

NAHU Teleconference Etiquette

When you are attending an NAHU teleconference or a web/teleconference, you will be given a special teleconference 877 number and a PIN to sign on to the call.

FIRST - Basic Instructions

Prior to the call, double-check the time, time zone and the number of the call. Our calls are always based upon Eastern Standard Time. Please call the teleconference number prior to the set time. You will be immediately connected to the other participants. No one will have to wait for you.

- Those already connected will hear a short tone when you join the call, and the chair will usually say something like, "Hi, who just joined the call?" or "Welcome, hold on a moment while everyone joins the call."
- Address the chair and always say your name before speaking so that people will have no difficulty identifying you.

SECOND – Important Conference Etiquette

There are several elements of teleconference etiquette, please review these before you call. They include:

1. Mute Button

Try to call from a quiet location. If you cannot, use your mute button, if there is one. Background noise, the dog barking, radio, etc., could be a problem for the other participants.

2. Phone HOLD button - DO NOT USE!

Most phone systems today offer music on hold or a company audio promotion for clients to listen to while waiting on the line. **If you must temporarily leave the conference simply place the receiver on your table or desk with the MUTE button ON.** If you push the HOLD button the entire teleconference will hear the music and will not be able to continue until you return. Please **DO NOT** under any circumstances use your HOLD button. **If you must leave or take another call HANG-UP from the conference and rejoin the conference later by calling in again.**

3. Breathing

Some people breathe 'heavier' than others. So, we ask everyone to hold the mouthpiece or telephone headset away from their mouth and nose, until they are speaking. This sounds pretty silly, but when you're on a call with a heavy breather, you'll know why!

4. 2-line phones

If you have a two-line phone, please turn the ringer off of the second line. If you don't, and you get a call during the teleconference, it can really be a shrill noise that everyone hears.

5. Pets

Your dog will probably woof at exactly the time needed for some comic relief, so it's not usually a problem. But please try to put pets in another room.

6. Speakerphones, Cell phones and Cordless phones

Use these with caution. If they are the only way to attend the call, **use them**. The clarity/quality sometimes isn't great. We will let anyone know if this is the case.

7. Sharing

The leader will usually ask for callers to share or respond, throughout the call. If/when you do share, say something like, "Tom (or the leader's name), this is Frank from Philadelphia." The leader will say, "Yes, Frank, go ahead." Then you can say whatever you'd like. Always use the leader's name and wait until they respond, indicating that you can proceed. On smaller calls (5 or 6) this formality isn't usually needed and there is a natural flow of people sharing and discussing.

8. CrossTalk

If another caller says something that you want to comment on or ask more information about, go through the leader, don't speak to the person directly, at least at first. Let the leader play traffic director. You could say something like, "Sara, can I ask that Pat rephrase the point she just made?" Again, on smaller calls, this isn't as necessary, but on the large calls, it really is.

9. Early/Late

Please don't call the teleconference number more than 5 minutes ahead of the scheduled time -- another conference may be in session. If you're late to the call, no problem, just dial in and be silent until you catch on to what's being discussed. The leader may or may not officially welcome you -- but probably won't so as not to disturb the flow of the call. That doesn't mean you're not welcome! And, finally, if you're more than 10 minutes late, be really careful about asking questions, as they may well have been asked earlier.

We want to thank you for observing the rules of etiquette to make the NAHU teleconference a pleasurable sharing experience for all those in attendance.