



# How to Run Successful Virtual Meetings with MEPs and Policymakers

András Baneth

Public Affairs Council

[abaneth@pac.org](mailto:abaneth@pac.org)

Connect with me on LinkedIn

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# Engaging online with MEPs & policymakers

1. Before the meeting
2. During the meeting
3. After the meeting

Outreach emails to MEPs



# Is this a good email...? Why?

Subject: ECPA conference invitation

Dear MEP Smith,

I'm contacting you on behalf of ECPA regarding the upcoming 'The future of plant protection product approvals post-COVID-19' conference.

We'd like to invite you to address the topic of 'Why does the EU need to speed up novel technology approval procedures?'.

I understand you'd need to discuss the invitation with your political group, but we'd very much need to receive a reply within a week.

The event will take place online, using Zoom, on 27 October. We very much hope you can accept our invitation.

Thank you in advance,  
[name]

# THE BODY



**OPENING (DEAR, 1ST NAME ONLY, HI)**

**APOLOGISE VS THANK THEM**

**REFERENCE TO PREVIOUS EXCHANGE (IF ANY)**

**WHEN ASKING A QUESTION  
(STANDALONE + QUESTION + SCOPE)**

**HOW MANY HYPERLINKS?**

# THE BODY

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**SHOULD YOU BOLD OR UNDERLINE?**

**TITLES, BULLETS, NUMBERING, @**

**CAREFUL WITH RELATIVE DATES (TOMORROW ETC.)**

**SIGN-OFF AND SIGNATURE**

The background image shows a person's hand typing on a silver laptop keyboard. To the left of the laptop is a white cup filled with yellow tea on a matching saucer. Behind the laptop, a notebook with a green cover and a pink pencil are visible. The entire scene is set against a dark blue background.

# EXERCISE

**Draft the first 2-3 paragraphs of an email that you're sending to an MEP to request a 20-minute online meeting.**

**Context: you haven't yet met this MEP and they don't know your company/organization.**

# EXAMPLES to discuss



#1

*Dear (German MEP),*

*I am contacting you on behalf of EuroCommerce to propose a short online meeting regarding the Digital Services Act file. As representatives of retailers and wholesalers in Europe, we are very keen to exchange views with you or one of your advisors and discuss our comments regarding the compromise amendments to the draft report.*

*To get a flavour of who we are, EuroCommerce is the EU association representing big and small retail, wholesale and other trading companies in all EU Member States. Our members are both companies such as Lidl, Carrefour, IKEA, Metro or Amazon as well as national associations and affiliated federations. Our German members are the associations BGA and Handelsverband Deutschland.*

*I look forward to hearing from you regarding your availability in the next two weeks and remain at your disposal should you need any further clarifications.*

*Kind regards,*

#1

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I look forward to hearing from you regarding your availability in the next two weeks and remain at your disposal should you need any further clarifications.

Kind regards,

# #2

*Dear (AGRI MEP),*

*I am writing to suggest a short online call with Christel Delberghe, Executive Director Competitiveness, and Niccolo Ciulli, Adviser, at EuroCommerce, the main EU organization representing retail and wholesale. The purpose of the call would be to exchange on topical issues in relation to agri-food chain developments and the sustainability transition.*

*We propose the following dates or any other dates that would suit your agenda better:*

*13 October (Wednesday) – between 15:00 and 17:30*

*15 October (Friday) – after 15:00*

*19 October (Tuesday) – after 11:00*

*22 October (Friday) – before 14:00 and after 15:30*

*We hope you will find the time to meet and will follow up soon on this request.*

*Best regards,*

## #2

*Dear (AGRI MEP),*

*I am writing to suggest a short online call with Christel Delberghe, Executive Director Competitiveness, and Niccolo Ciulli, Adviser, at EuroCommerce, the main EU organization representing retail and wholesale. The purpose of the call would be to exchange on topical issues in relation to agri-food chain developments and the sustainability transition.*

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*Best regards,*

# 7 THINGS MEPs & policy-makers are thinking before a meeting

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## #1

### Why care?

Is this topic relevant to my (political/personal) interests?

## #2

### Why me?

Was this sent to others too?  
Am I a key player on this topic? If not, why do they contact me?

## #3

### Context

is this the right time to discuss this? Isn't it too early/late in the process?

## #5

### Cost of 'no'

If I decline the meeting, will it have any negative consequence? Will I look bad?

## #6

### Logistics & Optics

Timing, platform, pre-approval, Transparency Reg., Media

## #4

### WIIFM?

What's in it for me? Will I get new information/data/perspective? Do I NEED to meet them?

## #7

### Expectations

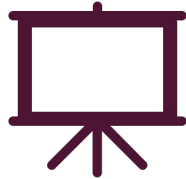
How will the meeting run?  
What will we discuss?

- Will the discussion be recorded?
- Who else will be joining?
- Can you share info about the meeting online (the meeting only, or content)?
- Will you use PPT, video, screen sharing or other?
- Will someone from your on-site team or subject matter expert join in?
- Have you trained them or did they rehearse beforehand?
- What are your key messages (max. 3)?
- What does a successful meeting look like? (focus on the outcome)

**CLARIFY BEFOREHAND**



Have cabled internet (not wireless)  
+ 4G in case the cabled fails



If multiple presenters, make sure  
everyone has all the slides  
(so they can display/advance it  
from their end if needed)



If your internet fails, have the  
dial-in number ready



Consider pre-recording critical  
parts or speeches to use as a  
backup

## PLAN THE TECH

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# LOOK GOOD



# Framing Your Video Shot

Headroom

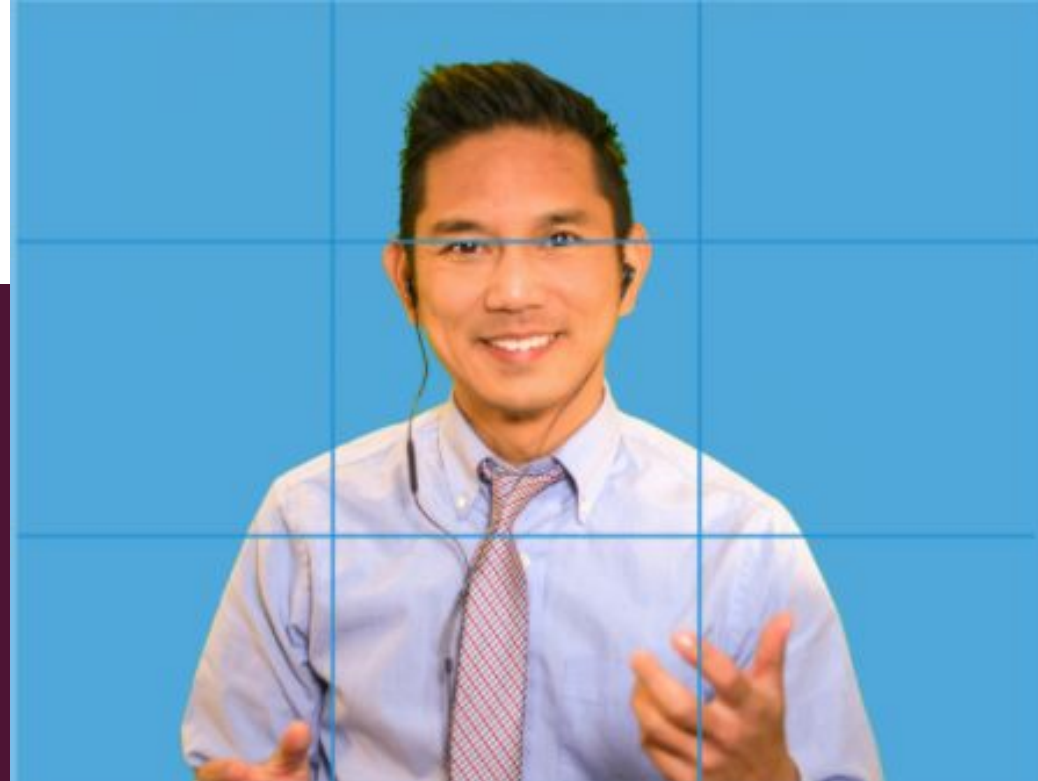
Eye Height

Angle

Distance (arms length)

Center vs. Rule of Thirds

Hands



## SETUP

1. LIGHT YOUR FACE
2. CAMERA EYE LEVEL
3. HEADPHONE MIC





YOUR SECRET METHOD

# HOW DO YOU MAKE YOUR VIRTUAL POLICY MEETINGS EFFECTIVE?

Type in the chat box or  
put your virtual hand up so we can unmute you.

# HOW TO KEEP THE INTEREST UP

Play with  
your voice

Make it  
a dialogue

Keep it shorter than you  
would in person

Use visuals

Use pauses  
and breaks

“Read the  
[virtual] room”

Consider using  
co-presenters

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# SLIDES: WHAT TO DO (AND WHAT NOT TO DO)



**MAKE YOUR SLIDES** *interesting*



**Limited (or no) animation**



Split bullets into multiple slides



**Minimal on-screen text (or annotate)**



**Send as pre-reading handout**





**ON-SCREEN & POST-EVENT VERSION**

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- Send a follow-up “thank you” email (with extra data/background info)
  - Informing them about your take-away from the meeting
  - Sharing your social media message about the meeting (if pre-agreed)
  - Sending them useful information about something they mentioned at the meeting



YOU MAY CONSIDER...

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IF THE MEETING  
WAS 'ON THE  
RECORD'

# USE “CONTENT REPURPOSING”

**If you have a recording, you may:** (if agreed/approved)

- Have it transcribed and published
- Cut it into smaller chunks and post them on your website or social media
- Share notable quotes on LinkedIn, Slideshare or Scribd
- Turn the audio into a podcast
- Write a memo about your take-away
- Create an infographic from the content

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# ANY FINAL QUESTIONS, COMMENTS?

Connect with me:

[linkedin.com/in/andras-baneth/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/andras-baneth/)