Great Virtual Meetings

An Online Training
By Maggie Chumbley

A mini- manual
for getting
started

Getting Started

Before scheduling the meeting, choose the best platform for your meeting needs. Consider accessibility for attendees. Support your attendees to troubleshoot potential issues before the meeting.

- **User Friendly?-**Does the service require people to have an account or download something?
- **Tech Troubleshooting** -Can users do a test call to check audio, microphones, and video? Send a tip sheet or links to the software's own how-to guides and videos.
- **Necessary Software Features-** Can attendees call in via phone, or is video and chatting necessary for your meeting?

Facilitator Preparation

Prepare the materials to distribute to your meeting attendees plus your own cheat sheet guide, verbiage, and links to copy & paste.

- **Meeting Agenda -** Prepare and distribute a link or file to the agenda and any supportive visuals or documents before the meeting time and ensure that all links are set at appropriate *permissions for access.*
- **Pre written instructions, cues, shortened links**- make a cheat sheet for yourself with text you can copy paste into the meeting chat. Some examples of text to prepare ahead of time: the purpose of the meeting, the questions for pair sharing, question prompts, links to shared documents, collaboration spaces, or articles. Use link shorteners like bitly.com or https://goo.gl/
- **Video and Sound** - Ensure your own video, mic, and sound are working properly. Practice any new maneuvers before the meeting time.

First 5 Minutes

Just like office meetings, in virtual meetings, we have to wait a little bit for everybody to arrive before we get started. In the first five minutes people will be arriving into the meeting space gradually, they may be troubleshooting their tech or just waiting for the meeting to begin. This is a good time to start supporting and connecting with meeting attendees and orienting folks to the platforms and documents to be used.

- **Welcome -** Welcome people as they enter the meeting room and ask around to ensure everybody is feeling confident in their video and audio.
- **Gallery View** - In Zoom, ask participants to place the call in "Gallery View" instead of "Speaker View" using the button in the upper right of the window. Gallery View allows us to see everybody in the meeting and makes for more connection.

- **Introductory Activity** - Consider using introductory activities while folks are waiting for the meeting to start. Ex. have people change their display name to read as their [first name], [last name]- [Location], or [Department], or [Role in the project]. Practice using the chat feature and have attendees answer a brief warm up question. Share the links again to the agenda or slides for people to preview. Or, take another approach and invite folks to turn off their cameras and mute their mic so they can prepare on their own with privacy and wait until your cue to have everybody appear at the same time and all get started together. You can also enable a "waiting room" feature in Zoom and admit all attendees to the meeting at once.

Roles & Tasks

When hosting an online meeting, there can be a lot to keep track of. Work with a co-host or other meeting attendees to assist with running the meeting.

- **Note taking -** Ask your co-host or another meeting attendee to act as the note-taker or the 'live blogger". This person types in the chat window information like the main points of what is being shared, instructions, next steps. These chats can be saved and serve as meeting notes or as a helpful record when typing up meeting summaries later on.
- **Co-Hosting -** Enable a co-host in the meeting settings, and they can help with creating breakout rooms, screen-sharing etc.

Beginning and Orienting

Some of your attendees may need a little more support with how the meeting will operate and how to utilize the features needed. Here are some features to mention to participants while getting started so they know they need to be on the lookout for a few cues.

- **Chat Box -** Each zoom user has a toolbar on the bottom of their window where they can click on the chat icon to open the chat box that appears to the right. Participants can can send messages to *Everyone* or to *specific people privately.*
- **Joining Breakout Rooms-** When placed into breakout rooms, participants are invited to join a breakout room by clicking "Join" when prompted.
- **Leaving Breakout Rooms-** Inform participants that when the meeting host closes the breakout rooms, participants will be given a 60 second warning before they will be placed back in the main session. Participants can stay in their rooms for the last minute, or choose to end the breakout session sooner.
- **Moving between other collaboration websites and Zoom**- Name the windows you'll be toggling between during the meeting. Cue participants on what you'd like them to view when. Ex "Meet me on a slide 2 in the google slides window". "Let's meet back in the zoom window where we can all see each other again".