



Ten Tips to Foster Online Engagement

Here are ten ways to invite people to participate more in online meetings:

#1 Plan for a few minutes of socializing before the meeting's official start time.

Invite people to come a bit early. This will also help you start the meeting on time.

#2 Increase trust. Create agreements about confidentiality and respect. Review them at every meeting. If people don't trust members of a group, they won't engage.

#3 Help the participants to say something in the first 5 minutes of a meeting. Even if all they do is read something, hearing their own voices helps them engage later.

#4 Help participants connect to themselves, to each other and to the purpose of the meeting. Do this as early in the meeting as possible.

#5 Find ways for the group to co-create meeting outcomes. Give people thoughtful questions to answer in breakout rooms. Liberating Structures can help you do this by design. To learn more, watch [these videos](#).

#6 Provide instructions both verbally and in writing so the group can stay together. Some people understand better by hearing, others by reading.

#7 Take frequent breaks to rest everyone's eyes, minds and bodies. Never go more than an hour without a break that invites people to move.

#8 Give participants choices, for example, about how or when to respond, whether to join breakout rooms or not, or what question to answer.

#9 Do things together. People learn by doing, and doing things together is engaging.

#10 Have fun! Laughter engages bodies and minds and contributes to group bonding.

Experiment with these and observe your group. When do people engage – or not? What helps them open up and participate? Whatever works, do more of that.



If you'd like your meetings to be more effective, efficient and even fun, I'd be happy to assist. Contact me and learn about upcoming workshops and online courses at BickfordCollaboration.com.

