

Psychotherapists Board of Aotearoa New Zealand
Te Poari o ngā Kaihaumanu Hinengaro o Aotearoa

Zoom Guidelines

As a reminder, electronic meetings should move at a slightly slower pace than a typical meeting. This is due to a two to three-second delay for most systems to communicate.

Video Conferencing tips

- be courteous to other participants and remember to speak clearly
- keep body movements minimal
- move and gesture slowly and naturally
- maintain eye contact by looking into the camera
- turn off other distractions i.e. mobile phone, close other apps on your computer that may make noise.
- mute your mic when you are not talking so that background noise does not interrupt the meeting.

Try not to:

- make distracting sounds or movements
- interrupt other speakers
- carry on side conversations

Contents

| | |
|---|---|
| Before a Zoom meeting | 2 |
| Appropriate attire | 2 |
| Joining a meeting | 2 |
| Control video and audio quality | 2 |
| Adjust your lighting | 2 |
| Think about your background..... | 2 |
| Practice speaking to the camera and not the screen..... | 2 |
| Sharing your screen..... | 2 |
| Hosting | 2 |
| Internet connection | 3 |
| During a Zoom meeting..... | 3 |
| Mute your microphone when necessary | 3 |
| Keep your video on..... | 3 |
| Think about your actions on camera | 3 |
| 'Raising your hand' | 3 |
| Zoom chat function..... | 3 |
| Multitasking | 3 |
| Sharing your screen..... | 3 |
| Additional Resources | 3 |

Before a Zoom meeting

Appropriate attire

Dress for your video conference the way you would for an in-person meeting.

Joining a meeting

Join early – up to 5 minutes before the meeting start time. This can assist in allowing the meeting to run on time.

Control video and audio quality

Ensure your video and audio settings are adjusted to suit your environment. You can test the quality of your audio and video prior to joining a meeting, or during a meeting if necessary. If you have difficulty hearing your colleagues, or they have difficulty hearing you, earphones/headphones with a microphone attachment may be able to assist.

Try to hold meetings in quiet, indoor locations to control ambient noise.

Adjust your lighting

Don't sit directly in front of or beside a bright light source, or else all the audience sees is a bright light and a shadowy figure. Experiment with moving lamps and your camera until you can see your brightly-lit face on the screen.

Think about your background

Try to provide a plain background. You can't control everything in a mobile environment, but give some consideration to your background prior to your meeting.

Practice speaking to the camera and not the screen

Our tendency is to look at the person on the screen, but you should look at the camera when you speak so the audience feels like you're talking directly to them.

Sharing your screen

Be mindful of the programs or files you have open on your computer. You may not want to share your entire Desktop during a meeting but only a Word document or PowerPoint. Open up any relevant documents before the call and share only those during the meeting.

Shut down your email.

Note that when you share, Zoom prioritizes the shared item to the bandwidth. This can reduce the other video feeds' quality, so don't share longer than necessary.

Hosting

If you are hosting the Zoom meeting, become familiar with how to mute and unmute all participants. You should also be logged in 5 minutes before the meeting is scheduled, to allow you time to become familiar with the controls, as well as allow people to move from the *Waiting Room* to the *Meeting Room*.

See below for important considerations when hosting a meeting:

- Secure your Zoom meetings to prevent unwanted guests
- Review your host controls and meeting settings ahead of time
- Share housekeeping details with attendees
- Remind them to mute their mics when others are presenting or speaking
- Let them know how they can get your attention during the meeting (i.e. raising their hand)
- Will you be checking the chat window?
- Start the recording (or set up automatic recordings)
- Troubleshoot audio problems if they arise

Internet connection

If you can, connect to the internet via an Ethernet cable. Zoom quality is best on a solid wired internet connection. Zoom is also functional on a wireless connection. If you are wireless, try to remain close to the wireless router.

During a Zoom meeting

Think of a Zoom Meeting as a face-to-face meeting and conduct yourself as you would if you were all present in the same room.

Mute your microphone when necessary

Mute your Microphone when you are not speaking. It assists to cut down on ambient feedback for the audience. If you are having a lot of back-and-forth discussion, you can keep your microphone on, but you should mute yourself when listening to a presenter. Also note that you should try to avoid talking over/ at the same time as others.

Keep your video on

Unless your background is inappropriate or distracting, you should keep your video on. Video is crucial in building trust and engagement in virtual communications.

When your video is on, adjust your camera to be at around eye level if possible – especially take note of the angle of your laptop screen if using the built-in camera.

Think about your actions on camera

Always remember that everyone can see you. Any exaggerated movements may be distracting to the audience and can be disruptive to the speaker.

If you are required to move around or need to move location, please turn your video off to reduce any possible distraction to others. This includes if someone in-person needs your attention.

'Raising your hand'

If you wish to contribute to the conversation or answer the question, raise your hand using the Zoom function. When the host calls on you, you can unmute your microphone.

Zoom chat function

You can send a question or statement to everyone or privately to a participant.

That said, try to avoid unnecessary side conversations during a meeting as it can be distracting.

Multitasking

Try to avoid doing other tasks, checking emails, looking at your phone etc. Respect your colleagues by continuing to be attentive during the meeting. If you have to, make sure that you are on mute when completing other tasks or having a brief conversation.

Sharing your screen

Make sure you share **only** the document you want to share. If you haven't done so already, close any programs or windows before opting to share your screen.

Additional Resources

For more information on using Zoom, visit the [Zoom website](#) for videos on *Joining a Meeting*, *Sharing Your Screen*, *Meeting Controls*, and more.