

# Virtual Meeting Power-Ups

Lead  
Groups  
Better

Facilitating in the virtual environment is not just doing what you are used to doing face to face, but now in front of a webcam. Making our meetings, trainings, and strategy sessions skillful and efficient in the virtual space means embracing a new paradigm. This new paradigm may include letting go of the ways we used to “read the room” or letting go of our trusty whiteboarding skills.

Now more than ever, we can skillfully and truly include and unleash every single person, so they can do their smart thinking, hard work, and efficient collaborations.

## OLD PARADIGM → VIRTUAL PARADIGM

### THE NOTE TAKER

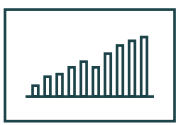


The one person who records and summarizes what happened.

Multitasking is impossible, and to participate fully in discussion, we cannot be simultaneously taking notes. It's nice just to talk and have somebody else track what is happening.

We all make “notes” together, co-author what will be written down, and co-create the meaning of sessions. We are all tracking even more closely how our discussion and insights are co-evolving.

### THE SLIDES

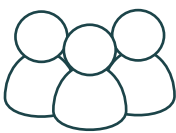


A visual tool to create structure, provide information, and share pretty pictures.

Slides are a quick way to show data, introduce terminology, and create a plan. Plus, not all conference rooms have windows.

We send polls, briefings, videos, and key concepts asynchronously before we meet on video. We use instant polls and paste succinct instructions and main points in the chat.

### THE OPEN DISCUSSION



An unstructured time usually following a question like, “Does anyone have thoughts about this?”

We feel like we are providing everyone a chance to share their thoughts on a topic in open conversation. We think it feels “organic” that way.

Open discussion is a mess on zoom. So, we use polls, breakouts, co-authored documents, and structures that protect ideas, can be anonymous if needed, and truly include every single person.

### READING THE ROOM



Looking at faces, body language, and asking provocative questions to see if people are participating and digesting information.

Because humans are complex and require time to integrate and incorporate ideas and perspectives, we need to see if the ideas are “landing.”

We “read the room” virtually by inviting thumbs up/down check-ins, polling, and sampling. We allow the people in the room to read each other through small and rapid impromptu conversations in breakout rooms.

### THE PHONE BASKET

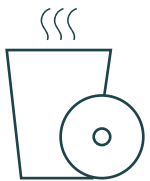


A place everyone deposits their electronic devices in order to focus on the meeting.

We hope to ensure the exclusive focus on the meeting and reduce distractions.

Streamline and plan content to use tools like timers and survey platforms that leverage the abilities of the mobile device. Take a few moments to invite everybody to close their alerts and emails.

### THE BAGELS & COFFEE



A buffet of sustenance.

To lure people into meetings, we could not require them to attend. Alternatively, to provide a place for informal connection and conversation.

Meaningful and structured tools like a chat-based Mad Tea Party can foster a sense of unity, intimacy, and connection. Participants can share an image of a recent trip, home improvement project, or recipe, and expand their repertoire beyond flavors of cream cheese. And you can have food delivered.

### ARRANGING THE FURNITURE



Because it does not arrange itself, and the law of meeting dynamics insists that whatever structure was used last will be completely incompatible with the next meeting.

Because we know that the purpose of the meeting requires a particular structure: in the round to facilitate discussion, or facing a presentation wall if we are receiving a lot of visual information.

While each participant can arrange their seat in the most comfortable and productive manner for themselves, we can select gallery view to see everyone at once, speaker view, set up a “fishbowl” by each person covering their camera so they can listen in on a conversation. No furniture moving required, and yet such a shift in the way the virtual space feels.