



Tips for navigating virtual trainings and meetings

Due to COVID-19, virtual meetings and trainings have become even more critical to employers. But while holding virtual meetings sounds easy enough, it can still be a daunting task to approach. We've compiled some useful tips (that we use a lot!) to help you have a smoother experience the next time you plan a virtual event.

Preparing to Host or Present a Live, Virtual Event

- Set-up and test all your equipment 30 minutes before the session (this way you have time to find workarounds if something doesn't work as expected).
- Sign-in to the meeting platform early (15 minutes is ideal) to make sure everything is prepped (presentation, notes, soundcheck, etc.) so you are ready when it is time to start.
- If attendees will be physically gathered as a group(s)
 - Identify a group leader to serve as a key contact.
 - Advise the group leader to plan and practice with their equipment in advance:
 - Confirm devices can connect to the internet (hardwire or strong wireless signal).
 - Be sure the microphone volume is loud enough for the presenter to hear attendees speak.
 - Consider connecting an external speaker to the computer so the group can easily hear the presenter.
 - If using equipment that is not normally used (e.g., a projector or large monitor), remember to check cords and connections to make sure everything is set up correctly and working.
- In case of technical difficulties, get attendees' phone numbers (cell phone is usually best if it will not be used in the meeting) so you have a way to contact them if needed.
 - To limit the number of phone numbers you collect, if you have multiple people attending from the same organization, identify a point person for that group that you can reach out to.

Useful Information to Send to Individual Attendees

- Share the system requirements (usually available on the platform's website) so attendees can make sure their computer or mobile device is compatible with the platform.
- Request everyone log-in to the event at least 15 minutes in advance so there is time to help address any technical issues before things get started.
- Encourage everyone to familiarize themselves with the platform's attendee controls (dashboard) while they wait for the meeting to get started:
 - Mute/unmute
 - Raise your hand
 - Questions/chat box

Presenter Tips

- Familiarize yourself with the platform's controls and practice to make sure you can use them smoothly (e.g., sharing your screen, muting and unmuting attendees).

- Know what attendees see when you share your screen or a video (e.g., can attendees still see your webcam when you share a video). Consider adjusting settings or turning off your webcam to minimize distraction when you want attendees to focus on the information you are sharing (and not your face).
- Have a co-presenter/moderator who can step in and communicate with attendees if you experience technical difficulties.
- Make sure you can easily access the event's link/log-in information in the event you experience technical difficulties and must rejoin the meeting.

The above tips are good, universal things to keep in mind and following them can make your first (or next) virtual event go smoothly. Since including tips on specific platforms could make this list ridiculously long (there are so many options out there), here are links to tips for the two platforms we've used the most for our virtual trainings.

- GoToWebinar – [How to Run the Perfect Live Webinar](#)
- Zoom – [7 Zoom Meeting Tips Every User Should Know](#) [video]