



# How to Excel at Virtual Meetings

*Presented by the DCo Facilitation Network*



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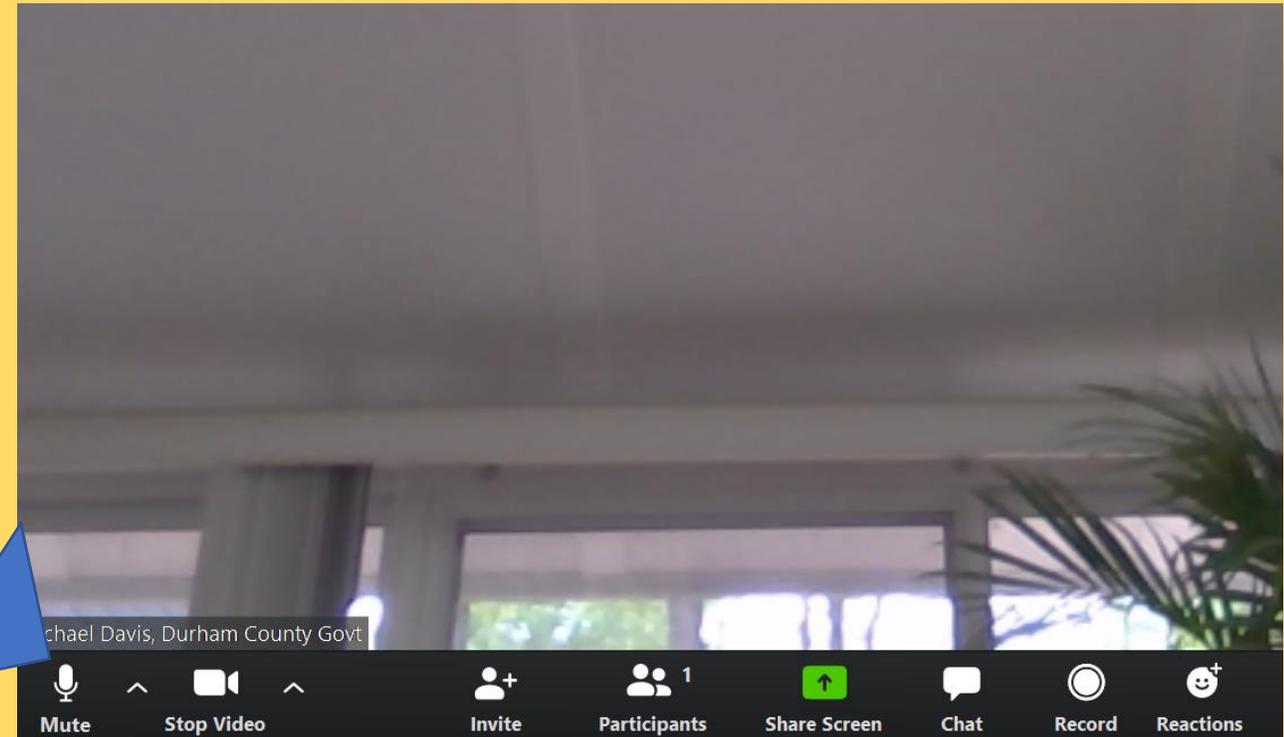
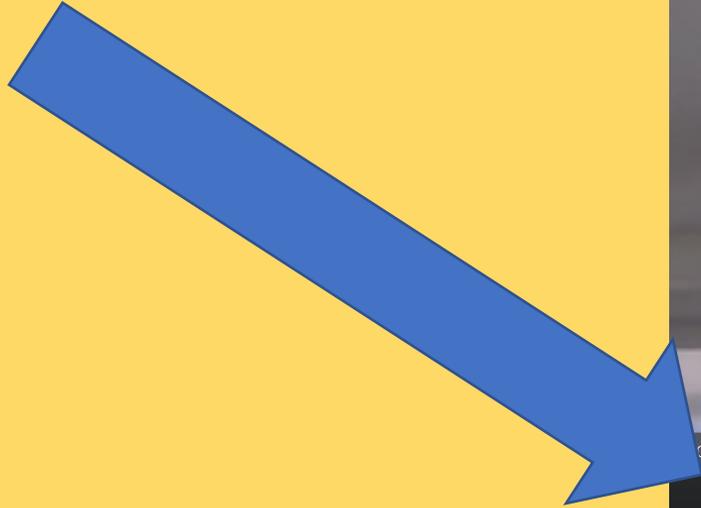
**April 16, 2020**  
**10 am – 11 am**

El Davis, Durham County Govt



# Housekeeping

- If not speaking, please turn on "mute"





# Welcome and Introductions

- Michael Davis, Durham County Strategic Initiatives
- Donna Rewalt, Durham County Cooperative Extension

# DCo Facilitation Program

- In-person '101' training
- Facilitating for others: community & county employees
- Facilitation Network: a community of practice for quarterly learning meetings



# Objectives for Webinar

- Share tips and tricks so that employees might be able to apply principles to improve their own virtual meetings
- Learn of other employee facilitation needs so that the DCo Facilitation Network may be able to provide support to the workforce

# "How to Excel at Virtual Meetings"

*Disclaimer:*

- *Like you, we're still figuring this out!*
- *We're not sure anyone has "excelled" at this point :)*
- *But we're hoping to learn and improve together*



Announcement:  
This webinar is being  
recorded

Image source: Time magazine

# Roles for Today

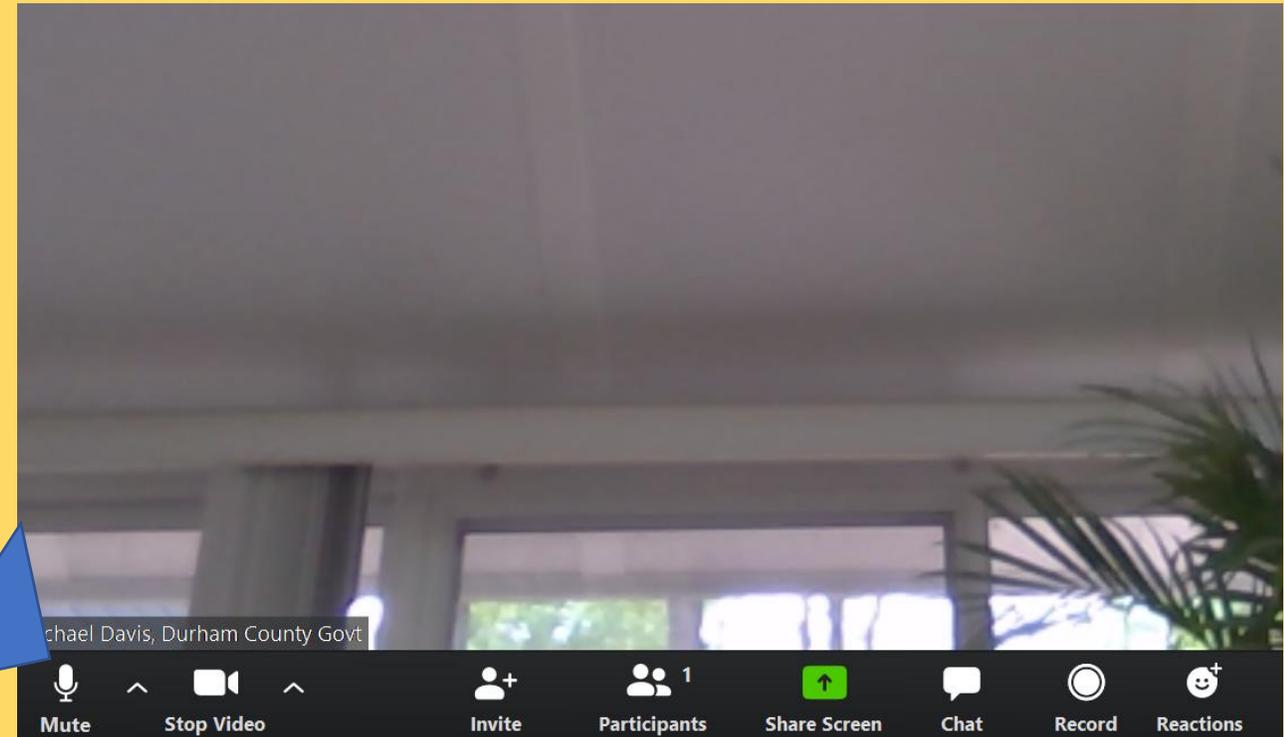
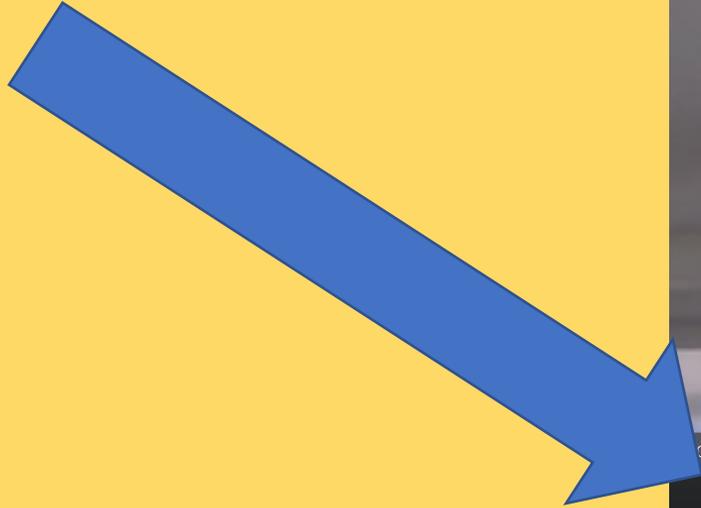
- Content Providers:
  - Donna, Michael, Michelle, Nathan, Jenny, Christa, Erica, Willa, Lakesia
- Time Keeper:
  - Karlene



Image source: Washington Post

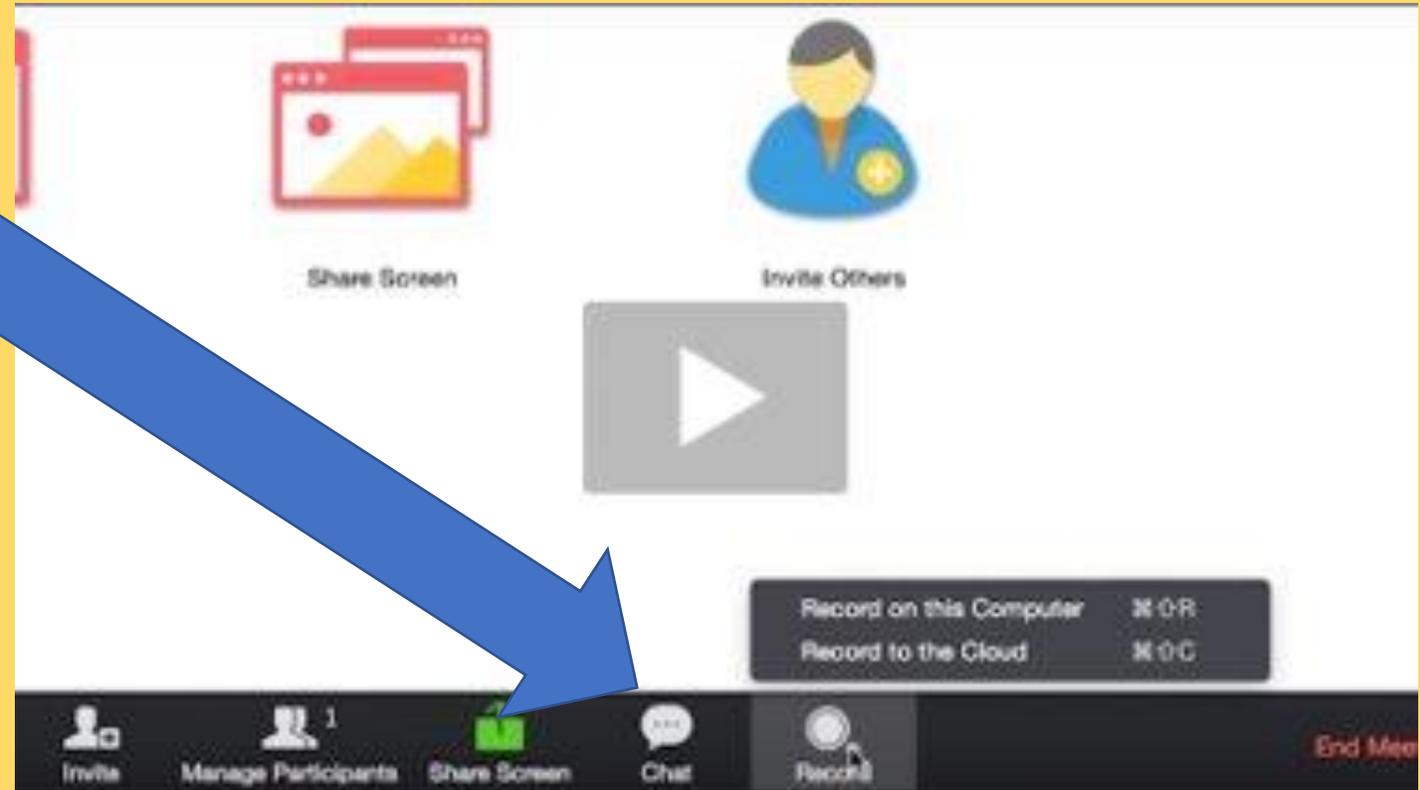
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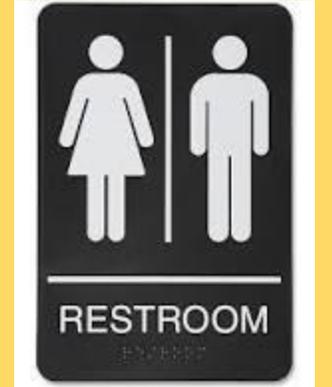
# Housekeeping

- Use the chatbox to pose questions and talk with each other



# Housekeeping

- Restrooms are down the hall and around the corner



# Agenda

- Breakout Groups
- Breakout Share-Outs
- Poll Questions
- Virtual Meetings 101
- Q&A
- Next Steps and Close

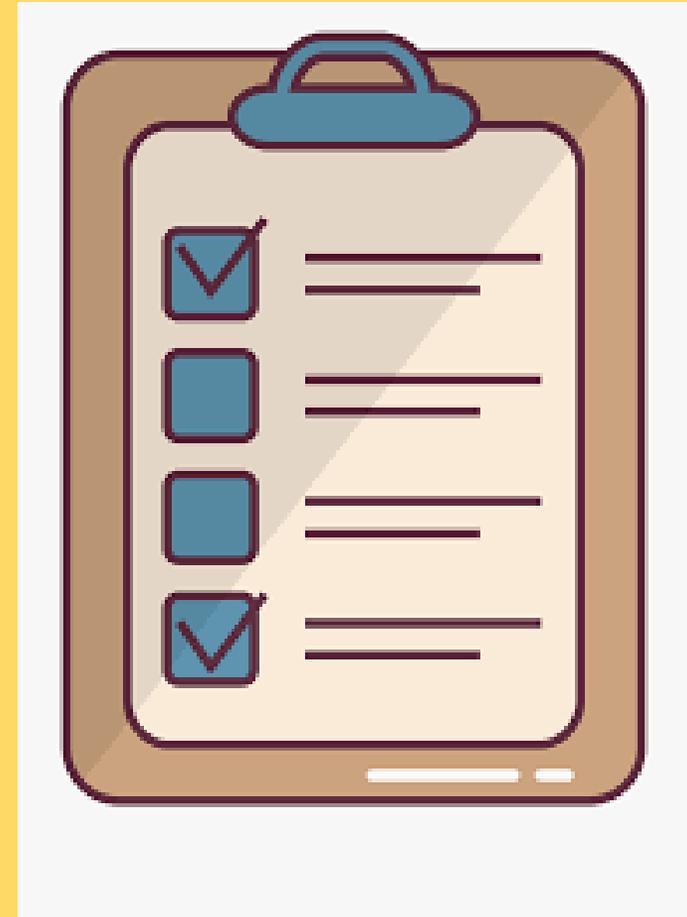
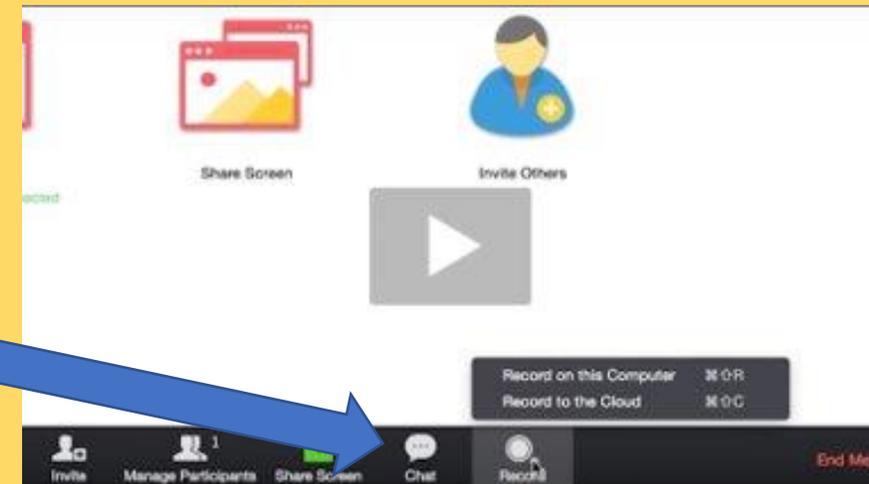


Image source: [netclipart.com](https://www.netclipart.com)

# Breakouts

- What do you like about remote work, and what has been challenging?
- What is one thing you've learned in doing virtual meetings so far?

Use the chatbox to take notes from your conversations



# Breakout Share-Outs

- What do you like about remote work, and what has been challenging?
- What is one thing you've learned in doing virtual meetings so far?

Use the chatbox to share takeaways from your conversations



# Poll Questions

- **What tools are you using for virtual meetings?**
  - Zoom
  - Skype
  - Google Hangout
  - FaceTime
  - Uberconference
  - GoToMeeting
  - WebEx
  - Other
- **What tools are you comfortable using?**
  - Zoom
  - Skype
  - Google Hangout
  - FaceTime
  - Uberconference
  - GoToMeeting
  - WebEx
  - Other

# Virtual Meetings 101

# Don't Forget Meeting Basics

The will to win is not as important as the will to  
prepare to "win."

--Vince Lombardi

# Don't Forget Meeting Basics

(Pre-work)

- Agenda with timing for each item
- Objectives / Things to Accomplish
  - Knowing and Wanting
- Next steps with assignments: "And so you will ..."

(Post-work)

# Don't Forget Meeting Basics

- Roles:
  - Lead
  - Co-lead (if needed)
  - Notetaker
  - Time keeper
  - Technical assistant (for technology, etc.)
  - Chatbox monitor

# Opening the Meeting

- Clearly explain purpose
- Ground rules
- Setting a tone

# Opening the Meeting: Icebreakers

- Icebreakers
  - Now more than ever, a chance to have some fun
  - We all want to simply connect as people
  - Time for show and tell? What are you reading/crafting/organizing OR show us your pets!
  - Optional: "pre-meeting chat" time for social conversations – the "water cooler" stuff

# Webinar Etiquette

- Turn your camera on (unless the facilitator says not to)
- Mute yourself when you are not speaking
- Try to eliminate distractions (e.g., cell phone beeping, calendar pop ups, etc)
- Be on time – log in a few minutes early

# How to Get Ideas (In A Virtual Meeting)

- Pose focused questions to get specificity
  - *"Instead of "What do you think?" ... ask "What are the strengths of this idea?" or "What could improve this idea?"*

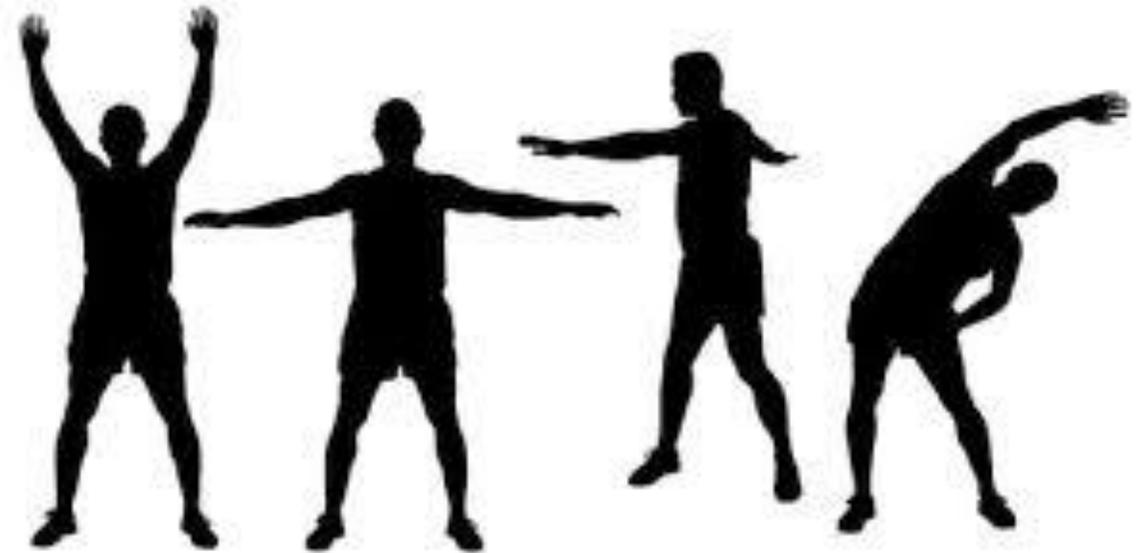
Source: [University of Minnesota Extension](#)

# Stretch Break

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# How to Manage Speaking

- To involve others in the meeting:
  - *"Check in regularly throughout the meeting"*
  - *"Invite responses to the information and ideas shared"*
  - *"Use the participant list to be sure that you've asked everyone to contribute"*
  - Delegate leadership roles so more people are sharing and invested
- If folks get side-tracked ... it is ok to say "let's please follow up on that later on" - they can set another meeting

# How to Manage Speaking

- Or you could have a virtual “parking lot” using screen share
  - And have your notetaker capture those items
  - Just make sure you follow up on them
- Easier for multiple people to talk if a small group
  - If larger group consider using chat box, polls and breakout rooms to allow MORE people to offer input
  - Again, set ground rules and create norms

# How to Make Virtual Meetings Fun

- Limit meeting to 60 minutes
- Don't just read from slides
- Keep eye contact
- Keep meetings fast-paced / Or at least have variety
- Delegate and share the wealth: Spread out the tasks and running of the meeting
- Show enthusiasm, smile, find and spread the joy

# The Technical Stuff

- Do a trial run before the webinar/meeting to make sure everything works!
- Be patient ... technical stuff is tricky.
- At some point there will be a glitch. It's ok – it happens to everyone.
  - Have a technical person
  - Provide the phone-in number as a back-up
  - If someone sounds garbled, just come back to them later. It's OK to move your agenda items around.

## video conference bingo

"Hey are you talking? I think you're muted"	This meeting ID is not valid. Please check and try again.	Not looking at the camera	Everyone is exactly 8 minutes late	Logging in with the wrong email for Google hangouts
Getting an invite with both video link and phone number	Staring at only video of yourself	Looking at close-up of someone's face on the big screen	Small talk for the first 5 minutes while waiting for the last person to join	"Can everybody see my screen?"
"Soooo.. how was everybody's weekends?"	awkward silence		Not sure if you should join with video or just audio	Forgetting to stop screen sharing
"Hey Dave theres some background noise can you mute yourself"	Random gargling noises in the background	"Omg sorry I thought this was PST not EST"	"Sorry, can you hear me now?"	After interrupting each other: "Sorry you go first"
"Hey guys sorry I have to hop off, you guys keep talking"	Forgetting to turn off text notifications while screen sharing	WFH person shows everyone their cat	"Maybe we should switch to a phone call?"	Ambulance or fire truck noises in the background

@inagfatt

Source: Thebasispoint.com

# Virtual Platforms: Zoom

- Background image function
- Breakout rooms
- Chat box – use it to seek input or info from large group
  - Remember, “private” chats aren’t private if they are downloaded and saved for later
  - Don’t type anything you wouldn’t want everyone to read, even if it is a “private” message.
- “Raise hands” function
- Phone vs. computer Zoom use
- You can change your view
- Avoid “zoom bombs” - have a waiting room, have registration info if needed, host can control access
- Screen sharing

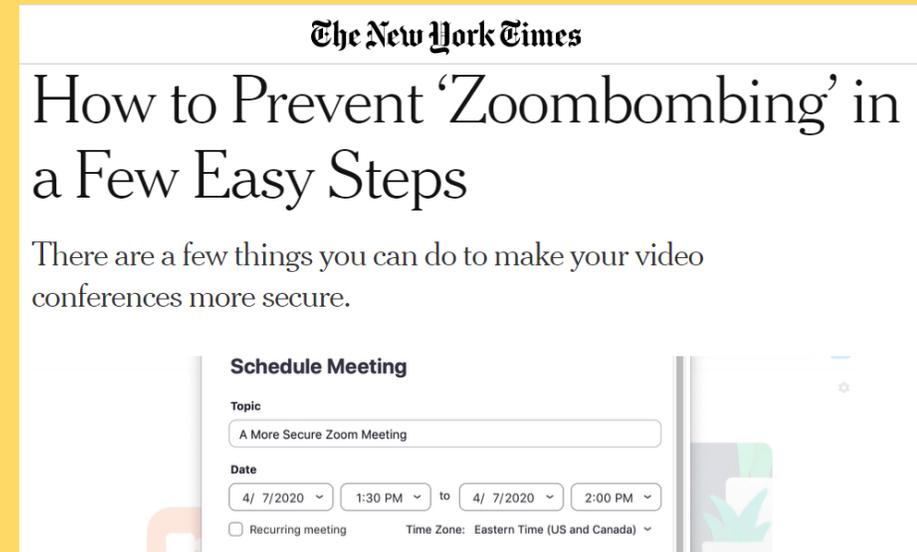


Image source: [The New York Times](#)

# Virtual Platforms: Others

- Skype – talk to IS&T
- Microsoft Teams – talk to IS&T
- FaceTime – for Apple phones
- Webex
- Google Hangouts
- Others?





After work, laugh with 'SNL' Zoom bit

# How to Close the Meeting

- Leave with next steps and assignments
- Leave time for questions at the end
- Follow-up with notes / next steps and tasks in email later
- Consider leaving on a positive note - gratitude, encouragement, maybe a moment of praise

# Beyond the Meeting: Remote-Work Tips

- Dedicated office space:
  - We recognize not everyone may have the ability to do that.
  - Experiment with different spaces and set ups until you find what works for you.
- Set a daily routine - start time / end time.
- Stretch / walk during the day if you can
- Don't forget to eat - don't let the work consume you
- Take mental breaks, just like you might at work.
  - Reach out to a colleague you haven't connected with in a while.
  - Don't forget your professional networks. Stay in touch with them.

# Q&A

- What else would you like to know?
- What other resources might you need from us?
- Are you interested in “practice” webinar meetings?

# Next Steps

- Recording of this webinar will be sent after
- Tip sheet will be sent after
- Contact Michael ([mdavis@dconc.gov](mailto:mdavis@dconc.gov)) or Donna ([drewalt@dconc.gov](mailto:drewalt@dconc.gov)) with questions / need for support



Cooperative Extension

## The Meat (and Potatoes) of Your Meeting

To hold a successful virtual meeting, you can employ many of the same tricks that you use during a real-life meeting. Don't just read from the slides. Make eye contact (or in this case camera contact). Show enthusiasm, smile, find and spread the joy! And of course, a bad joke or pun never hurt anybody! However, during virtual meetings, you'll need to go the extra mile to make sure that your team is engaged.

- **Delegate and share the wealth.** Spread out the tasks and running of the meeting to involve and engage more participants.
- **Pose focused questions to get specificity.** Instead of asking "What do you think?" ask "What are the strengths of this idea?" or "What could improve this idea?"
- **Check in regularly throughout the meeting.** Pause more frequently than you would during an in-person meeting to ask participants if they have questions or comments.
- **Invite responses to the information and ideas shared.** If you have a registration list or list of participants, you can use it to make sure that you've asked everyone to contribute. If not, scan the participant list in the virtual meeting tool to invite full participation.
- **Keep a virtual "parking lot".** Just as in an in-person meeting, folks may get side-tracked and want to stray off topic. If folks get side-tracked, ask your note taker to put their comments in a "virtual parking lot" list. You can come back to the list at the end of the meeting if time permits or schedule another meeting to address those issues and questions.

## No, You Go!

If you've been on a virtual meeting you know the greatest challenge is coordinating who speaks when. Virtual meetings are often characterized by complete silence or three people talking at once. To avoid this phenomenon, you as the meeting facilitator can employ a few tricks of the trade. Most of the virtual meeting platforms have a variety of tools, which are designed to keep the meeting flowing even if you have a large group.

- **Break it Up!** This tool allows you to have virtual breakout sessions during which your large group is divided into smaller group conversations. Make sure you have note takers, timekeepers, and someone assigned in these breakout rooms who can report back to the larger group.
- **And the Audience Says...** Use the 'poll' tool to allow the entire group to respond to an electronically posed question at once.
- **Side Conversations Allowed:** Encourage use of the chat box tool for questions and comments. These can help shyer members of the team contribute more freely. Just

### Pro Tip: The Chat Box

One of the cool things about most of the virtual meeting platforms is that they allow you to save information from the chat box for future reference. However, word to the wise, this also means that "private" chats aren't private if they are downloaded and saved for later. Don't type anything you wouldn't want everyone to read, even if it is a "private" message.

# Poll – 3 Questions: How did we do?

**How useful was this webinar for you?**

- Not at all useful, somewhat useful, very useful

**I am likely to participate in virtual meetings differently because of this webinar.**

- Do not agree, somewhat agree, strongly agree

**How likely would you be to attend another, similar webinar from the DCo Facilitation Network?**

- Not at all likely, somewhat likely, very likely

# Thanks for Participating!

*Contact Michael ([mdavis@dconc.gov](mailto:mdavis@dconc.gov)) or  
Donna ([drewalt@dconc.gov](mailto:drewalt@dconc.gov)) with  
questions / need for support*