Speaker Tips

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a speaker for the 2022 AAPDRT Annual Meeting. We're grateful for your participation and work you've done to prepare. Below you will find tips to aid with your transition from the physical to virtual presentation space. For most of you, this is old hat but if you have suggestions that might improve this document for others, [send your thoughts my way](#)!

Your Environment

Background Environment
Consider decluttering your space and removing items you don't want people to see. Be aware of what is visible in the frame and make sure the area is clean and orderly. That being said, we don't recommend a blank wall. Background items can be a nice touch to show personality, but they shouldn't include items you don't want others to see (like private photos of children).

Lighting
Ample lighting ensures you look your best and improves video clarity. For the best results, face the light (main source of light should come from behind your webcam). A few things to consider:
- A room with a lot of natural light is helpful.
- Make sure you don't sit with your back to a window (back lighting will shadow you).
- Overhead lighting can be tricky and cast unwanted shadows.
- Consider bringing more lighting into your space (such as a lamp or ring light) and position in front of you.

Environment Sound
Most of us won't be alone when presenting. Make sure families, roommates, and co-workers know you're presenting to minimize noise. The best setup would allow you to close a door and maybe even put up a sign as a reminder not to be disturbed. If you have kids or pets, give them something to keep them occupied.
Don't be afraid of silence. There might be a 3-10 second lag depending on buffering speeds.

The Presentation

Regardless of whether it's your first speaking engagement or 100th, the atmosphere speakers lose from physically being in front of an audience matters. You no longer benefit from having an audience's undivided attention. The burden of keeping people engaged falls more on you than ever. Here are some practical things to remember much like you would for a real event, and some additional tips for the virtual setting:

Clothing
Think about what you feel confident and comfortable wearing. Avoid plaids, prints, and other busy patterns. Consider the temperature of the room you'll be in when presenting to ensure you're comfortable. The current climate allows for a more casual on camera look.

Personality

You will need to work harder to appear dynamic on screen. It will feel like an exaggerated version of yourself, but trust us, it's not. Use your voice to guide viewer attention by varying your intonation to keep attendees engaged. Consider having someone in the room with you to nod in approval, provide visual feedback with expressions, etc.

Positioning

For the best viewing and framing of the video, center yourself in the middle of the screen so your head and shoulders take up the majority of the frame. Keep hands from face and stand if at all possible. Don't place your laptop on your lap as it can make the video bounce.

Eye Contact

Making eye contact with the camera is going to be especially important in keeping the audience engaged plus it will look more polished. A few specific tips:
- ➤ If you have notes or a full script, make sure they are pulled up on the screen where the camera is. You don't want to be looking down or away to a second monitor pulling the focus away from the audience.
- ➤ Position your device at eye level, even propping up the laptop using books if needed.

Your Power Point

Test and practice your ability to see the presentation in presenter mode rather than notes mode. Avoid small font or images. Keep slides clean and concise.

The Tech

Technology might be your biggest wild card. When you show up to a live event, you have onsite AV support. You don't for a virtual event. Here are several things to consider:

Updated Software

We will be using Chime Live. Be sure you are using the most recent version of Chrome (Version 97.0.4692.99 as of 2/4/22) and Zoom (5.9.3 as of 2/4/22).

Internet Connection

Hard-wired internet is preferable, so you will need an ethernet cable and quite possibly a special dongle on top of that. Otherwise, a stable and robust WIFI is required. We advise you to politely ask family members, roommates, co-workers, etc. to stay offline during your presentation to increase the connection's quality and stability. If you experience loss of internet, make sure your mobile device is ready to go (but keep muted and sound off to avoid feedback).

Equipment

You want to avoid using older devices, if possible, as camera and memory will impact the quality of the video. If using a laptop, plug it in. This stops the laptop from disabling certain power/battery functions and it's a backup in the event you forget to charge it! Also be sure to close out all other applications other than the window browser you are using.

Do not rely on slide pointers or annotation tools provided on web conferencing platforms.

Technology Sound
Using headphones/a headset will drown out background noise, avoid feedback, as well as help your voice carry through the device better. Smaller, wireless headphones have a more streamlined look. Change your computer's audio settings to input and output through the headset and its mic if you go this route. If you are using video in your presentation, it is a good rule to allow dialogue to be closed captioned.

Virtual Background
Virtual backgrounds can be fun, but don't get carried away. If you wish to include, we encourage you to find something that isn't distracting and remains professional. If you wish for us to provide one, [please let me know](#).

Support
During the lecture, if you have this luxury, we encourage you to have someone in the room with you that is willing to monitor your phone (in silent mode) for any critical details from the production team. This will ensure you don't need to monitor yourself and instead can have a carefree lecture experience.