Tips to improve your Adobe Connect Meetings

Technology Management Tips

- Take care of all technology issues prior to the start of the program
  - Do not use wireless connections
  - Set room screen resolution to 1024 X 768
  - Optimize room bandwidth to DSL, and instruct other participants to do the same on their computers.
  - Shut down any programs NOT being used for the presentation, and instruct other participants to do the same on their computers.

- Have participants set up and check audio/video prior to the meeting date. Explain audio requirements in a chat pod—telephone bridge numbers, muting telephones, etc.

- Recruit a partner to provide staff technology support before and during the meeting. This partner should be able to resolve technical issues such as helping participants who are having trouble logging on or starting their video and/or audio broadcasts. Set up a separate chat pod in the Presenter-Only area for them to communicate directly with you without interrupting the meeting.

- Provide the phone number and e-mail address of the technology support person to participants if they have technology problems during the meeting/program.

- Use a headset microphone to broadcast audio. Test all equipment before the broadcast.

- If using a video camera, wear plain, light colored clothing and be in a moderately lit room.

- Turn off all technology features not needed for hosting the meeting, particularly those that compete for bandwidth (email, browsers, etc.). Focus on the program.

- Enhanced Participant Rights
  To allow participants to share their voice or Web-cam, or to let them control other pods as a presenter:
  1. Select the participants that are affected by highlighting them in the participant list.
  2. Click on the Pod options menu in the bottom right hand corner of the pod and choose Enhanced Participant Rights.
3. Choose which rights you'd like to grant to the selected participants in the dialog box that appears.

- Have a backup plan in case the technology doesn’t work. Preplan various methodologies which may include a telephone bridge to continue the meeting.

**Planning and Setting Up for Meeting**

- Determine what you plan to teach, what examples you will use, which content (PowerPoint presentations, animations, videos, documents, and so on) will be shared, who will be allowed (or encouraged) to present, and so on.

- Create a meeting agenda.

- Decide when you are going to ask and answer questions, when you are going to present polls, and when other presenters or students will present or share documents. Establish how you will call on other presenters and students to participate.

- Create and test all supporting content prior to the scheduled meeting session.

- Create the meeting room, schedule a meeting session, load your content into the meeting room, and notify users well in advance.

- You can use the invitation feature built into Adobe Connect to send reminder announcements. Include all pertinent information in the e-mail message, such as:
  - Name, date, and time of the meeting session
  - Names of all participants who will be assisting with or giving presentations
  - Expected duration of the meeting
  - Session agenda
  - URL for joining the meeting
  - Directions for participants to test their computer system prior to the meeting session
  - Whom to contact if they have technical difficulties

- Include all prerequisites in the meeting announcement, or provide a link to the prerequisite materials.

- Before the meeting begins, provide participants with a list of etiquette rules, such as:
  - Wait for the planned question time to raise questions.
  - Use the "emoticons" in the "My Status" list in the Attendee pod to give feedback to the presenters regarding pace, approval, audio volume, etc.
  - Pay attention to the presenter and refrain from multi-tasking during meeting.
  - Turn off radios, alarms, cell phones, and other distracting sources of noise.
- If possible, close your door and/or put up a sign that reads "Quiet Please—on-line meeting in session."
- Use appropriate language and show respect for all other participants.
- If broadcasting audio, use a headset with microphone.
- Stay involved; participate in discussions, surveys, and polls.
- Do not turn your microphone on unless actually speaking and turn back off when finished speaking.
- All text entered into the Chat Pod stays in the meeting room after the meeting is ended unless it is cleared from the Pod by the Host.
- If you plan on recording the meeting, remind attendees that what they say or enter in the Chat Pod is going to be recorded for others to view.

- Provide necessary information about using Adobe Connect to meeting participants and presenters. Documentation specific to the WSU Extension implementation of Adobe Connect is available at [http://eces.wsu.edu/distance/connect.html](http://eces.wsu.edu/distance/connect.html)

- Preload all content into the Connect Share Pod meeting room before the scheduled meeting. Currently only the following file types are accepted:
  - PowerPoint
  - Flash Paper
  - .swf (Shockwave)
  - JPEG
  - Flash

- Prepare resources or links to additional information in a Web links pod in the Adobe Connect meeting room.

- Prepare a meeting session summary to reinforce what was presented during the session and to bring closure to the meeting.

- Conduct a trial run with participants or colleagues a few days before the meeting to check the system. Test such features as application sharing, document sharing, running presentations, and playing video. In Connect Meeting, video should be short (no more than 3 minutes). If you would like to present an extended video, send the link to participants for viewing before or after the meeting.

**Communication Tips**
- A week before the meeting, send the meeting/program announcement by e-mail with links for the connection and audio/video check-in.

- 24 hours before the meeting, send a reminder by e-mail.
- Minimize background noise before the meeting. Turn off phones, pagers, and watch alarms. Close the door to the room and/or place a sign on the door.

- Make the meeting/program agenda visible to participants.

- Set an engaging pace and monitor the audience. Vary your pace to keep participants interested. Encourage participants to give you feedback on the pace of the session using the MY STATUS "emoticons" in the Attendee List pod.

- Get feedback from participants on the session to improve your use of the technology.

- If desired, use the record feature to record the meeting. Make this recording available for participants who missed the meeting. Review the recorded presentation to evaluate the meeting and your delivery. Remember, if you use MeetingPlace telephone bridge in conjunction with Adobe Connect Meeting, you would need to check the “Record audio from speaker phone” box when starting your recording, and have a computer microphone available for that purpose. Using VoIP is preferred for recordings.
  - Let participants know if the meeting/program including the chat feature is being recorded and archived.

**Meeting Facilitation Tips**

- Determine which technology is appropriate for the intended meeting/program goals. Predetermine if Adobe Connect is the best method to facilitate your meeting or will a telephone bridge work better to meet your goals.

- Instructors should freeze their video camera when not speaking to prevent distraction and unfreeze when they are speaking.

- If the meeting/program has more than 10 participants, there may be limited opportunities for meaningful conversation. It may be best to present all content and then open up the microphones for questions and comments. You may use a chat pod to generate conversation. Consider using a wiki after the meeting to continue conversations.

- If the meeting will involve many new Adobe Connect users, consider having a practice session 15 minutes prior to the meeting to show and let participants practice the main functions of the computer interface.

- Arrive early and greet participants as they enter the room.

- Monitor the uplink and downlink to see what each participant’s bandwidth is processing. This function is found in the upper right corner of the Connect site. Unless you know that each participant has decent bandwidth (broadband or DSL), try to keep the uplink below
100 kbps. Pause your camera; limit the video in very large meetings.

- Actively engage participants, if appropriate.
  - Call on participants who aren’t fully engaged.
  - Ask participants to share their opinions or experiences with the group.
  - Ask thought-provoking questions and select participants to respond.
  - Turn participants into presenters.
  - Use the whiteboard and annotation features to draw attention to the screen.
  - Include multimedia elements such as video clips, pictures, and sound clips.
  - Use polling throughout the meeting. Share and discuss results with participants.

- Don’t let a few people dominate the session. (i.e., you may want to engage them through a private chat feature.)

- Have someone besides the presenter monitor the chat function.

- Consider having a co-presenter. Taking turns presenting adds variety and gives the presenter(s) a break to prepare for a new topic or change in activities.
  - Carefully choreograph the flow and format of the meeting/program with co-presenters to prevent downtime or confusion “on the air.”

- Be flexible in delivery (people and technology are unpredictable).

- Don’t monopolize speaking time unless your meeting/program goal is only content transmission.

- Participants at a distance often “check out”. To determine who is engaged, ask them to raise their hand electronically, or you can post a poll.

- Use software features to post action steps and/or a summary of the presentation/discussion. The notes pod can be a forwarded email to all participants.