

The Science is Clear: *Visibility Drives Engagement* in Virtual Meetings



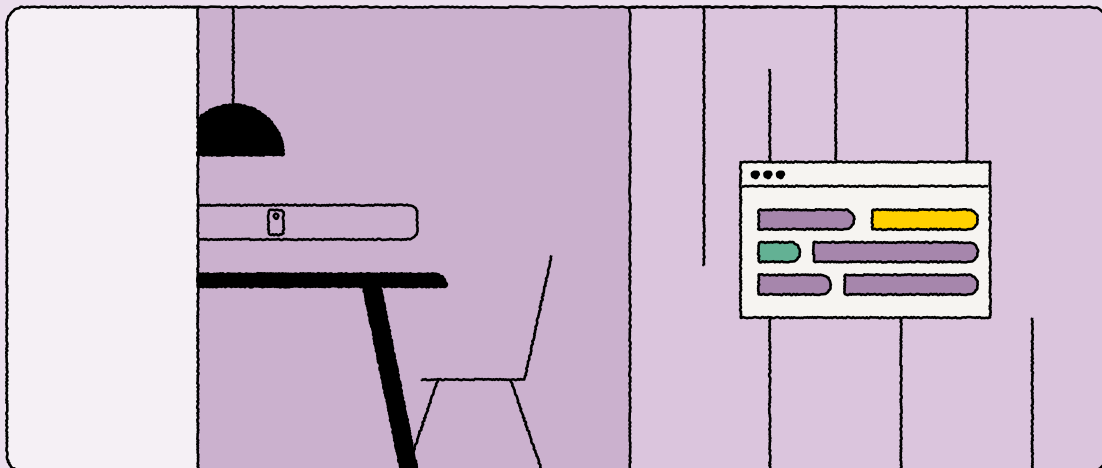


Being seen doubles attention and *enhances performance*

As companies navigate the evolving landscape of a distributed workforce, video meetings remain the backbone of virtual collaboration. However, hybrid collaboration presents unique challenges, from maintaining engagement to ensuring all voices are heard, not to mention having the equipment we need to hold remote meetings in the first place.

80%

of us waste time looking for meeting rooms with the right equipment to have a virtual meeting.



Let's face it: we've all been in meetings where we've struggled to be seen or heard. But is it really a case of out of sight, out of mind? Does being seen in a meeting really impact how successful that meeting will be? **Turns out, yes. Drastically so.**

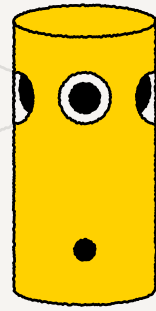
Jabra worked closely with the London School of Economic's Behavioural Lab to conduct further analysis on our previous research into the effect of technology on hybrid meetings. This second wave of analysis provides hard data on what many of us have suspected: being clearly seen in a virtual meeting dramatically boosts attention and engagement, often doubling these factors compared to participants who

are less (or in)visible.

The findings confirm that visibility isn't just about inclusion, it actively enhances performance. When people know they're seen, they engage more, contribute more, and experience a positive increase in their cognitive and social responsiveness.

The message for businesses is clear: great meetings don't just happen, they need an environment where that empowers people to perform at their best. And that starts with being seen. ➡

The visibility effect: The power of *being seen*



The study collected millions of data points in over 500 minutes of recorded video meetings, comparing groups using different video conferencing technology. The survey showed that participants using the Jabra Panacast 50 were fully visible at all times, while those using competitor conferencing equipment were often obscured, especially those seated at the edges of the meeting room, who were only fully visible about a fifth of the time.



Double the attention

Visible participants were twice as attentive and engaged as those who were harder to see.



Increased expressiveness

Visible participants showed greater emotional range, reducing their neutral expressions to 92% of the time.

Let's look at the data

The difference in engagement between those who could and couldn't be seen was stark.

Facial expression analysis showed that visible participants were **twice as attentive and engaged** as those who were harder to see. Participants who were visible maintained focus 55% of the time, compared to 34% for those who were harder to see. Similarly, engaged facial expressions were observed twice as often in visible participants (21%) compared to those

who were partially or fully hidden (10%).

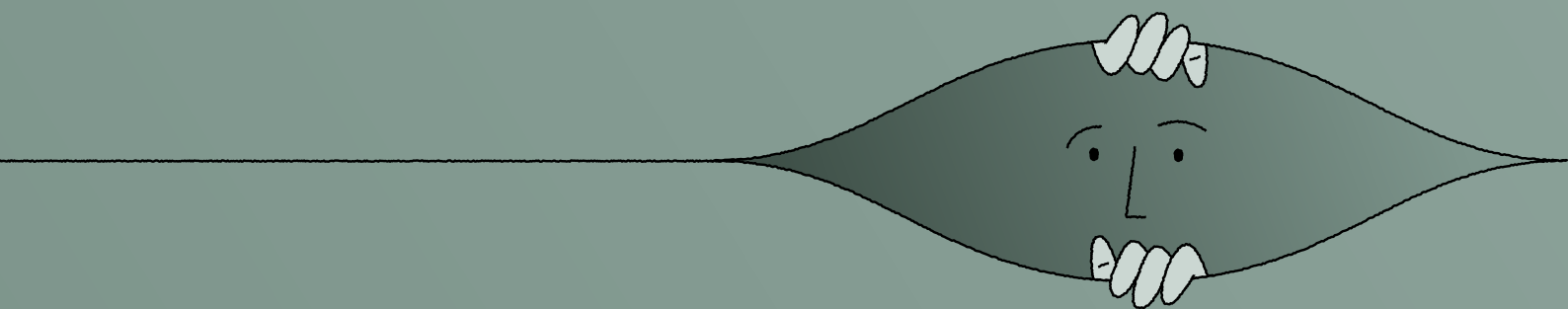
Crucially, visibility didn't just increase participation, it also made people more expressive and emotionally present. Those who weren't clearly visible maintained neutral facial expressions for nearly all (98%) of the meeting, while visible participants showed greater emotional range, reducing their neutral expressions to 92% of the time.

Together, these findings confirm that visibility plays a fundamental role in fostering active participation. When people know they can be seen, they are far more likely to contribute, react, and stay engaged, an essential factor for effective collaboration. If we are neutral in meetings, we are not in a state of collaboration or active engagement. This has a knock-on impact on our ability to have productive or creative discussions, limiting innovation and reducing the overall effectiveness of the meeting.

What do the experts say?

“Our analysis suggests that visibility plays a significant role in virtual meetings dynamics. Overall being clearly visible significantly equates with greater attention and engagement, typically doubling these factors compared to participants who are fully or partially occluded.”

— Dr Simon Noyce
Psychologist and lead researcher



How visibility *enhances* performance

As part of the study, researchers looked at changes in what is technically termed ‘arousal’ in meeting participants, which is a measure of how alert and engaged someone feels. The results show that changes in alertness clearly differ depending on whether we’re seen or not.

Participants who were visible reported higher levels of arousal (6 vs. 5 on a 10-point scale), a state typically associated with greater energy, motivation, and cognitive activation. When coupled with the doubling of engagement and attention, this suggests that visibility isn’t just about presence, it actively enhances participants’ ability to think, focus, react, and contribute effectively.

This aligns with psychological theories such as the Yerkes-Dodson Law, which suggests that moderate levels of arousal enhance cognitive performance and

task engagement. In this context, increased arousal caused by being seen can lead to heightened focus, faster cognitive processing, and improved responsiveness. These findings also support the social facilitation theory, which argues that people perform better on tasks when they are being observed by others.

By being seen, participants may subconsciously become more engaged and proactive, as they perceive a greater sense of accountability and social connection, leading to more effective collaboration.



+55%

Visible participants report 55% increased levels of arousal

Participants who were visible reported higher levels of arousal: a state associated with greater energy, motivation, and cognitive activation.

The visibility paradox

Why being seen isn't enough for a great meeting



While visibility is a powerful driver of engagement and performance, it also introduces complexities in workplace dynamics. Seeing and being seen affects more than just participation, it fundamentally shapes how individuals perceive their authority, autonomy, and sense of belonging in group settings.

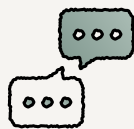
Our research indicates that visibility can sometimes come at the cost of how comfortable we are to speak up. Participants who were always visible were **19% more likely** to report lower levels of independence compared to those who were not always seen. This suggests that while being seen fosters collaboration, it can also subtly reinforce social conformity, making individuals more aware of how they present themselves to others.

This highlights the need for organizations to **balance visibility with psychological safety**, ensuring that

employees feel empowered rather than scrutinized. When individuals feel that their presence is acknowledged without judgment, they are more likely to engage authentically and contribute meaningfully.

Visibility should enhance participation, not create pressure. Organizations should focus on creating an environment where employees feel seen and valued, rather than monitored. Encouraging a culture of open communication and mutual respect ensures that visibility fosters engagement rather than discomfort.

To ensure that visibility enhances rather than hinders workplace collaboration, organizations should:



Encourage open participation

Encourage open participation by emphasizing that visibility is about engagement, not surveillance.



Balance visibility with autonomy

Balance visibility with autonomy by allowing individuals the flexibility to choose how they participate in meetings.



Train leaders

Train leaders to recognize psychological safety cues and foster inclusive discussions that give all voices equal weight.

What do the experts say?

“The feeling of increase dependency associated with personal visibility could be interpreted as a result of a greater sense of group membership and hence group dependency and conformity.” — Dr Simon Noyce
Psychologist and lead researcher



Wrapping up

Our analysis leaves no doubt: visibility plays a significant role in how people feel, engage and perform in virtual meetings. When employees are clearly seen, they are twice as likely to stay focused and contribute actively.

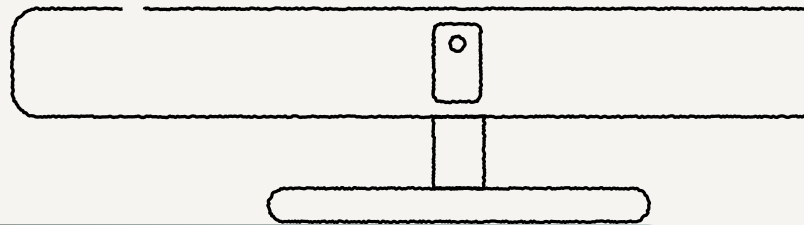
But, visibility alone isn't enough. Organizations must ensure that being seen is empowering rather than pressuring.

To create truly effective hybrid meetings, businesses should prioritize visibility not just as a function of technology but as a tool for fostering inclusion, confidence, and engagement.

This means investing in professional video solutions, allowing flexibility in participation, and ensuring

psychological safety so that visibility enhances, rather than limits, collaboration.

By taking these steps, organizations can build a work culture where meetings are not just spaces for communication but catalysts for meaningful engagement, creativity, and productivity.



To create truly effective hybrid meetings, businesses should prioritize visibility for all meeting participants to foster inclusion, performance, and engagement.

Are your meeting spaces empowering your teams to perform at their best?

Visit Jabra.com to find out more about our range of video solutions to support meeting spaces, big and small.