



Making Virtual Meetings Meaningful

Whether you are conducting a chapter meeting or presenting important information to a large group, here are some ways to improve the virtual experience for the participants.

Connection - What do I want my viewers to feel?

- Be your authentic self.
- Be watchable.
- Shift the attention to the viewer.
- Express yourself; transmit what you feel to the viewer.
- Internalize your message or make notes – no script.

Context – What do I want my viewers to see?

- Deliver with dynamism.
- Balance non-verbal (93%) with content (7%).
- Be animated.
- Use your hands.
- Expend 10% more energy.
- Smile using your eyes.
- Look at the lens. Don't watch yourself.
- Ensure light shows your face.

Content – What do I want my attendees to remember?

- Have a clear message.
- Use understandable language.
- Explain any DKG-specific jargon.
- Tell a memorable story.
- Show a great picture.
- Wrap up with some feedback from viewers.

Sources:

Susan Leahy - Group to Team Leadership Solutions: Maintaining Team During Social Distancing - <http://www.grouptoteam.com>

Rebecca Williams - Story Coach - <http://rebecca-williams.com/>

Zoom tutorials - www.zoom.us.com

GoToMeeting tutorials - www.dkg.org/DKGMember/Resources/Presentations-test/Videos.aspx

Connecting During a Pandemic

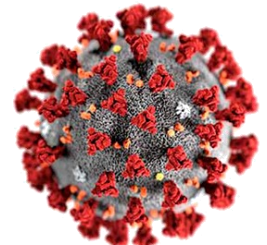
The year 2020 brought unimaginable new circumstances to everyday life when the coronavirus (COVID-19) struck and rapidly spread worldwide. DKG members, “forward moving ever,” are learning how to make the best of stay-at-home orders, closed schools, universities, and offices and slowed economies.

Educators are learning videoconferencing software, distance learning tools, and online alternatives and are connecting with students, peers and families in multiple ways. DKG members are likewise learning new and varied methods of connecting with each other in addition to leaning on comfortable forms of networking.

Connecting Members to Members

Tried and true methods of communication are still helpful in connecting with others. Phones, postal mail, and email make it easy to stay in touch. In one chapter, members receive an email each Monday morning from an officer sharing what she has done that week and giving encouragement, inspiration, or general news of members. A state organization (SO) is having members share what they are doing during self-isolation and the pandemic's isolation in teaching. Emailed narratives can be compiled into one sharing site. One chapter uses its phone tree to call members with a “smile of the day.” Other chapters have a member-pairing system of individually calling to check on each other, which is a good way to build multigenerational friends. One chapter president is making handmade cards to send to her members and other DKG friends to tell them she is thinking of them.

Blogging is becoming a common method of sharing information. International President Cathy Daugherty is [blogging weekly](#) to communicate news of DKG during the pandemic and to share stories of how members are adapting and learning to use technology to stay in touch. Chapters can create blogs where members can share their experiences. In addition to providing a creative outlet, these will become historical documents.



Videoconferencing apps, such as [Skype](#), [Google Hangouts](#), [Webex](#), [Zoom](#), [Jitsu](#) on any platform, and [FaceTime](#) on Apple products, allow members to visit face-to-face and see that each other is well. Chapters are holding meetings with Zoom, installing officers, inducting new members, and having success keeping activities going. One state organization is doing related personnel interviews using Zoom, while another is [initiating a technology support group](#) to help members who are not familiar with these types of communications so that they can participate and get technology help to stay in touch.

Zoom has been used in Sweden to empower and celebrate students and teachers. Traditionally, to celebrate the completion of a PhD candidate's work, she would “nail her thesis” three weeks before presenting her dissertation. She would physically hammer a copy of her thesis on a tree, talk about the results, and raise a glass of wine. Instead of in-person as is the tradition, Swedish members recently held this ceremony virtually, and it evolved into a very happy event with many people earlier unknown to each other chatting and communicating about science, COVID-19, and good ways to survive life in isolation. It created many new friends all over Europe.



Avoid Zoom “Bombing”

Members may have heard of photobombing, where someone unexpectedly jumps into a photo as a prank or joke. It appears Zoom meetings can be bombed as well, usually without the fun intentions of photobombing. Think what could happen if an uninvited guest showed up in your Zoom chapter meeting!



Zoom has responded to Zoom-bombing with some best practices. To provide more clarity around the privacy issues, Zoom is stressing advanced security features and resources to secure your virtual classroom or meeting, including these tips:

- Enable the Waiting Room feature, which is one of the best ways to protect your Zoom virtual classroom. It allows the leader to see who is waiting to participate and admit them, omitting anyone she does not know. Click [here](#) to see a video on how to do that.
- Utilize the [Zoom Safety Settings Checklist](#) to ensure the correct buttons are checked for security. It also gives emergency tips for muting, deleting bombers, and locking the meeting.
- Learn best practices for securing your virtual meeting or classroom on this recent [Zoom blog post](#). The security options when scheduling a meeting include links to more specific how-tos.
- The [Zoom Help Center](#) has one-minute introductory videos and a vast repository of help files. If you have any other questions about securing your virtual classrooms, reach out to the Zoom Support Team at support@zoom.us.

Other videoconferencing apps will have similar safety settings. Check their websites and stay safe.

Connecting During a Pandemic (Continued)

One SO held its Executive Board meeting using GoToMeeting (GTM). A fee-based videoconferencing service, GTM is available free to state organizations through International during the pandemic. The paid version has more features than free apps. (Contact Headquarters for more details about using their GTM license.)

Video sharing apps allow users to put video recordings online so anyone can view them. Examples with free sharing include [YouTube](#), [Vimeo](#), [Tik Tok](#), and [Facebook Watch](#), which allows the ability to watch any video with friends so chapters could have a watch party. One SO asked members to record a video of themselves sharing what DKG means to them and to post it to their SO Facebook account. Chapters could record their virtual meetings and post them on YouTube for members who couldn't attend the original videoconference meeting.

DKG Communities offer a safe environment for communicating with members with similar interests. There are 23 communities available under MyDKG profile once members are logged on the DKG website. Post a question, start a conversation, or respond to a post. Subscribe to the communities that interest you and get connected.

Google offers a variety of products for getting connected and continuing DKG business. Many chapters have used Google Hangouts to meet. Chapters are using Google Forms to vote on new officers or members if a vote is required. The forms tally the vote count, and users do not need a Google/gmail account to complete the form.

Facebook allows users to create private groups so chapter members are sharing information with each other without going public. They share photos, funny happenings, videos, and everyday activities. Facebook allows members to keep in touch with others, which is what's important. Read how to set up a chapter Facebook account here: <http://dkgi.blogspot.com/2017/11/setting-up-facebook-page.html>.



Other social media apps are also good for connecting with others. Members of one chapter are sharing photos on Instagram. Some are sharing thoughts and ideas using Twitter. Texting, messaging, and sharing through any app keep members connected.

The International Educational Excellence Committee posted two good blog entries recently regarding staying connected while social distancing. Read them here: <http://dkgi.blogspot.com/2020/03/part-1-ways-to-stay-connected-while.html> and here: <http://dkgi.blogspot.com/2020/03/part-2-virtual-programs-while-social.html>.

Whatever your preferred method of communicating, get connected and stay in touch with other members. Genuine spiritual fellowship is a benefit of DKG, especially during a pandemic.

The birds are still singing...

The method you choose to get connected with others is not the important factor... reaching out, letting members know you are thinking of them, sharing, caring, and moving forward are what's important. Let spring be a time of renewal and revival of the earth and our spirits.

We want to share one last tip from a European member:

Nature is good for your mental health. Inspire your members with a virtual "walk and talk" video—or phone call—in your garden just to let your friends know that the birds are still singing. That gives us hope for the future.

Yours in DKG,
The International Communications and Marketing Committee

