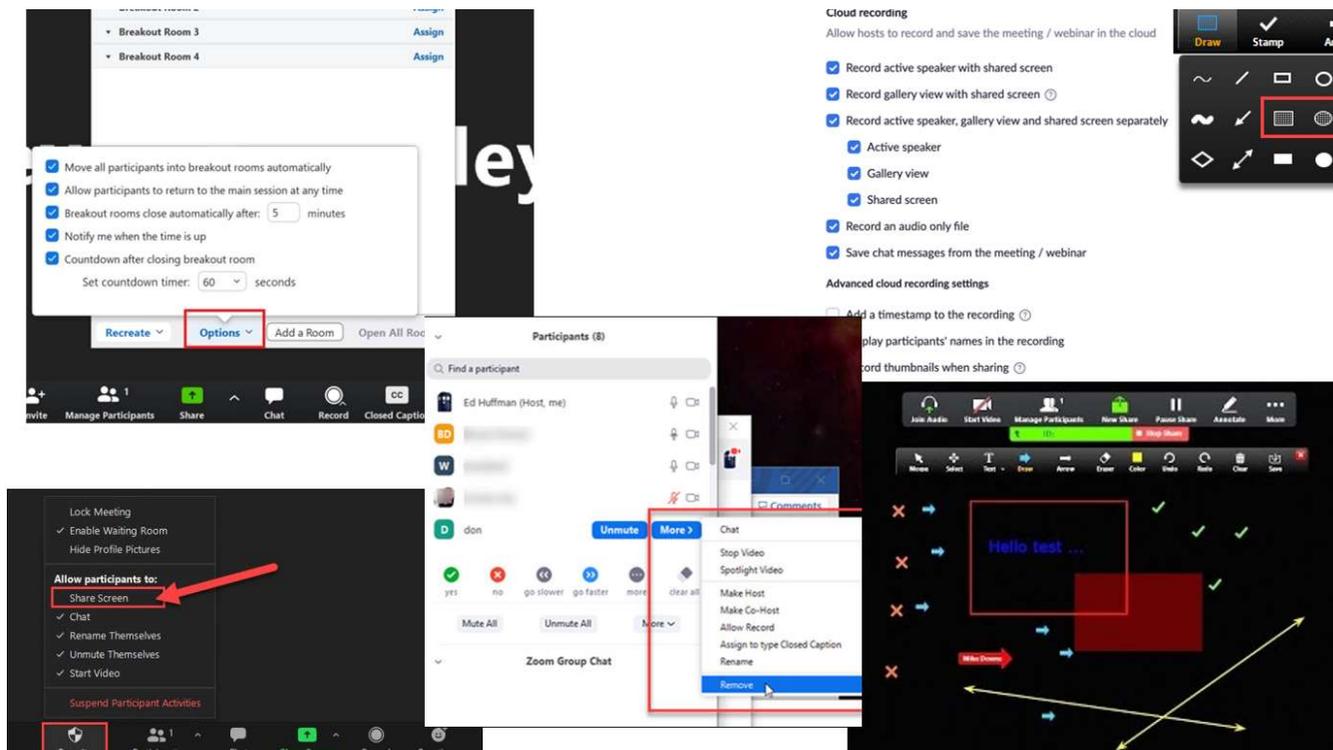


Working with a Virtual Technical Producer



Tech Issues – for example:

- Participants can't see / hear facilitator
- Facilitator can't see / hear participants
- Facilitator or participants can't share screen
- Facilitator can't figure out how to share the right view of their deck
- Sound not playing on presentation video
- Participant can't download files
- Participant can't see annotation tools
- Participant keeps dropping out
- Facilitator can't advance their slide deck

Training Support – for example:

- Responding to participant questions regarding content or session timings
- Supporting what trainer is saying by typing in chat
- Annotating summary notes on whiteboard during discussions
- Giving clear written instructions in chat eg:

****** BREAKOUT ACTIVITY:**

Click the file to download it

Answer the questions in the document

Nominate a spokesperson to report back

- If trainer's connection drops, the producer can take over the session until they return

Tech Support – for example:

- Producers normally have 2 devices and 2 separate internet connections, so if one drops the other keeps the room running
- Merging participants' mobile audio
- Allocating host and co-host roles
- Security settings
- Running polls
- Recording sessions (and reminding trainer re GDPR and Work Council regulations)
- Creating and managing breakouts
- Providing participants with instructions, eg annotating
- Enabling live transcription
- Running other external software, eg simulations
- Knowledge on how these tools are affected differently by PC, Mac, Linux, mobiles and tablets

Admin Tasks – for example:

- Attendance register
- Running the Waiting Room
- File uploads
- Taking screenshots of annotated slides
- Provide links in chat to external sources (eg articles, books, websites, surveys)
- Countdown timer during breaks

& MORE

Benefits

- Creates a slicker professional delivery when trainer and producer work well together
- Saves the trainer stress over having to sort out (often multiple and simultaneous) tech issues while also trying to run the session
- Saves time – not just for tech issues, but also setting up breakouts and using other tools
- Trainer doesn't have to provide participants with anything – producer has already prepared links, files, instructions etc ready to go and can look up websites or books mentioned and provide info
- Reduces admin load on trainer – eg attendance reports, screenshots
- Allows the trainer to do what they do best – deliver the magic!

Understanding

A robust understanding of what we can do, and how this helps the trainer

Materials

Slide deck with notes
Facilitator/Producer Guide
Files for uploading

Clear, concise instructions

Eg - Slide 23
Breakout 1
Random groups of 4-5
12 minutes

What do we need from an instructional designer?

Script

A good producer will be able to instruct or explain on their own, but if there's something specific then tell us what you want us to say, or write in chat

Time to do Tasks

Eg – Don't ask Producer to welcome participants, introduce platform tools AND sort tech issues at the same time

Consider the Partnership

It's a tag-team. Think about how a Producer can do something in the background while a Trainer is speaking; and how the Producer and Trainer take over and synthesise with each other – eg sharing screens or giving information in turns

Someone who is organised and methodical, who prepares diligently for each session ahead of time

Someone who can think ahead and anticipate (and fulfil!) the trainer's needs

Someone who can keep calm in a crisis

What to look for in a Producer?

Someone who can multitask, think on their feet, be flexible and adapt to changes as needed

Someone who is experienced and knowledgeable about the nuances of the tech – the platform's user interface as well as the back end, and external sites like jamboard

Ideally, someone from an L&D background who understands the session from a trainer's point of view and can take over if the trainer's connection drops out

Think about the trainer's needs first – if there are only some admin tasks, a VA might be sufficient. But a VA may not be able to keep abreast of the constant platform changes, and how these affect the different devices.

Working with a Producer

Before:

- Ensure we have all materials so we can prepare for the session
- Slide deck, producer guide, breakout slides, videos etc
- Login details for the room
- Host key if needed
- Rehearsal sessions

During:

- Be welcoming!
- Treat your Producer as a valued training partner, not a skivvy
- Log in 30 minutes before the class starts, so you can align
- Watch the chat – Producer will notify you of any issues there
- Let Producer know ahead of time of any changes

After:

- Say thank you 😊
- Give and receive constructive feedback
- Testimonial on LinkedIn if appropriate

Top Tips

- Face to Face and Virtual are *different*. They need different design.
- Moving from one platform to another may entail redesign. What works well in Zoom might not work well in MS Teams.
- Consider the limitations of the platform. Does it require guest logins and then refuse them the ability to share screens or files?
- Consult with a Producer when designing. They can not only help with platform and tech input, but they also watch a lot of sessions being done well (and not so well)
- Treat your Producer like a valued training partner – not a skivvy.
- Consider what level of tech support you / the facilitator may need.
- Let the tech support the training; not get in the way of it.

Having a Producer opens up more scope for interactive participation – improving learning outcomes and “stickability”

Having a Producer means you can cope with bigger groups – so fewer sessions for the same impact

Having a Producer means you can save time during the session – so more, shorter sessions to fit into the work day

Convince Your Boss

Having a Producer brings another L&D professional to the session, who can offer insights and provide unbiased feedback on improving learner engagement

Having a Producer means that your delivery is more professional – internal or external, your learners are your clients!

Having a Producer means there's a backup to take over if the tech fails – so participants' time isn't wasted by having to reschedule

Think about the trainer's needs first – if there are only some admin tasks, a VA might be sufficient. But a VA may not be able to keep abreast of the constant platform changes, and how these affect the different devices.



CONTACT

+44 (0) 7912 077 354

gayle@step-one.org.uk

www.linkedin.com/in/gayle-kaufmann