conference will be hosted online via ZOOM. To make the most of your time 'onsite,' take a day or two before the conference begins to practice logging into ZOOM. Find out how to access sessions, check your audio, and work out any glitches. Your experience is in your control.

Blocking off your calendar

Work never stops, but when you're attending a virtual conference, it should take a backseat – even if only for an hour or two at a time. After all, you chose to participate in a virtual conference because you saw value in the speakers, educational sessions, and networking opportunities, so don't throw away the time you have to learn and grow! Make sure your coworkers know when you'll be busy and make an effort not to check email while you're in sessions.

Keep your family in the loop

This work from home life means that most of us are never truly alone. Our spouses, our kids, and our pets are only a room away at all times, and all demand a certain amount of your attention. By this point, you've worked out some schedule to separate work time and family time, so keep to that schedule during your virtual conference.

Build-in snack and meal breaks

One thing you don't want during a day of high-intensity learning is to have "hanger" get in the way. Even if you've never meal prepped before, this is a great time to start! Plan out your breakfast, lunch, and snacks. Even figure out your coffee breaks! While an in-person event would have built-in breaks with coffee set up in the hallways and snacks appearing as if by magic, your virtual conference F&B is your responsibility.

Go old school

Take notes on paper! To focus more, keep your attention on the screen, but your fingers off of the mouse and keyboard. Avoid flipping between a notes doc and the conference, where it might be easy to get lost and end up on Instagram or Reddit, keep the screen dedicated to sessions. This means full screen! To network and communicate with attendees, answer live polls, and more, keeping your computer free for viewing.

Attend with others

Conferences are better when you attend them with friends. Any coworkers attending the same virtual conference? Make plans to discuss sessions after the fact or message

them throughout about points you found interesting. This interaction can keep you engaged with the content.

Stand and stretch

Don't feel confined to your chair. Build-in breaks in between sessions to take a short walk or stand and stretch. And, if you aren't on video during a session that hits in the middle of the afternoon, don't be afraid to stand. Activity, even something as small as standing or walking in place, can wake you up and get you refocused on the content at hand.

Set up a time to review and re-watch

A benefit of virtual conferences is that sessions are often available on-demand, whether during the conference or right after. If there was a session you want to re-watch or quickly review again, you can! Set aside time each day of the conference or on the final day to review your notes and make the most of the content you absorbed.

Now that you have the best practices for attending, you can make the most out of our ERICSA 2020 Family Reunion!