On its own, Microsoft® Skype for Business Online can only go so far – to experience the full benefits of your Skype for Business Online licenses, you need to complete your collaboration package using InterCall audio conferencing solutions. These integrated solutions allow your voice services to be truly unified by enabling participants to join meetings via PSTN phone lines and providing enhanced in-call controls. Below are recommended settings and best practices for Skype for Business Online conference leaders using InterCall Reservationless-Plus® conferencing.

BEST PRACTICES FOR SKYPE FOR BUSINESS ONLINE CONFERENCE LEADERS

Scheduling Meetings
Skype for Business Online Leaders should schedule discrete meetings in Outlook with a defined start/stop time. We strongly recommend against the practice of maintaining one Skype for Business Online ad-hoc conference that is open continuously, allowing participants to come and go freely during the day. Meetings of this type are risky as they are largely un-monitored and inherently insecure. It’s also recommended to not copy and paste meetings in Outlook during scheduling.

Rather, a Skype for Business Online leader should send specific meetings to targeted attendees and close the meeting properly at the end of each meeting, using the guidelines recommended – see Ending a Meeting below.

Starting a Meeting
The most common way to host a Skype for Business meeting is with the Skype for Business audio. Using this feature provides you with integration between anyone else who uses Skype for Business Online audio and anyone who dials in using Reservationless-Plus. When using Reservationless-Plus audio only, select the Call me at: radio button. When the system calls back it will not prompt you for a PIN. You can have the system prompt you for a pin when it calls by pressing "1" to join the call and then pressing "11" immediately after. If you do not put in the PIN you can still join the call but will not have any moderator key commands available over the bridge.

It is recommend to set the Leader Prompt setting to on. This will allow hosts to enter the leader PIN if call-back is used. If you don’t set this feature to on you can still have Reservationless-Plus prompt for your leader PIN when it calls by pressing "1" to join the call and then pressing "11" immediately after. If you do not put in the PIN you can still join the call but will not have any moderator key commands available over the bridge.

Please note: If you need to record within Skype for Business you must start the meeting using Skype for Business audio.
CONFIGURING YOUR COMPUTER AUDIO CONNECTION
Before starting a call, it is recommended to configure your computer audio settings, bearing in mind that a microphone set too high may cause others on the conference call to hear audio as distorted.

To configure audio click on the gear icon on the right hand side, then select Tools followed by Audio Device Settings. Select the preferred audio device located under Select the device you want to use for audio calls. After the device has been selected and tested click OK.

When you join a meeting with computer audio it's recommended that you use a headset rather than a computer microphone and speakers. This will reduce the likelihood of echo and feedback. Please see the list of plantronics headsets that are compatible with Skype for Business located at http://www.plantronics.com/us/solutions/microsoft/.

Utilizing the Connection Indicator
When starting a Skype for Business meeting, you will see a connection indicator on the top right corner. If you are using computer audio and encountering issues with audio quality, start your troubleshooting by checking this indicator. A display of five white bars indicates a healthy connection. If the bars are yellow or red it is recommended that you change to a different connection or, if you are on a wireless device, either move closer to the router or hardwire in.

Ending a Meeting
To effectively end a meeting, a Leader/Presenter exiting the meeting must select the three dots on the lower right hand corner of the meeting window then click the End Meeting option.* When Leaders/Presenters close the meeting by either clicking the Red Phone icon or using the "x" to close the meeting window, the Skype for Business Online servers do not signal the InterCall conference bridge to end the conference. Closing Skype for Business Online Meetings improperly can be problematic for conference leaders that hold one or more meetings in a day. Closing each meeting properly will ensure that your next meeting starts and runs as designed by Microsoft. You can find more about how to properly end a meeting in this video.

*There is no End Meeting option in the Skype for Business web client application.

Proper Usage of Reservationless-Plus Conferencing Accounts
Skype for Business Online leaders and company admins that manage Skype for Business Online accounts should have a dedicated Reservationless-Plus account that is not shared amongst a pool of leaders.