TOASTMASTER ONLINE MEETING
TIPS AND TRICKS

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Setup of Your Online Meetings

There are lots of ZOOM-specific training about any issue, but especially helpful to first time users right now, go to: https://zoom.us/docs/en-us/covid19.html.

Encourage EVERYONE to get a free Zoom account *40-minute limit* to practice using the tools on your own and/or invite others to join your meeting. Test your system by joining a test meeting: https://zoom.us/test (available any time).

Make sure someone has a paid Zoom Pro account so that your meeting can go longer than 40 minutes.

For those with 1.5-hour meetings, you might use one free account and host two 40-minute meetings: everyone logs off at 35, takes a break and logs back for the second 40-minute meeting.

Set up the *repeating* Meeting ID as always the same and list it publicly on your website, social media, and Club Central. This is a great opportunity to grow your membership. You can limit access by setting up a "Waiting Room" or password access.

You might invest in a good camera—better than the computer camera.

It is better to use a head mic, ear buds, wired phone buds to minimize external noise pollution *such as typing.*

Link to lots of training from ZOOM specifically for people using it for the first time during COVID: https://zoom.us/docs/en-us/covid19.html, including live webinars where you can ask questions.

Put Zoom app on multiple devices (laptop and *Smartphone)* in case your WiFi signal gets weak, as backup. Be wary of being in meeting on both your computer AND your phone since, there will be echoing if both audios are active. To troubleshoot, see: https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/202050538-Audio-Echo-In-A-Meeting.

Region 3

Before Online Meeting Starts
(a Checklist for Participants)

1. Try to ensure the strongest Internet signal or video/audio will be adversely affected.

2. Test all technology (including camera/video, Wi-Fi, and screen sharing) and access to the meeting before it starts.

3. Become proficient at turning your videocam off/on (briefly) to keep other people from unwanted visual distractions (like a cat walking in front of the camera). Remember: if you can see others, others can likely see you.

4. Keep noises from disrupting the meeting/speech by muting yourself when not speaking. (Minimize distracting noise, like typing on your computer, coughing, etc.) Turn off all notifications and put your mobile phone on silent/vibrate.

5. Use of a lapel mic, a wired or Bluetooth phone mic will minimize noises like typing.

6. Make sure you can be heard clearly when speaking (You can test the mic anytime).

7. Ensure proper lighting, so it enhances, not detracts from your face/video quality.

8. If you are speaking, position your camera so that face is framed well. If you stand up to speak, maintain posture with body movement in frame. (Be mindful of voice quality).

9. Back-lighting and bad angles create facial shadows you may want to adjust.

10. Consider your background. Eliminate background objects that distract from you as speaker.

11. Read the agenda (emailed prior to meeting) — you could print it out— and come prepared.

12. Share the agenda on the screen before the meeting starts. Agenda can also be shared in the Chat room like other documents and links.

13. Send relevant speaker introductions to the proper people well BEFORE the meeting.

Before Meeting Starts
(for Meeting Planners)

1. Send out meeting preparation tools and instructions necessary to participate – good Internet access, a camera, mic/headset, lighting, background, etc.

2. Send out instructions and links, several days in advance of meeting.

3. Ensure all participants have access to participation equipment (cam, mic, etc.)

4. Encourage participants to arrive online EARLY to orient them to the tools available.

5. Test your system by joining a test meeting:
https://zoom.us/test
(available any time).

6. Create some early time for social connection especially greeting guests—beforehand.

7. Perhaps create a Zoom Master role to offer Technical feedback to participants to improve the experience. Create some co-hosts who can help with meeting controls.

8. Offer post meeting social time to answer guests' questions and to catch up with members.

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During Meeting (Logistics)

1. Perhaps create a role (Zoom Master?) for feedback regarding the virtual experience.

2. Start off the meeting by introducing new participants to Zoom and cover online meeting etiquette issues/agreements, such as how to acknowledge or transition between speakers.

3. Choose "gallery view" to see everyone and "speaker view" when you need to pay attention to one person.

4. Handclapping may be too disruptive online. Try silent "jazz hands" (although may not be effective for those participating by phone audio-only).

5. Be wary of awkward silences between speakers. Prepare to quickly transfer between speakers when muting/ unmuting.

6. You might alter your name tag to indicate your role (eg. "Bart = Timer" "Tom=Speaker 2").

7. Keep it simple and have timer use visuals (eg. display colored timing cards, or a phone with the colors). TDM55 website offers other alternatives. Speakers should "pin" Timer's window to maintain access to the timing signals. If using the Chat feature for such communication, Speakers must watch for the notifications.

8. Voting (Best Speaker, Best table Topics Speaker, Best Evaluator) can be done via Chat privately to the Vote Counter. The Zoom host could use the Zoom Polling feature (Pro version only), although this method is more complicated and the host can't participate in voting this way.

9. Introduce all Club visitors at the beginning of the meeting and give everyone a chance to contribute during the meeting (participate in Table Topics and provide feedback).

10. Participants should avoid multi-tasking (not checking email or attending to non-meeting activities) and offer full attention while other people are presenting. Be a good listener.

11. Choose personal breaks only at appropriate times versus stepping out of the meeting. Mute yourself and your camera if not speaking (set up a face picture in your profile).

12. Where appropriate, choose a virtual background that doesn't detract). Practice its use.

13. Don't interrupt other people when they're speaking (speak over others). Use "Raise Hand" feature to request to ask a question or make a comment. Once acknowledged, you can quickly unmute, speak, and then Mute yourself to indicate you're done. You may also use the Chat feature to state your comments.(Make sure someone monitors the Chat room).

14. Stay aware of the camera lens/eye contact. (People can tell when you're looking away).

15. Turn off video/audio if you need to step away briefly.

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