Culture and Etiquette

Our fully remote setup gives us the gift of flexibility and autonomy, but with that comes the responsibility to work intentionally and respectfully. This guide outlines the Thesis norms and expectations that help us collaborate effectively, reduce fatigue, and create a thriving remote-first culture.

# 1. Add Your Professional Photo to Tools

Why it matters:

Seeing a face makes us feel more human and connected. It helps build familiarity, reduces anonymity, and improves communication especially when we don't get the chance to meet in person that often.

Action:

Upload a clear, friendly professional photo to all company platforms. Please don't upload a cartoon or picture of you on the beach/drinking etc. You have to remember that this picture appears for external calls as well as internal. If uploading a photo is a problem for any particular reason then please reach out to your Manager or someone in the People & Culture team to discuss.
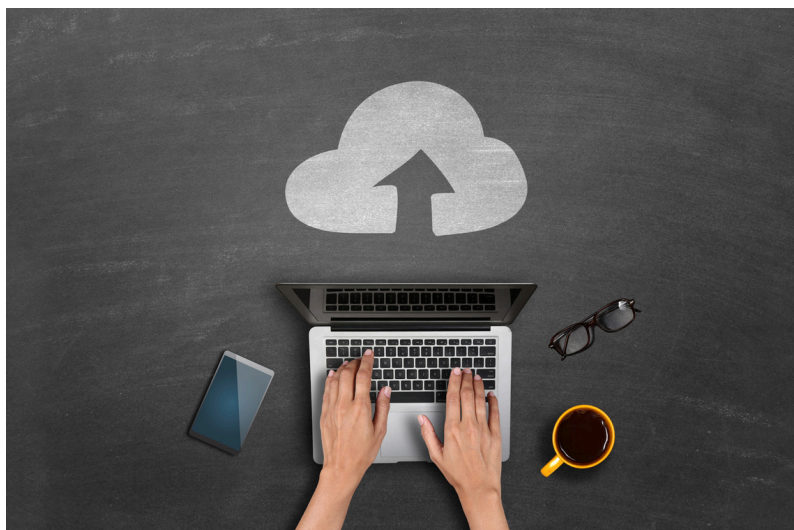
2. Block Focus Time in Your Calendar

Why it matters:

Deep work requires space and uninterrupted time. If we don't protect our focus, we can't do our best work.

Action:

Regularly block out time in your calendar for focused, non-meeting work. Respect others' focus blocks when booking meetings. Try not to overbook focus time to allow people to use your calendar to schedule meetings.
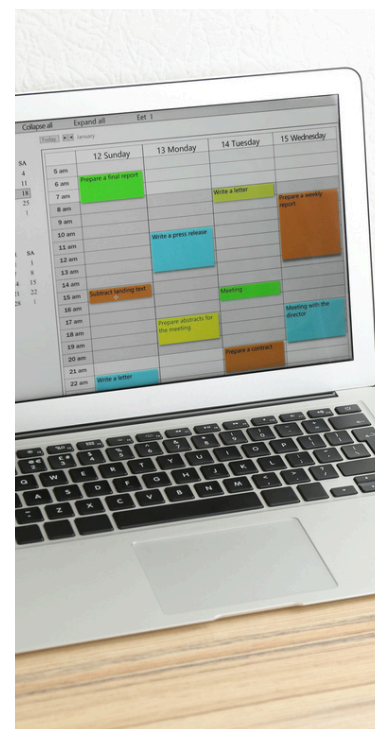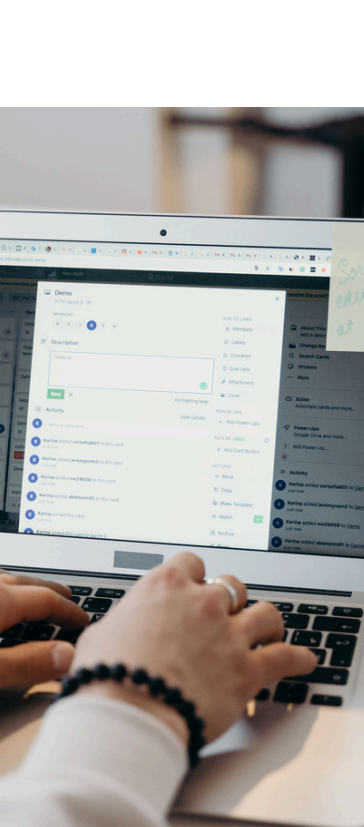
3. Check Calendars Before Scheduling a Meeting

Why it matters:

Everyone manages different time zones, workloads, and personal schedules. Checking availability shows respect for people's time.

Action:

Always review someone's calendar before sending a meeting invite. If the only time that works clashes with another commitment, reach out first or add a note suggesting the recipient propose an alternative.

4. Include a Brief Agenda in Every Meeting Invite

Why it matters:

Clear agendas help people prepare, know if they need to attend, and focus the discussion. Meetings without agendas tend to wander or lack purpose.

Action:

Add a few bullet points in the invite or description field.

5. Use "CC" for Non-Mandatory Attendees

Why it matters:

Sometimes people may benefit from a meeting, but don't need to attend in real time. Using cc avoids bloating calendars and allows optional catch-up.

Action:

If someone should be aware but doesn't need to join live, CC them and clarify it's optional.

6. Default to Recording & Transcription

Why it matters:

People may be in different time zones or have conflicts. Recording and transcribing meetings ensures no one misses important info and supports flexible, asynchronous collaboration.

Action:

Make recording and transcription your default, unless there's a reason not to (e.g., highly sensitive conversations).

7. Accept/Decline Meetings & Always Send a Response

Why it matters:

Unclear RSVPs create confusion and waste time. Meeting organizers need to know who's attending so they can prepare appropriately. Ensure responses are always sent to the organizer: unless you send a response they will not see if you are attending or not.

Action:

Always select Accept, Decline, or Tentative, and then send a response.
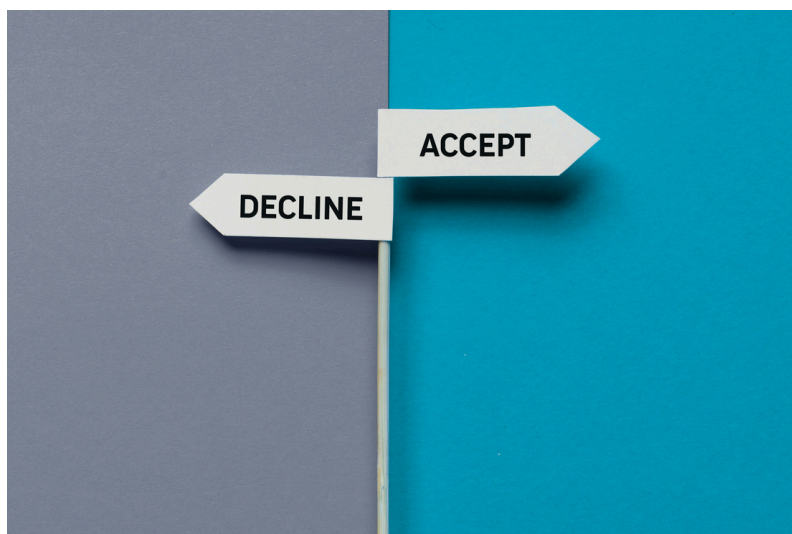
8. Review Recurring Meetings Regularly

Why it matters:

What worked once may not still add value. Unchecked recurring meetings clutter calendars and create fatigue.

Action:

Every quarter, review recurring meetings and cancel what's no longer useful, shorten durations, or adjust frequency. Use "end by" to stop meetings recurring for longer than necessary.

9. Cameras On is the Default

Why it matters:

Seeing each other builds trust, connection, and reduces miscommunication. It's especially important in remote settings.

Action:

Keep cameras on for internal meetings by default. For client calls, it is always expected.

Note:

If you have a specific reason to keep your camera off, please make the organizer aware and just drop a quick note in the chat for everyone else e.g., "Joining with audio only today, thanks!"

10. Walking Wednesdays

Why it matters:

Sitting at a desk all day isn't healthy. Walking meetings encourage movement, change of pace, and mental refreshment.

Action:

On Wednesdays, opt for audio-only meetings while walking if the agenda allows. Indicate when a meeting is a good opportunity for a "Walking Wednesday."

11. No Meetings Fridays

Why it matters:

Fridays are great for reflection, deep work, and wrapping up the week. Meetings can fragment this valuable time.

Action:

· Review your calendar weekly and move non-essential Friday meetings.
· Avoid booking meetings on Fridays unless absolutely necessary.
· If a Friday meeting must happen, reach out in advance to confirm and explain why.

12. Use Statuses Thoughtfully

Why it matters:

Setting status messages to signal your availability manages expectations clearly and transparently (e.g., " Deep Work – back at 3pm" or "Walking Meeting – reply async").

13. Dress Expectations

Why it matters:

Even in a remote environment, how we show up visually (especially on video calls) contributes to professionalism, mutual respect, and how we represent Thesis to each other and to clients.

Action:

• For internal meetings, the general rule is casual but presentable. Think comfortable, tidy, and appropriate for being on camera.
• For client-facing meetings, please dress in a professional and polished way that reflects the standards of your role and our brand.
• No need for suits but think one step above loungewear.

WE TRUST YOU TO USE GOOD JUDGEMENT. IF IN DOUBT, LEAN TOWARD SHOWING RESPECT FOR YOUR AUDIENCE.

14. Mindful Language on Calls

Why it matters:

Not everyone uses a headset so your words may be heard by others in someone's home environment, including children, especially during school holidays. Some team members may also find swearing or strong language uncomfortable or offensive. We want to foster a respectful, inclusive space where everyone feels safe and considered.

Action:

- Avoid swearing or using explicit language on calls, even if the setting feels informal.
- Assume your voice can carry beyond the person you're speaking to.
- If in doubt, keep it clean! Professional doesn't have to mean boring.
- If you hear language that feels inappropriate, it's okay to respectfully flag it or speak to your manager or to the People & Culture team.

WE ARE THESIS

OUR VALUES SHAPE OUR CULTURE, OUR DECISIONS, AND OUR IMPACT.

Culture is built by the micro-decisions we make daily – it's how we show up, respect time, communicate, and support each other. This etiquette guide isn't just about process, it's about creating a remote environment where people feel trusted, supported, and empowered to do their best work.

Let's build it together.