

Best Practices for e-Clubs

Zonta e-Clubs use technology to electronically meet and communicate with their members. There are several tools available to e-Clubs such as Skype, Zoom.us, GoToMeeting, GoToWebinar, WebEx by Cisco and Glance. Other services are likely available in your country.

Since e-Clubs meet face-to-face less frequently than traditional clubs, it is important that regular communications to engage members in the goals and service of Zonta be conducted with the use of technology through chat rooms, messaging platforms, blogs and closed group social networking websites, such as Facebook, Flickr and Instagram. The information in the section below offers guidance on how to maximize the use of technology in communicating and engaging members in Zonta e-Clubs.

- **Be accessible.** Have a common secure location where shared documents are available to all attendees, such as Dropbox.
- **Give proper notice.** Send an electronic invitation that requires a confirmation and put the meeting in the electronic calendars of all attendees.
- **Be purposive.** Have a clear and well-communicated agenda that is available before the meeting and online during the meeting.
- **Set time limits.** Set a time cap for the meeting to boost productivity, help the participants stay focused and ensure that the meeting will not go off-track.
- **Give sufficient information.** Send out as many documents in advance so members can review and be prepared.
- **Prepare technology in advance.** Ask all the participants to start their computers at least 15 to 20 minutes before the meeting gets underway and make sure their microphones and cameras are working fine.
- **Be prepared.** Make sure presenters and guests are familiar with the e-Club's meeting technology, vet presenters and guests prior to the meeting by communicating with them weeks before and familiarizing them with the format and technology.
- **Keep all members updated.** Record the meeting and comments for others to review if they are not able to attend.
- **Conclude with clear actions.** After the online meeting, send a summary of the discussions including next steps, tasks assigned and when the next meeting will take place.
- **Minimize distractions.** Limit background noise and mute all phones unless speaking.
- **Avoid multitasking.** Participants should be engaged enough to give the meeting 100 percent of their attention.
- **Be polite.** Good manners are especially important as people work to overcome some of the intercultural and language challenges of meeting virtually. Attendees will not always be able to see body language, so speakers need to be mindful of how attitudes come across without virtual cues.
- **Keep the communication loop.** Send a thank you email for feedback. Doing so will make members feel appreciated and connected to the e-Club.

For more information on available technology tools, see pages 40 - 41 of the Marian de Forest Membership Manual, which can be found here:

<http://membership.zonta.org/Governance/Manuals>