Tips for improving video quality

Video quality is influenced by many different factors, including your network speed, the amount of lag (called *latency*) in your network, ambient lighting, and your webcam's settings, to name a few.

To get the most out of your video quality, review the checklist, below.

Verify Internet upstream and downstream speeds greater than 1 Mbps
You should have at least 1 Mbps upload and 1 Mbps download speeds available as measured by http://speedof.me. Upload speeds under 1 Mbps might cause your video to be choppy, distorted or delayed to others. Download speeds under 1 Mbps can cause delays or "slow" video from the other parties.

Latency is a general measure of how well your network communicates with the outside world. The speed test at http://speedof.me also provides latency data. If the latency measurement is above 100 milliseconds (ms), we might have a hard time keeping you connected to the other parties.
Try improving your speed and latency by:

1. Asking your Internet service provider for faster Internet speeds and more reliable connection to reduce latency;
2. Making sure you or others on your network are not running other high-bandwidth applications like Netflix, YouTube, Hulu, etc.

Try using a hard-wired network connection over a wireless network connection.
Wireless networks can get pretty busy in large organizations. Try testing VRI using a wired network connection.

Try another network connection.
Many large organizations, such as hospitals, health care networks, and hotels, provide both public and private networks. The private networks are often used much more heavily than the public networks. If your organization offers both private and public networks, try connecting to the public network.

Avoid using built-in, or "integrated", webcams; purchase a dedicated webcam.
Please do not use your built-in, integrated webcam! The webcams that come built into laptops and some desktops often do not have the speed or quality desired for video remote interpreting. In most cases, the frame rates drop off considerably unless you have a ton of light in the room. This will cause video trailing, video splotches and artifacts, "yellowing" of your subjects, and many other quality issues. We always recommend external webcams that come with their own optimized drivers and software. See our webcam recommendations for more information.

Use a computer that meet our recommended specifications.
Older computers and webcams, or low-end computers, or AMD computers that use all-in-one APU processors, often will not have the horsepower to provide the best audio and video quality. For example, while in a VRI call that has poor quality, if you notice that your self-view window does not display a smooth video feed of yourself, odds are good that your computer is struggling to keep up with your webcam's video processing demands. This can occur when your computer's graphics processor is inadequate for real-time videoconferencing applications. Another indicator is if your CPU usage is also very high, or if you see a lot of CPU spikes, either in general or while on a VRI call. Using a computer with better graphics and processing capabilities should help solve this.

Please see the hardware requirements on our Minimum Requirements article.

Install and use the latest video drivers that came with your webcam.
If, while in a VRI call that has poor quality, you notice that your self-view window does not display a smooth video feed of yourself, odds are good that your computer is struggling to keep up with your webcam's video processing demands. This can occur when you try to use a webcam without first properly installing it. You should always install and use the most recent drivers and software that came with your webcam. Do not rely on the generic drivers that come pre-installed with most computers.

Add more lighting in the room.
This is important! To provide smooth video, you need to broadcast your video at 20 frames per second or faster. Some webcams (especially built-in webcams -- don't use them!) require a fair amount of light to reach this rate. The more light you have, the faster your frame rates will be. If you receive comments about your body movements leaving trails across others' screens, you probably need more light (or a better webcam).

Disable your webcam's automatic contrast, balance and focus adjustments.
Many webcams are set to automatically adjust your video's brightness, contrast, white balance and focus. For instance, in dim lighting, Logitech webcams increase the brightness by reducing the frame rate. You can try disabling these automatic features and instead setting them manually based on your room's lighting.

Try changing the native video resolution using your webcam's software.
This is an uncommon solution. Most webcams come with native software used to control and configure the webcam. Using this software, you can try to increase the video resolution that your webcam captures. You usually should not have to play with these settings because your webcam should automatically use the best video resolution available.