

## *Devices in Meetings Video Transcript*

- I think we need to look at three types of device in meetings, which are phones, tablets, and laptops. All three can cause problems, and they're not going to go away. So we need a plan for how to get the best out of them.

**So phones first.** The obvious approach is to say all phones off, but for many of us, it's quite a hassle to switch our phone off completely. So then you have people with phones on silent and you can hear something buzzing and we're all looking to see if it's ours. **Airplane Mode is a quick way to make sure that nothing rings, and I think that's the best option.**

Either everyone agrees to put phones in Airplane Mode, or you can have them on silent but not on the table. They have to be in a pocket or a bag. Sometimes someone's expecting an urgent call. Perhaps they have a relative in hospital or an important customer is going to call them, in which case I think it's okay for a special arrangement where they leave theirs on as long as they take it outside to answer it. I find it incredible that people can take a call and be chatting away while others are sitting at the same table. I just think it's really rude and distracting. So if that's you, even before the meeting starts or after it's finished then don't. Always take your phone out of the room to talk. One more thought about phones. If you're having quite a long meeting and the participants really are addicted to their phones, maybe they're doing high-pressure jobs where lots of urgent things are being juggled at once and they honestly do need to monitor them, you could have regular breaks where they can catch up with their messages. And you can reassure the group at the start, "We'll have a break in 45 minutes "for you to check your phones, "but for just the next 45 minutes "we'll all have them switched off. "Do we all agree?"

**Next, laptops.** I think these are more of a problem than phones because they are the obvious way to take notes and check information, and yet how do we know that people aren't checking their emails as well? Perhaps during a part of the meeting which doesn't concern them. Or maybe they reckon they can multitask. So I think the two options are either to allow laptops but say **"No emailing,"** and you might need some forfeit payable if we hear a bing sound as emails come in, or the other option is just to say, **"Sorry, no laptops allowed at all."** Maybe just one laptop for taking the minutes on, if that's the way you do it. Personally, I prefer the second option, no laptops. And my fallback, if someone has a really good reason to need theirs for the meeting, is to say, "Okay, but no emailing." They really must promise.

**Then finally there's the question of tablets.** I've certainly found that people don't seem to mind my iPad in meetings, especially if I'm writing on it with a stylus. It doesn't seem as obtrusive as a laptop. I guess because there's no physical barrier. It's flat on the table. So everyone could see if I was emailing. **So I think it's the same as laptops.** Ideally, you wouldn't have them, but if that's how someone likes to take notes or they need to refer to information and let's face it that's the future, we're going to have to embrace it, "Then okay, but promise no emailing." Clearly, if people break the rule that's been agreed by everyone at the start of the meeting, then it's either a forfeit, maybe they can put money into the pot for donuts next time, or it's a case of the leader of the meeting being assertive. For example, "Dave, would it be possible "for you to stop texting and focus on the meeting?" Or "Dave, I notice you keep looking at your phone, "and I'm guessing that something "big's happening outside of the meeting? "It's not ideal, but do you want to step out "for a few minutes and sort it out?" With any luck, Dave will say, "Oh no, sorry. "No, no, it's fine, where were we?" And then we're all back on track.

**So what rules are you going to have for your meetings for phones, laptops, and tablets? Are you going to ban them or allow them without emailing? And what forfeit are you going to have for people who break the rules? Use the notetaking tool to answer these questions.**