9 ways to interact with a virtual audience

Virtual Presentation Guide

#1 Chat

People like to share.

Engage your audience with a chat discussion topic. In this example, participants were asked to name a company they admired for its exceptional service culture.

Greer Worthington   39:23

Nordstrom

Lilian Cover   39:30

publix is a grocery store chain in florida

Valerie Evans   39:31

Chick-fil-A and Publix, both have exceptional customer service and their culture obviously encourages that.

Amelina Anguiano   39:36

Sprint

Jenna Daugherty   39:36

Southwest - employees seem happy and they appear to value their customers. (Also Publix, miss shopping there!)

Jennifer Thorpe   39:52

Chick-fil-a is one of the best

Meredith Wright   40:08

PNC Bank - patient and takes time to understand me and understand that one size approach does not all

#2 Poll

Ask the audience.

Polls are a great way to get your audience to weigh in on a particular topic. They can also be used as a quiz.

Most video conferencing platforms allow you to share the results of the poll with your audience. In the example below, participants were asked if their company had a customer service vision.

It can take a minute or more to launch a poll and get the results, so use polls sparingly throughout your presentation.

Poll Question:
Do you have a customer service vision?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

#3 Visual

Something to look at.

Ask your audience to look for something particular when you show them a visual. You can even link the visual to a chat discussion.

For instance, the picture below shows a band aid attached to a smoke detector on a hotel room ceiling. It led to a nice discussion about why a guest might put a band aid there. (Contact Jeff if you know the answer.)

This supported a larger point about understanding customer experience through your customer's eyes.

#4 Questions

Submit in advance.

Interaction doesn't just have to happen **during** your presentation.

Ask participants to submit their questions ahead of time. This gives you a number of key benefits:

- Build more excitement around the presentation.
- Design your content around audience questions.
- Focus on issues participants care about.

The example below is from a presentation on serving upset customers.

#5 Physical

## Do something active.

Ask your participants to do something physical to incorporate movement in some way. This simple technique really wakes people up!

One favorite activity is to ask participants to grab a piece of printer paper and then fold it in half. Ask them to fold it in half again and then unfold it.

The piece of paper will now be divided into four boxes participants can use to take notes!
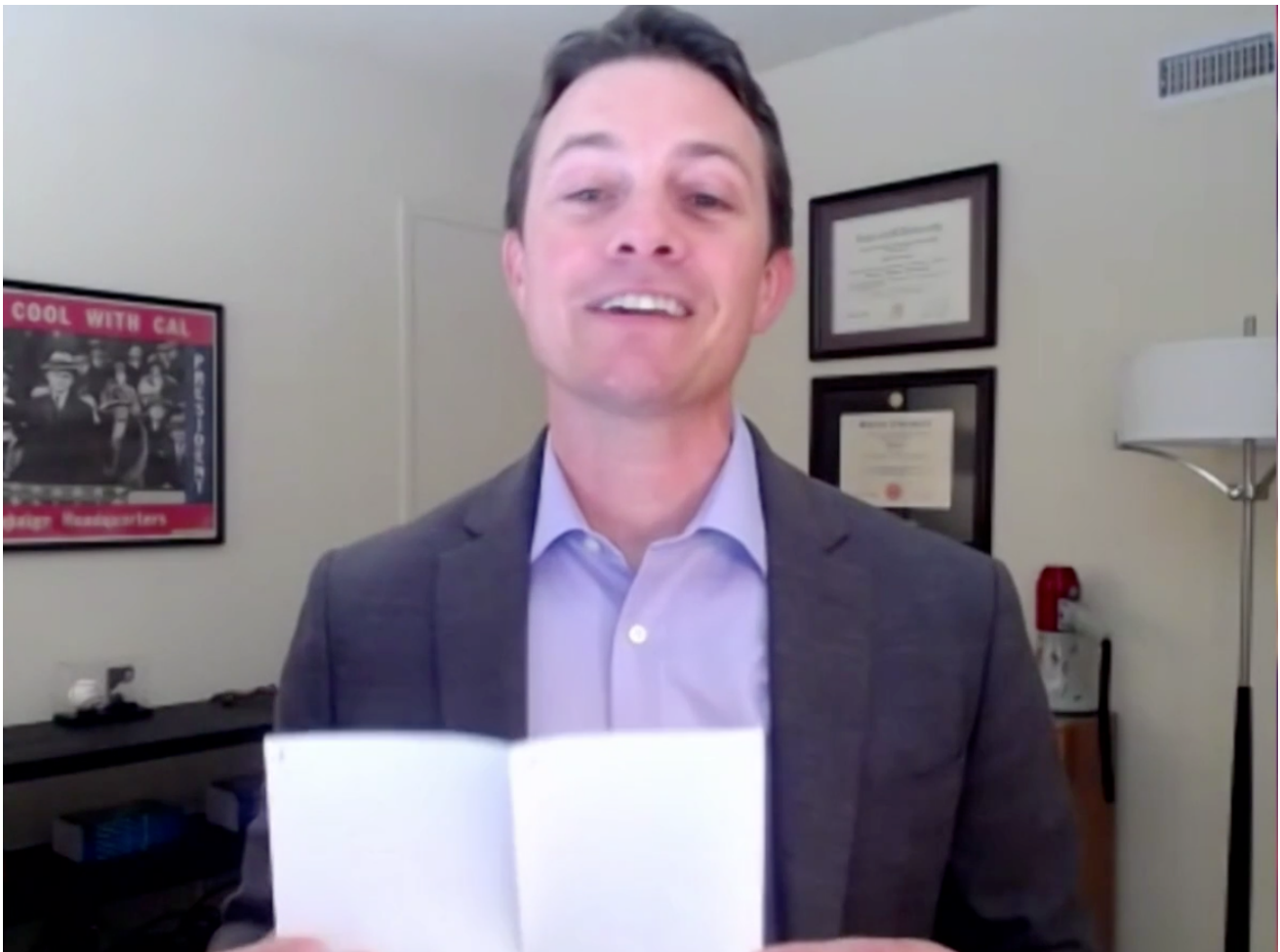
#6 Individual

Go solo.

Give participants an activity to do on their own. It can be a quiz, a self-assessment, or even a puzzle.

This is a nice change of pace that encourages participants to work on something quietly at their desks.

Participants are given 30 seconds to try to solve the puzzle below. It then becomes a metaphor for a discussion about seeing issues from new perspectives.

Hint: you have to look at the puzzle a different way to solve it!

Can you solve this puzzle?
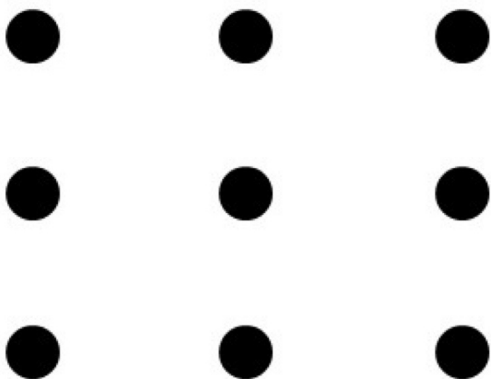
- Connect all 9 dots
- Use only 4 straight lines
- Do not lift your pen

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#7 Reaction

Show me how you feel.

Many web conferencing platforms have reaction buttons, such as a thumbs up, thumbs down, or a smiley face.

You can ask participants to react to a particular concept or idea by clicking on a reaction button.

It's also a faster alternative to launching a poll. For example, you can ask, "How many of you have used this concept before?"

#8 Download

Share extra content.

This handout is an example of extra, downloadable content.

It encourages participants to take action, since they need to do something to get the additional content.

The example below gives participants a key word they can text to a short code to get an additional handout and subscribe to the Customer Service Tip of the Week email.

Try it yourself!

10 activities + weekly reminders
text **HIDDEN** to 66866

#9 Follow-up
Call to action.

Ask participants to take action **after** the presentation.

This could be a call to action at the very end. It's easy to combine this with a content download (tip #8), and tie the content to a follow-up activity.

The example below is an email that's automatically sent to anyone who downloads a toolkit. It goes out two days after the presentation.

This email is a follow-up from my recent presentation.

- Will you share some feedback?
- Do you have a question I can answer?
- Were you able to implement an idea?

I'd be grateful if you replied to this email to let me know.

You can also use this link to schedule a call if you'd like some help.

Did you know?
The presentation was based on content from my bestselling book, *Getting Service Right*. You can learn more about the book here.

Thanks!
Jeff

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About Jeff

Jeff Toister is a customer service author, consultant, and speaker.

He ran his first virtual training session in 2002, and has been continuously working on learning new techniques ever since.

Jeff has written three customer service books, including the bestselling The Service Culture Handbook. Over 500,000 people have taken one of his training courses on LinkedIn Learning.

- Learn more about Jeff's presentations
- Get Jeff's weekly customer service tips
- Watch Jeff's training videos

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