

# ONLINE VS FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS: WHERE IS THE DIFFERENCE FOR GERMAN BUSINESS TRAVELERS?



Because of the Coronavirus pandemic, companies have replaced approximately two out of three business trips with virtual meetings in the past three months. However, this is only a temporary solution for the employees.

More than eight out of ten German business travelers prefer face-to-face meetings. Around every second employee says that they offer advantages such as better relationships, success experiences and sales. **In addition, every fifth business traveler feels more productive on the go than in the office.** These are the results of a study conducted by the German Travel Association (DRV).

Overall, 68% of business trips have been replaced by virtual meetings since March. This corresponds to an increase of 39% compared to 2019. Although face-to-face meetings and business trips were possible despite the lockdown, only 16% of meetings with external participants took place since the outbreak of the pandemic. 16% were postponed or cancelled and every third conference was held virtually for the first time.

Even if virtual meetings are now routine in many places, business travelers want to rely more on face-to-face meetings in the future. 85% of respondents say they prefer this type of meeting. 43% of them plan to hold significantly fewer virtual meetings in the future. 42%, on the other hand, would like to continue meeting virtually.

Many employees have noticed in the past few weeks that video and telephone conferences have their advantages. For example, 79% of respondents mentioned lower costs and 73% time-saving. However, 68% also noticed a serious deficit - the danger of the technical problems.

There are also other aspects that speak for personal meetings. 51% mention the personal sense of achievement for employees and 48% the better relationship management. Personal contact also seems to be advantageous from a sales perspective. 45% say that they achieve more sales at personal meetings. In virtual meetings, this only applies to a third of the respondents.

Another advantage of face-to-face meetings and the necessary travel is that 19% of business travelers can work more productively on the go than at their permanent place of work. Despite travel expenses, every second person still reaches the same level.

This is mainly due to the fact that solo travelers can make good use of the time between or after work appointments. Two out of three respondents cite this as the reason why they are productive on the go. **Six out of ten attribute this to the fact that they can relax in between.** A different environment promotes creativity for every second person and thus also helps productivity.

But business travelers don't find the right conditions everywhere to be able to work productively. This is especially true for airports and train stations. 31% are dissatisfied with the WLAN access offered there. 33% would like more soundproof cabins for undisturbed calls and 35% more quiet

work areas with tables.

Date: 2020-07-13

Article link:

<https://www.tourism-review.com/business-travelers-prefer-face-to-face-meetings-news11628>