

Accessible Virtual/Hybrid Meetings and Accessibility Features on Zoom

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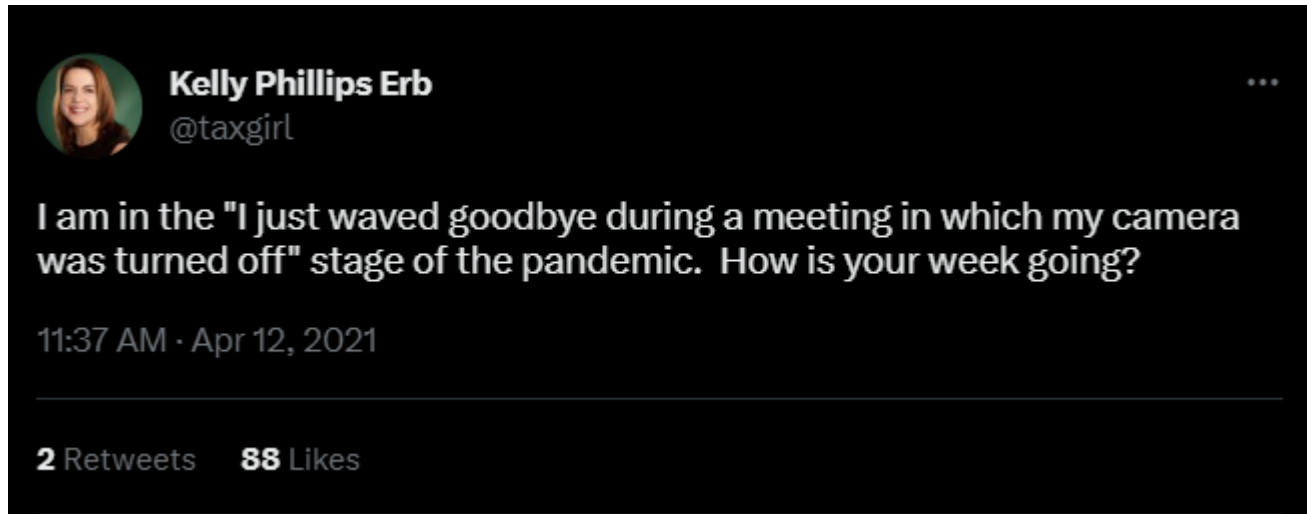
Creating an accessible Zoom meeting ensures that everyone present can understand, engage and participate in your meetings with little to no barriers.

Plus, as we strive to foster more diverse, inclusive and equitable environments, an accessible Zoom meeting is a way to take action on these efforts.

When possible, it is helpful to have a support facilitator in each Zoom session who can handle any accessibility issues or requests that arise. This should be someone other than the main presenter or facilitator of the meeting. Let participants know that they can send a private chat to this person for support. For large meetings or structured events, provide a way for people to request accommodations in advance of the meeting.

- Sound quality is important for all users and critical for people who are d/Deaf or hard of hearing, and is important for individuals with ADHD, autism and more.
- Reduce background noise: When speaking, ensure you are in a noise-free environment and stay close to the microphone.
- Mute participants who are not speaking: Especially in large meetings, all participants should be muted except for the person who is speaking.
 - If participants are not consistently muting themselves, the host can mute individual participants in the Manage Participants panel.
 - The host can also use the Mute All Tool ([Muting/Unmuting Participants in a Meeting Instructions](#)) or the Mute Participants on Entry ([How to Manage Participants in a Zoom Meeting](#)) option to apply muting to multiple participants at once. The Mute Participants on Entry option can also be selected when scheduling the meeting.
 - Let participants know that they have been muted upon entry and state expectations for how and when they should unmute themselves and participate.

Some attendees may prefer to not turn on their video in a meeting for a variety of reasons, such as medical privacy concerns, concerns about the ways in which the use of video may reveal or highlight disabilities, the anxiety or distraction that being on video can cause and more. It is best to provide the option for participants to choose not to enable their video, in both the classroom and business settings



Screen Sharing is a good way to display PowerPoints or other media, pull up an editable whiteboard or walk participants through a process step-by-step.

Verbalize what is on the screen. Participants who are calling in or have bad internet connections may be unable to see the screen. People who are blind or have low vision may also be unable to see the screen and cannot read the screen-share contents using assistive technology. For the benefit of anyone who may be unable to see your screen, verbalize what is seen and the actions you are taking.

Share materials ahead of time. Send any materials you plan to display through screen sharing to your participants ahead of time. This allows everyone to access the materials and follow along even if they cannot see the screen share during the meeting.

I'm sharing my screen; can you guys see that?



- In-meeting chat ([Chatting in a Zoom Meeting](#)) can be very useful during meetings, including as a participation channel for people who are working in noisy environments. There are just a few accessibility considerations to keep in mind when using chat.
- Some participants with disabilities may be unable to access or fully utilize chat. Some users may decide to not monitor the chat because they can't do so while focusing on the verbal conversation. Assistive technology users can access, read and contribute to chat, but may be unable to activate links in the chat window.
- Participants who are calling in to a meeting will not be able to see or contribute to the chat. Finally, all users run the risk of losing important links or content from the chat if this information is not saved in some way.
- Avoid side conversations in chat. If important questions or points are made in the chat, make sure to repeat them out loud so everyone knows what was said.
- Share chat content through additional channels. Send links from the chat to all participants by email before or after the meeting. Optionally, you can save the entire chat ([How to Save In-Meeting Chat](#)) to your computer or the cloud for your own reference or to share with others.

- Breakout rooms can be used for small-group discussion and collaboration, but make sure to think about accessibility when you plan to use them.
- **Provide flexibility in participation.** People with certain disabilities like anxiety may prefer not to join a breakout room. Whenever possible, it is best to allow participants the option to remain in the main Zoom session if they would prefer not to join a breakout room. Keep in mind that some people may be able to get more out of the experience by using that time for quiet reflection, taking a quick computer break or by reviewing the content discussed up to that point.
- **Pay attention to accommodations.** If live captionists or ASL interpreters are present, make sure to assign them to the same breakout room as the participant receiving the live captioning or ASL interpreting.
- **Give participants the ability to record, if necessary.** If the Zoom session is being recorded for later review or captioning, the host will need to give participants the ability to record ([How to Assign Recording Privileges to a Participant](#)) if the host will not be in the breakout room that needs to be recorded.
- **Plan ahead for technical difficulties.** Some devices and technical set-ups do not allow participants to join breakout rooms.

Meanwhile in the Zoom breakout rooms...

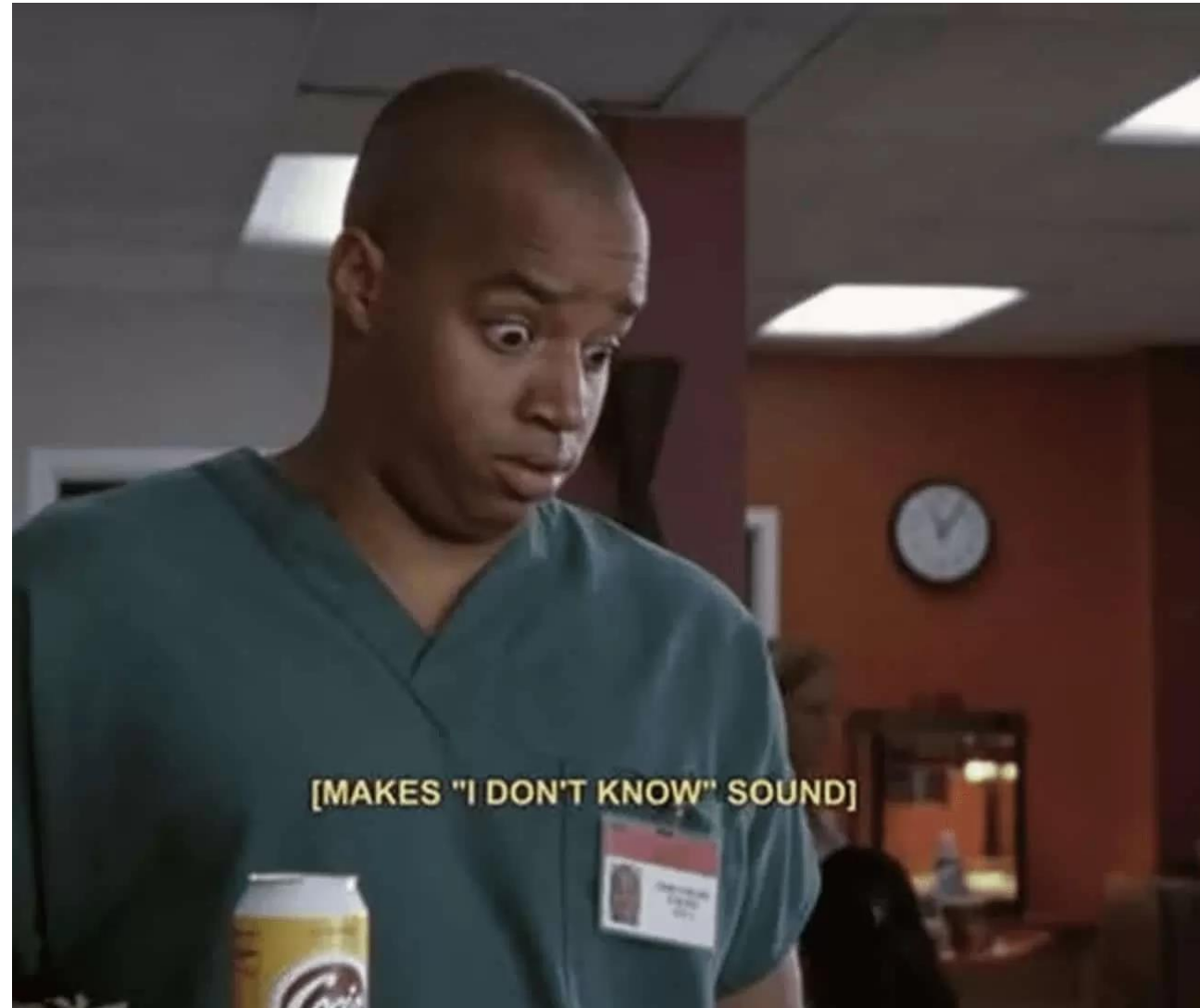


- If using live captioning, please share information with participants at the start of your meetings about [How to View Captions in Zoom Meetings](#) and share that both the font size and position of the captions can be adjusted individually by participants: [How to Adjust the Font Size of Captions](#). There are two types of live captioning: automated and manual.
- Live captions benefit a wide variety of people, and we highly recommend enabling them in your meetings. Participants will be notified that live captions are available and can choose to turn them on or not. Please note that automated live captions are not accurate enough to be used to fulfill a captioning accommodation. Instead, please consult the Manual Live Captioning section below for guidance on fulfilling accommodation requests for live captioning.

For live captioning provided by a person (not an automated service), there are two steps that are required in order to incorporate live captions into your Zoom session.

1. The session host will need to [enable closed captioning in Zoom account](#).
2. Secondly, the captionist will need to be provided with a way to add captions to the Zoom meeting. There are two ways to do this.
 - a. The captionist can join the meeting as a participant and be granted the ability to provide close captions by the host ([Managing Manual Captions](#)).
 - b. The captioning service can be integrated as a 3rd party provider.

Caption Fail



- ASL interpreters will need to join the call just like any other participant and share their video. Interpreters should have the Zoom application downloaded on their device before joining the call for best functionality.
- Remind participants to speak slow and clear, if possible, so the interpreters can keep up with the flow of conversation, one person at a time, and to identify themselves when speaking.



There are creative ways to use the [Zoom Polling Feature](#) for participation during meetings or to survey participants. Hosts should keep these best practices in mind:

- **Ensure everyone can participate.** The polling feature is accessible to people who use assistive technology. It is not usable, however, by people who are joining a meeting by phone. If you have participants joining by phone, offer an alternative way for them to send in feedback.
- **Alert participants when launching a poll.** Notify participants verbally when you are launching a poll. This is especially helpful for assistive technology users as well as anyone who may not be looking at their screen.
- **Give enough time.** Allow plenty of time for participants to find and participate in the poll.

Automatic Captions? Automatic No.

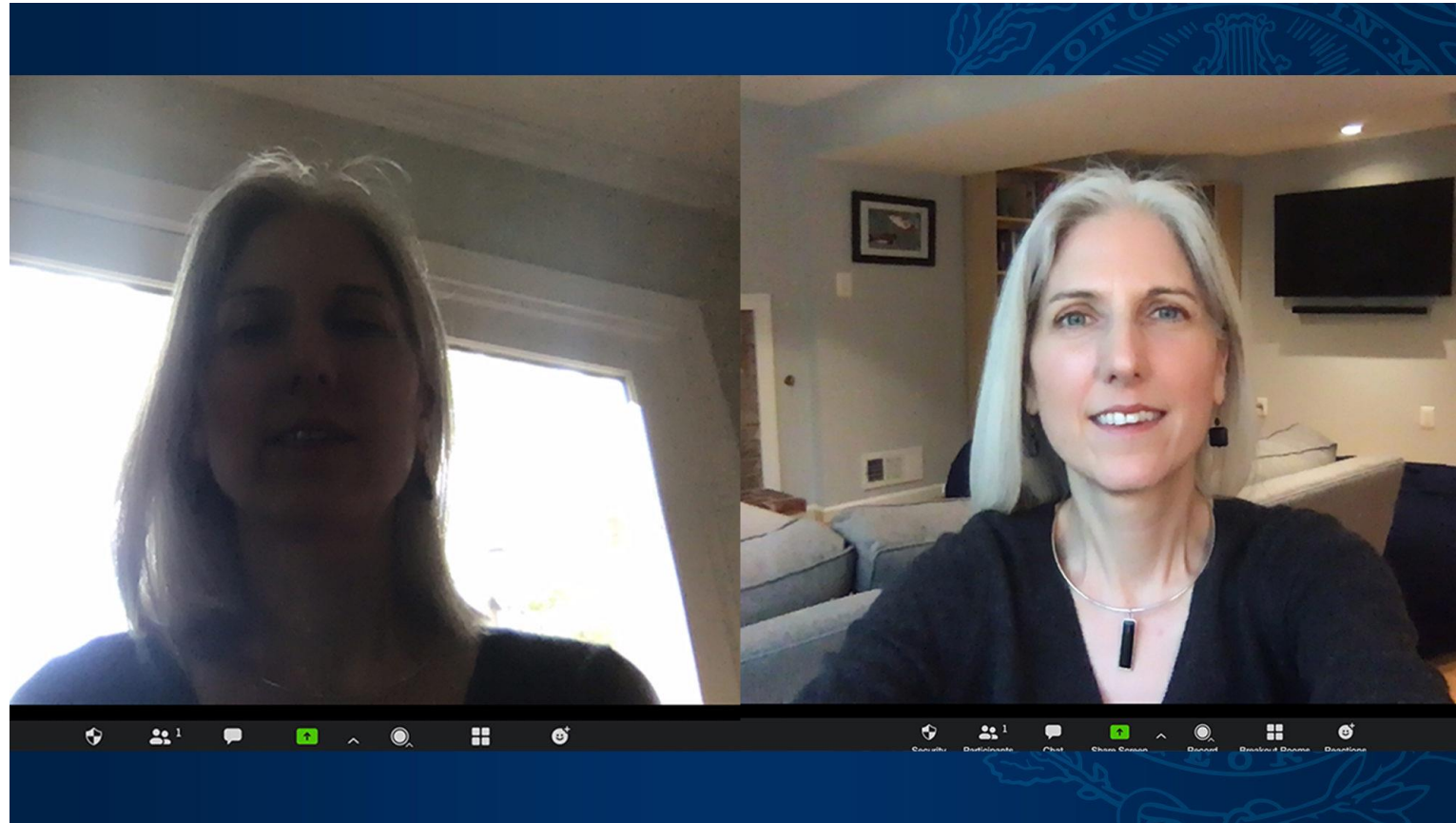


You say you want some food for thought? Here's a thought, don't talk with your mouth full.



somee cards
user card

Darth Vader Syndrome



Credit: Georgetown University ([Five Ways to Look and Sound Better on Zoom - Georgetown University](#))

**THAT AWKWARD MOMENT
WHEN**



**YOU'VE ALREADY SAID "WHAT?" THREE
TIMES AND STILL HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THE
PERSON SAID, SO YOU JUST AGREE**

Remember: Adding accessibility to your Zoom meeting is no longer a suggestion but an expectation. Zoom offers multiple tools to support you as you work to make your virtual meetings more accessible for all in attendance. It's good to remember that accessibility is a spectrum, and proactively adopting the above actions and directly speaking with your attendees about their accessibility needs will set you up to make your spaces more accessible.

Thanks!

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