A Guide to Virtual Meetings

A segment in COSO's Summer Series
By: Carly Payne
4 Simple Steps to a *Productive* Virtual Meeting

01 Understanding Zoom
It's important to be confident in your understanding of *all* of Zoom’s features.

02 Planning
How to plan for a virtual meeting and why it is crucial.

03 Interactive Activities
How to prevent virtual meetings from turning into lectures.

04 Execution
Example from a UM organization that has conducted a successful virtual meeting.
Understanding Zoom

Arguably one of the most essential components in holding a successful virtual meeting
In this section we will break down 5 “must know functions” when operating a meeting on Zoom.
1) **Break Out Rooms**

Utilizing break out rooms is essential to an interactive meeting, especially when presenting to a larger audience. By breaking out into smaller groups you ensure that members are listening actively and participating. Start and end your meetings together as a group, but attempt to weave break out rooms into your agenda!

LINKS: [206476313](#) and [206476093-Enabling-breakout-rooms](#)

2) **Screen Share**

The screen share feature is crucial to understand in order to display powerpoints to your members. This resource is helpful in a number of other ways as well and should be utilized in order to make your meetings more engaging.

LINK: [201362153-Sharing-your-screen](#)

Refer to the links if unaware on how to access these features!
3) White Board
   LINK: 205677665-Sharing-a-white board

4) Chat Rooms
   LINK: 203650445-In-meeting-chat

5) Reactions
   LINK: 360038311212-Meeting-reactions

These are other Zoom features you should familiarize yourself with before starting to meet. If you are confident in your usage of this technology it will reflect well in your meetings and members will be less apprehensive about virtual organizations.
Planning

02

When will your meetings be, and how will they be ran? Also, what resources will you need to have arranged prior to meeting?
Q: Why is planning your meeting going to be important?

A: An outline for your meeting will ensure that you stay on track even in the face of potential technical difficulties.
The 3 parts to planning

Pick a set **day and time**
By setting a recurring day and time for meetings to be held (whether monthly, weekly or bi-weekly) you help maintain a sense of normalcy within your organization. This will also help alleviate any confusion for new students on when a virtual meeting will be conducted.

Draft an **outline**
Create goals for each meeting, consisting of what content it is you want to cover and what you hope to accomplish on your call. Break all activities, lessons and games out into timed increments to ensure you stay on track.

Make a **powerpoint**
Prior to each meeting a powerpoint should be made containing the information that will be presented to the general body. This is crucial because creating a visual aid for your meetings will further enhance your members experience on Zoom. A powerpoint also comes in handy to share with individuals who might’ve missed the meeting or had been experiencing technical difficulties.
Technical difficulties will occur at some point. By planning ahead you are proactively working to alleviate the effect that any digital issues may leave on your meeting time.
Interactive Activities

How are you going to keep your members entertained and focused during a meeting?
6 Ideas to keep your meetings interesting and engaging!

- **Special Guests**: Virtual meetings allow you to reach out to individuals across the globe to speak with your organization. Take advantage of this!

- **Virtual Bingo**: A fun interactive icebreaker for a first meeting! [virtual-bingo](#)

- **Screen Share Virtual Tours**: Due to Covid, many museums, zoos, and national parks have created online walk-through tours. This is something some clubs may be able to take advantage of during a virtual meeting.

- **Collaborate with other clubs**: Virtual meetings give you a platform to easily collaborate with other organizations, consider joint meetings occasionally!

- **Cards Against Humanity**: A comedic interactive game for any laid back meeting [http://playingcards.io](http://playingcards.io)

- **Zoom Scavenger Hunt**: A fun and competitive game. Make members of your org run around their dorm looking for objects to display on screen, the last person to do so is out
Execution

Here is what one organization did during quarantine to keep their members involved and connected!
Current HP Concerts Chair: Michelle Marino
Michelle Marino

Michelle is senior public relations and electronic media double major and is currently serving as the HP Concerts chair. During quarantine Michelle led several successful meetings and has agreed to elaborate on how she prepared for them by answering questions many of you may have.
Q: “What was one roadblock you hit when initially meeting virtually, and how did you overcome that?”

A: “The lack of social cues when going virtual can lend to some awkward silences, this can be avoided by asking open ended questions, leave room to discuss.”
Q: “What is one way in which you plan on creatively using one of Zoom’s features?”

A: “During the first few GB meetings it may be helpful to utilize the virtual background feature to display your name and position within the organization to help newer members learn faster.”
Q: “Can you elaborate on one online resource you’d recommend?”

A: “To avoid awkward silences you can make use of a virtual wheel with members names on it as a way to encourage conversation.”
Q: “How do you keep meetings interactive when virtual?”

A: “I recommend jeopardy as an interactive game that can be used for trainings or as an icebreaker. You should also start meetings with an icebreaker that includes everyone.”
Q: “Do you recommend using an agenda?”

A: “It is VERY important to have an agenda as it helps to prevent any awkwardness. I usually outline an agenda the day of or the day before.”
Q: “What is one final message you would like to spread to student leaders on the topic of virtual meetings?”

A: “Don’t be intimidated, this is new for everyone and can be seen as a chance to connect in different and creative ways. New students are looking to be super involved and will still come to you, so don’t worry.”
Thank you for taking the initiative to better yourself and your organization!

Questions?

Email: coso_involvement@miami.edu