

Next-Level Zooming: Tips to Help You Master Online Presentations

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As I finish up my third week of moving much of my “presenting life” to Zoom, I’ve learned a lot, and I am excited to share it with you. My first two articles on Zoom ([16 Ways to Make Your Zoom Presentations Interactive & Engaging](#) and [Eight Tips to Help You Bloom on Zoom](#)) cover participant engagement and how you present yourself in the fast-paced and, at times, unforgiving space of online meetings. It’s a challenge to master this new medium. Here are a few of my favorite tools and tips for taking your Zoom meetings to the next level; try one or try a handful for your next Zoom encounter.



Getting Started & First Impressions

1. **Profile.** Add a picture of yourself to humanize the experience. (Zoom settings: Profile)
2. **The Waiting Room.** Use the waiting room so people hear your music and see your projected screen (see #4 below) as they enter the meeting. (Settings–In Meeting/Advanced–Waiting Room)
3. **Play Music.** Play music from iTunes to set the tone as participants enter the room.
4. **Scroll Quotes, Cartoons, or Announcements.** Along with the music, it’s nice to have something for participants to view when they enter the space. Otherwise, it’s pretty awkward just sitting there before everything begins. I’ve used PowerPoint to scroll quotes or cartoons from *The New Yorker* as a way to spice up the experience.
5. **Set Norms.** Ask attendees to mute themselves, turn on their video cameras, and [raise their hands](#) when they have a question. [Remind participants they are on video](#)—there are some interesting videos of human behavior on Zoom floating around!
6. **Provide a Tour.** Provide first-time users with a tour of features so they understand what they can do - nonverbal feedback, raise their hand, share their screen (if you have turned on this feature), and so forth.

Cool Features in Zoom

1. **Use the Polling Feature.** Set up a poll and have participants answer. (Settings–In Meeting/Basic–Polling)
2. **Place Participants in Small Groups.** Ask participants to participate in small group dialogue or complete an activity, just as you might in real life. Learn more about placing participants in groups [here](#).

3. **Place Participants into "Pair and Shares."** Place participants into dialogue groups of two. Learn more about placing participants in groups [here](#).
4. **The Whiteboard Feature.** Turn on the whiteboard feature. (Settings–In Meeting/Basic–Whiteboard)
5. **Non-verbal feedback.** Turn on this feature and “Participants in a meeting can provide nonverbal feedback and express opinions by clicking on icons in the participant panel.” (Settings–In Meeting/Basic–Nonverbal feedback)
6. **Annotation.** Turn on the annotation feature, which will “Allow participants to use annotation tools to add information to shared screens.” (Settings–In Meeting (Basic)-Annotation)

Closing Out the Presentation

1. **Go around the horn (2).** If the group is small, you can ask participants to conclude with one word that comes to mind for them as you conclude.
2. **Conclude with a quote or personal statement.** Provide an inspirational quote or a personal statement that puts closure on the experience.

The online environment is more limited than in-person, but there are still plenty of options to facilitate engagement. I hope these suggestions help as you design great online learning experiences.

Now it's your turn. What are some other tips, tricks, and hacks you have used to facilitate engagement? I would love to know!