Technology Best Practices to Promote Well-Being
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Background: We all have a love/hate relationship with our devices: we love them for the power and control they give us, but we are frustrated by the power and control they have over us. Constant connectivity actually *decreases* productivity.

Recommendations for email

- **Check your email less frequently**. A recent study found that checking email three times a day is more productive than constant checking. Send emails during regular working hours, avoiding weekend, evenings and holidays
- Off hour emails create an unspoken pressure. Consider using a scheduled send so that you may both work when is convenient for you, but not pressure your colleagues. Use the 'Send Later' feature.
- If you regularly catch up with email during non-traditional working hours, **use a disclaimer** at the bottom of your email that you do not expect a reply until the next working day.
- Respect others' **boundaries and capacity to respond**. Showing empathy for everyone's working conditions goes a long way.

Recommendations for video calls

- Avoid starting meetings by **encouraging others to turn on their cameras**. It puts pressure on people who might only want or be able to participate by audio.
- Remember phone calls? **Consider a voice-call only**. Normalize this practice.
- **Avoid defaulting external calls to video,** especially if you don't know each other well.
- **Build in breaks:** Schedule back-to-back meetings for 25 or 50 minutes to give yourself enough time in between.

Tips for effective and efficient meetings

- Make sure you **really need a meeting** before scheduling it. Can it be resolved by a phone call or email instead?
- Every meeting should have a **purpose**; to make a decision or complete an action together. Use emails for updates.
- Do not schedule **more time than you need**. Most hour long meetings can be completed in 30-45 minutes.
- **Start and end on time**. Don't wait for stragglers—it only encourages them.
- Only invite the people who **absolutely need to be there**. The more people in a meeting, the less that gets done.
- Every meeting should have **someone clearly assigned to run it**. If it's not you, name someone else.
- If you want people to **read something ahead of time**, send it at least three hours prior. Avoid giving out several handouts at the beginning of the meeting**.** They'll start flipping through and be distracted.
- **Set an agenda, and share it** at the beginning of the meeting to keep everyone on track.
- **Do not check your phone or email** during meetings. Everyone can see, and they'll start doing the same.
- **Keep track of next steps**. Any action items with an assignment should be sent around as a reminder after the meeting.
- If the conversation goes off topic, it is **acceptable to redirect**. A simple, "Let's schedule a time to discuss that later if it's helpful, since we only have 10 minutes left," works perfectly.
- **Watch body language.** You can easily tell if people are bored, disengaged, or feel like their time is being wasted.
- If needed, **assign a note-taker**, so that you can focus on running the meeting.

Further Reading
Setting Digital Boundaries
Combating Zoom Fatigue
Navigating the New World of Virtual Work
21 Unwritten Rules of Meetings