Tips for Leading Class Sessions in Breeze

(adapted from the Macromedia document, "Tips and Ideas for leading Breeze Meetings")

Breeze Meeting is based on many of the same dynamics and delivery protocols used every day in university and college classrooms. For example:

- Participants should arrive on time and stay for the whole session
- The presentation is the primary learning experience and a catalyst for further discussion and participant interaction.
- Side conversations and disruptions are not permitted.
- Participants may raise their hands to ask questions.
- Instructors or meeting leaders monitor participant expressions and body language to assess comprehension.
- Participants, as a group or individually, answer questions when asked.
- Participants are responsible for taking notes on important material.

Planning and Setting Up for Class Using Breeze

1. Create a plan for the class session. Determine what you plan to teach, what examples you will use, which content (PowerPoint presentations, animations, videos, documents, and so on) will be shared, who will be allowed (or encouraged) to present, and so on.

2. Create a class agenda.

3. Plan interactions. Decide when you are going to ask and answer questions, when you are going to present polls, and when other presenters or students will present or share documents. Establish how you will call on other presenters and students to participate.

4. Create and test all supporting content prior to the scheduled class session.

5. Create the meeting room, schedule a meeting session, and notify users well in advance. If possible, include Breeze class times in your syllabus along with the URL students will need to enter the room. You may want to use the invitation feature built in to Breeze to send reminder announcements. Plan to include all pertinent information in the e-mail message. For example, you will probably want to include:

   - Name, date, and time of the meeting session
   - Names of all participants who will be assisting with or giving presentations
6. Include all prerequisites in the course syllabus, or provide a link to the prerequisite materials

7. Before class begins, provide participants with a list of etiquette rules. For example:

- Wait for the planned question time to raise questions.
- Use the "emoticons" in the "My Status" list in the Attendee pod to indicate if the pace is appropriate and to request permission to speak.
- Pay attention to the presenter and refrain from multi-tasking during class.
- Turn off radios, alarms, cell phones, and other distracting sources of noise.
- If possible, close your door and/or put up a sign that reads "Quiet Please -- on-line class in session."
- Use appropriate language and show respect for all other participants.
- If broadcasting audio, use a headset with microphone.
- Stay involved, participate in discussions, surveys, and polls.

8. Provide necessary information about using Breeze to students and presenters. Documentation specific to the Penn State implementation of Breeze is available at the Penn State Breeze Web site, http://meeting.psu.edu.

9. Preload all content into the meeting room before the scheduled class session.

10. Prepare resources or links to additional information. You can create a Web links pod in the Breeze meeting room for presenting this information.

11. Prepare a class session summary to reinforce what was presented during the session and to bring closure to the class session.

12. Conduct a trial run. Ask some participants or colleagues to log in before class (preferably a few days) to check the system. Test such features as application sharing, document sharing, running presentations, and playing video.

13. Arrange to have tech support help available to answer questions for several days prior to holding class for the first time as well as during the time the first class will be in session.

14. Send out a reminder e-mail one day before the Breeze class session.

For more help and information: 724-430-4100 ext. 4634  cft10@psu.edu
Leading Breeze Meetings

1. Arrive early and greet participants as they enter the room.

2. Everyone who is broadcasting audio should use a headset with a microphone.

3. Minimize distracting background noise during the class session. Turn off phones, pagers, and watch alarms. Close the door to the room and or place a sign on the door.

4. Set an engaging pace and monitor the audience. Vary your pace to keep participants interested. Encourage participants to give you feedback on the pace of the session using the "emoticons" in the Attendee pod.

5. Speak with confidence. Use a script, note cards, or outline to help you stay on track. Monitor your speech for verbal pauses and verbal tags like "ummm," "you know," and "OK."

6. Actively engage the participants:
   - Use the whiteboard and annotation features to draw attention to certain items on the screen.
   - Include multimedia elements such as video clips, pictures, and audio clips.
   - Turn participants into presenters.
   - Ask learners to share their opinions or experiences with the group.
   - Use polling throughout the meeting. Polling results are immediate. Share and discuss them with participants.
   - Ask thought-provoking questions and select participants to respond.
   - Don't limit yourself to lecture. Develop and implement ideas for additional formats like game shows (Jeopardy), talk shows, and interactive interviews.

7. Recruit a moderator to help you run the Breeze meeting room. This person should be able to resolve technical issues such as helping participants who are having trouble login on or starting their video and/or audio broadcasts. Distribute the contact information for the moderator to participants prior to the first class session so they know who to contact. You can set up a separate chat pod for your moderator to use to communicate directly with you without interrupting the class. This chat pod could be positioned in the prep area where participants can't see it. Alternately, a cell phone or IM session could be used for communication between the instructor and moderator.

8. Considering having a co-presenter for class. Taking turns talking adds variety to the class and gives the instructor a break to prepare for a new topic or change in activities.

9. Consider having a colleague in the audience. The colleague can log in remotely as a participant and monitor the participant experience and alert the moderator to concerns.

10. Use the record feature to record the meeting. You can make this recording available for participants who missed the scheduled class meeting. You can also learn a lot about the meeting and your delivery by reviewing the recorded presentation.

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Recording Breeze Meetings

Consider the following when recording your Breeze class sessions:

1. Create a script or outline. Scripts provide you with the content you need to convey your message and keep from getting sidetracked during the session. It also helps ensure that you cover all the topics you intended to cover.
   - Highlight words in your script that you want to emphasize.
   - Add stories and anecdotes to engage learners.
   - Add overview and summary sections to the script.
   - Practice your script before recording the session.
   - If you plan to use a presentation during the recorded session, create your script by using the Notes feature in PowerPoint to match the timing of the slides in your presentation.

2. Create a quiet setting for recording the session.
   - Purchase a good microphone and set of headphones. Recommended equipment is available through the Micro-computer Order Center at Penn State.
   - Use the Audio Setup Wizard to do a sound pre-check to avoid being too close to or too far from the microphone.
   - Record in a room with little or no background noise. Eliminate all possible distracting noises, like cell phones.
   - If other participants are involved in the recorded session, have them use headphones instead of speakers to reduce the possibility of recording audio feedback.

3. Strive for interactivity.
   - Ask thought provoking questions.
   - Propose a question, pause to give viewers time to think, then reveal the answer.

4. Consider the shelf life of the recorded session.
   - Time- and date-stamp your presentation so people know when it was created.
   - Provide links to more frequently updated references.
   - Avoid references to current events if discussing timeless topics.
   - Provide pointers for accessing potential updates or explain where to find material that may be released subsequent to your presentation.