

## Sound, during Online Webinars

Intentionally working with and planning sound can enhance a meeting. Below are some tips to consider for all things *heard*.



1. **Sit in a quiet place.** Environmental noise can be distracting for meeting participants. A dog barking or a husband cooking dinner in the kitchen can easily interrupt or derail a conversation or decision-making process. Find a quiet place and shut the door if possible.
2. **Wear headphones.** This can help to cancel out noise and be helpful for both the user and those in the meeting. The quality of headphones is important. Some earbuds decrease the quality of sound rather than increase it.
3. **Mute yourself.** This is a helpful practice, especially when there are many people in the meeting. Consider muting all participants during presentations. See instructions [here](#).
4. **Unmute yourself during informal times.** This will allow you to hear each other's laughter, reactions, and small talk. This is especially important at the start of a meeting. It is also nice at the end of a session – ask everyone to unmute in order to say goodbye.
5. **Use the Raise Hand feature to speak.** This is an easy-to-use way to let someone know you have something to share and eliminates the need for participants to shout or interrupt. See instructions [here](#).
6. **Use the Chat box.** This a great way to raise many voices and to hear from everyone.
7. **Use the minutes before the meeting starts to check sound.** Troubleshooting before everyone arrives and in the first minutes of a meeting is time well spent.
8. **Invite silence.** We need not feel uncomfortable with silence and it can be helpful for participants for a variety of reasons. Two ways to consider:
  - a. **Solo notetaking:** *“On your own, consider the next agenda item for our meeting. Jot two notes for yourself on a slip of paper that you want to ensure are addressed here today. ... I now invite you to keep these in mind as we enter this important large part of our agenda today.”* Taking 5 minutes to do this can act as an “equalizer” – everyone has something to say whether they have thought much about this in advance or not.
  - b. **Solo work:** *“To help expedite our work, we have a 30-minute working session as part of our 2-hours together. You each have one piece of the plan and 30 minutes to draft it out – yup, we all have enough on our TO DO lists, so we are doing it right here, right now. Click on the link in the Chat box to a Google doc for us all to work in. We will review our drafted work and offer initial thoughts to inform our next steps. Send questions in a private message to me, and there will be 30 minutes of silent work. Let’s get started!”*

***What have you tried at meetings to use silence or enhance the sound experience?***