Top 10 Virtual Conference Tech Tips

1. **Check all connections and accessories**: Is the Wi-Fi working and at highest signal, is the network cable securely inserted into the modem, verify/test/adjust the microphone and video camera settings on the computer and/or device as needed.

2. **Charge all device batteries**: If using a laptop it is recommended that it be plugged in or fully charged, have a cell phone or mobile device charged as a backup, and keep a charger nearby as video conference session can drain down batteries.

3. **Check your surroundings:** It is expected that you have a quiet location with minimal background distractions. Improve your lighting by using natural light in front or side of the computer, or overhead lighting to add a light beside the computer. Position your camera by setting the laptop on a few books or a box so others may see you at eye level. Refrain from tilting your head up or down, instead, look straight up to the camera, people should see your head and shoulders almost down to your elbows.

4. **Prepare and practice:** Before joining a virtual conference, do a test run to ensure you are familiar with features or that everything you set up is working to offset or minimize technical issues.

5. **Headset with microphone** is recommended. If you don't have one, try using one from your smartphone as it usually provides better sound quality than the one on a laptop. Speak clearly and concisely.

6. Learn how to **Mute** and **Unmute:** Only turn on mic when it is your turn to speak, Mute when not speaking. Always check the computer/device screen if you clicked the mute button.

7. **Keyboard and Apps:** Hands off the keyboard and only keep essential windows and programs open.

8. **Notifications:** Turn off or silent mobile device notifications such as email, text messages and news/weather alerts.

9. **Secure Conference:** Make sure you have a reliable antivirus solution installed that provides virus, phishing, and web protection, and always keep operating systems and browsers updated.

10. **Support:** Identify who will be the support contact within your organization in the event something goes wrong before or during the virtual conference. Create a contingency plan if the laptop malfunctions such as using a smart phone or tablet.