



How to take your video calls from good to...

**GREAT MEETING EVERYONE**



## Contents

- > Something's missing from the conversation..... 3
- > On the agenda ..... 5
- > Everyone's invited..... 9
- > IT magic behind the scenes .....12
- > Try before you buy .....13
- > Great meeting everyone .....14
- > How can Poly help? .....15



## Something's missing from the conversation



You've chosen your video conferencing software to enable virtual communication and collaboration from just about anywhere. And now, your people can hop on a video call, pick up the phone, and share their work with each other from almost any device.

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Regardless of where you are in your UC platform deployment (long-time user or first-time implementor), the sharp rise in virtual meetings has made it important for you to optimize the employee experience. Standard issue microphones, cameras and speakers integrated into PCs, laptops and mobile phones don't provide the quality needed for a professional meeting, and will prevent your people from fulfilling their true potential.

Whether they're working remotely or back in the office, your team will be more productive using the right smart devices for the conversation. Not the kind of cameras or microphones you'll find in your laptop or smartphone, but the kind that can replicate the experience of being in the room – and create the human connection that's essential for great meetings. The simple addition of a professional headset or HD webcam can eliminate distractions, make everyone feel like an equal participant, and raise the overall productivity of every call. From there, you can also reduce stress, enhance understanding, and stave off meeting fatigue.

But with so many options, how do you select the devices that best meet everyone's needs?

This guide is designed to help you quickly assess your company's requirements and make informed decisions on professional-grade audio, video, and phone solutions that will help you take your virtual meetings from good to great.







## On the agenda...



For making more of your meetings, you'll need to consider video conferencing solutions, phones, and headsets. Between the three of them, you should be able to support communication and collaboration for each of your people, wherever and however they work. The trick is matching the solution to the situation.

So, let's go through some of the workspaces and workstyles you might know already – to see which ones might fit your agenda.



## Video conferencing

Laptops, PCs, and mobile devices give people the flexibility to join meetings from anywhere, on devices they find convenient – but they weren't built for video conferencing. Doing video calls all day from the kitchen table has taught us that the distractions of the office – other people talking, visual distractions, noise from the break room – happen at home, too. And even apart from distractions, how you see and are seen, what happens when you move, and how well you are heard make a huge difference, too.



## On the phone

Most videoconferencing software comes with voice-over-IP (VoIP). So, giving people VoIP-compatible desktop and conference phones helps drive its adoption. The software also delivers crystal clear audio quality, noise blocking technology, and even machine learning-driven tracking behavior so users can be heard while they're on the move.

And for those taking calls from a desk, the benefit is simple: always on, these dedicated devices allow for quick and easy connection to popular platforms with all the calling features your teams demand. And the “join now” one-touch access makes it easy to connect without waiting for your PC to start up. Add this simplicity to quality: phones with high-definition voice deliver more than twice the clarity of ordinary phone calls for life-like, vibrant conversations. Even in the noisiest office, people won't miss what is said or need to ask others to repeat themselves.



## Office meeting rooms

Who's speaking? What is that side conversation about? Who's sitting next to the CEO? Even when every meeting is different, the experiences shouldn't be. An enterprise room video solution uses high resolutions and frame rates to deliver crystal clear video on large displays. Some models include auto-focus cameras that frame the participants or dial in on the speaker without anyone touching a remote. And with video tracking in the room, remote workers can follow the discussion as if they were there – for a more collaborative meeting.

Audio is just as important, which is why some solutions use sophisticated mic designs and sound suppression to capture people talking from anywhere in the room – while cutting noises like echo or typing.



## Personal workspaces, in or out of the office

We've all seen enough poor lighting and heard enough muffled noises to recognize “default settings”. For a better experience, use an HD webcam and either a professional headset or noise-canceling personal speakerphone. A separate webcam will give you (and your audience) better image quality with more vibrant and accurate colors – even adjusting to changing lighting. Meanwhile, purpose-built audio devices include features to block out distracting background noises – be they noisy co-workers, shuffling papers, lawnmowers, or barking dogs.



## Headsets

Whether you take your meeting or phone call through a PC in the office, on a laptop at home, or on your mobile phone, these devices on their own do not provide an experience that you can rely on to be consistently clear or private. For this, you need a professional headset with advanced features like speakers and microphones that block external noise, to ensure you are not distracted, and your every word can be clearly understood. A quality headset can also give you spatial clarity. So, you can hear whoever is talking from any angle, as if you were in the same room. And don't overlook style – if a headset is comfortable, its user is going to be more confident on the call. Find out what suits your people and outfit them with the headsets that match their wearing preferences.





# Everyone's invited

The first thing to know is that not everyone works in the same way. Sometimes that's by choice – other times it's by circumstance. Before you look at what you're going to get, take a look at what you've already got.

Who works in your organization? Where do they work? And how? Recognize that people have different needs and preferences – and realize that one size won't fit all.



## Where is work happening?

Even within the office, there are many different locations where your people could be working. With the flexibility to move around freely, they could, for example, conduct the same one phone call in a number of the following areas:

### **On the go**

- Individuals conducting business away from their home or work office
- May be roaming the office space for improved focus or collaboration or outside the office visiting with customers, partners, or suppliers
- Use a mixture of voice and video devices designed to be very lightweight and portable

### **At the desk**

- Individuals working from their own personal space
- May be own desk, office, or home office location with or without privacy
- Used primarily for focused work and collaboration over voice/video

### **Huddle space**

- Fewer than six participants
- Scheduled and unscheduled meetings
- Used for one-on-one and small team discussions

### **Conference room**

- Six or more participants
- Meetings are typically scheduled
- Used for project team reviews and vendor meetings

### **Customer service**

- Typically, high-density environments designed to support inbound/outbound customer support calls
- Increasingly distributed and virtual environments where individuals are working from home
- Demand comfortable, lightweight devices that are resilient enough for high demand usage

## How is work happening?

It's not just the location that's important in determining the equipment your people need to conduct successful meetings. Their style of working is also an important consideration.



### Connected Executive

- Tech-savvy business driver who goes wherever needed to make decisions and solve problems
- Must communicate in a wide variety of environments such as at a desk, in the car, or at the airport
- Uses more communication tools than any other workstyle, so they need to stay connected across all devices



### Flex worker

- Splits time between office, home, and travel
- Always innovating and adapting their communication channels
- Needs to be “always-on” and communicate across several devices



### Office collaborator / communicator

- Office-based work style that is collaborative and open to new technology
- Most comfortable with familiar systems and devices; needs to seamlessly manage communication across devices
- Spends majority of time at their desk and needs to block out background noise, disruptions, and distractions while maintaining privacy on calls

# IT magic behind the scenes

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With so many different types of devices across several different workstyles and workspaces, how can IT buy, deploy, track, update, service, and drive adoption and use? These tips will help simplify these decisions:

## **Use software-compatible devices**

Whichever video software you're using, compatibility ensures a high-quality experience backed up by both hardware and software manufacturers.

## **Maintain a consistent workflow**

Devices that support your chosen platform will reduce calls for help because users will use the same interface in every situation.

## **A simpler view is better**

Minimize the tools needed to provision, monitor, update, and understand use across your portfolio.

## **Minimize vendors**

With this many different types of devices, there are many different vendors that provide one or more pieces of the puzzle. But if you only need to turn to one, you can probably simplify your contract, lower your costs, and offer more consistent interfaces and management.

## **Ensure global support**

If you have a global operation, having local inventory and support can be a lifesaver.

## **Don't ignore help**

There are service offerings from experienced vendors that can help plan and manage a large deployment. Take advantage of the experiences of those who have done this already.

# Try before you buy

If you want to test which devices your employees like best, a pilot program can provide a hands-on opportunity for workers to try different styles of devices in their work environment, providing you with invaluable information about their preferences. Here are some proven tips to help you run a successful pilot program:

01

## Find a motivated group leader

Select a leader who is a technology champion and frequently uses a variety of devices for meetings and discussions. Ideally, you will want to engage with a range of employees who use devices in a mix of in-office and remote locations.

02

## Choose a variety of workspaces, room sizes, and locations

From cubicles and remote offices to huddle rooms and boardrooms, test different technologies and experiences to know what works best for your organization.

03

## Pick a test group that includes different workstyles

Include executives, desk workers, and on-the-go professionals. Their experiences and feedback will be invaluable to understanding the needs of your overall workforce.

04

## Look for champions

Those early adopters who are excited to try something new are your champions. They may be members of leadership, department managers, or other employees across the business. Motivate them to drum up excitement about the new experiences, communicate the benefits, and, of course, help mine and relay feedback to IT.

05

## Make the pilot fun and visible

Get together with your champions to craft a plan for promoting these new spaces and technologies to employees. Publicize your project: put up signs and send updates letting everyone know that IT is spearheading a fun, new, and innovative project they can sign up for and test during their regular workday meetings.

06

## Bring in an experienced UC endpoint vendor

Choose a vendor or reseller that can provide a selection of voice, video, and audio solutions to test in both individual and group settings.

07

## Measure and share results

Track the success of your pilot by combining qualitative employee feedback, tickets, solution usage, and more. This will highlight additional considerations for success, and help you sell the program to executives – based on an action plan to successfully roll out the pilot more broadly.





## Great meeting everyone

Videoconferencing is an incredibly powerful way to keep dispersed teams aligned and productive. Having the right devices that seamlessly integrate and meet the needs of your various workstyles and workspaces will further boost engagement, collaboration, and business agility.

Identifying your organization's unique workstyle and workspace requirements is the first step. Recognizing and appreciating the breadth of needs will mean you pick the right devices to enhance your employee's experiences. And from there, good meetings can become great ones – for everyone.



# HOW CAN POLY HELP?

Whether your employees are in the office, on the go, at home, or a combination of all three together, Poly can help you create an environment that helps them connect, collaborate, and perform at their best, from anywhere.

Choose from the broadest selection of professional-grade audio and video devices with built-in smart features, as well as device management tools, and consultative services. Poly's personal and group audio and video solutions feature interoperability across all UC platforms and a large selection of Microsoft Teams- and Zoom-certified devices.

With remote and hybrid working on the rise across industries like healthcare, education, government and financial services, giving your employees best-in-class solutions and support to work anywhere, at any time, isn't just good for them, it's good for your business.

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