Break Into Zoom Engagement with an Escape Room Game

Purpose: Provide a quick and unique way to introduce a group to Zoom engagement tools.

Session Format: Training or Meeting

Audience: Any

Number of participants: 5-30

Time: 5-10 minutes

Materials: A challenge sheet with the four challenges listed

Features used: Reactions, Chat, Rename from the Participants Panel

Description: Teaching participants how to use the features of an online platform like Zoom, WebEx, Class, or MS Teams can be a challenge. Talking about a feature and showing them how to use it is not always as effective at getting them to actually use the features to communicate and actively participate. This is because people need to use the features themselves, with purpose. All the activities in this book are designed to help with this problem and get everyone using the features of these online platforms with comfort and ease.

And then along comes an escape room game idea to really teach people to use the features of a platform! This concept puts pressure on them to find answers for themselves rather than being told and shown. They are challenged to find out how things work in a friendly environment with a bit of healthy competition and celebration added. By giving participants a puzzle to solve, they are encouraged to discover how things work, while at the same time using the features they will need to continue to use throughout the program. Escape games can have "challenges" or questions that are related to one another and follow a narrative, each building on the next, or they can simply be a series of questions that ask learners to gather answers. We used the latter for our example activity.

At the beginning of an interactive Zoom training, use this activity to get participants learning to use the features and engaged by solving the challenges alone or together as a group. Plan the challenges to focus on the main features they will need to continue to use throughout the program. In the example provided, we focused on: the participants panel, the reactions, and the chat.

Design needs ahead of time: When designing escape rooms games consider this: to customize or make your own game, begin with what you want the learners to do. Create challenges that require those actions. The culmination of answers can be a final puzzle to solve. With this in

mind, develop the challenges and create a visual on a slide or document that can be shared on the screen. See the figure below for the challenges visual we used for this example.

Before the activity begins:
Facilitator: Review the game for flow and hints to prepare to provide. Note these answers are for participants using a PC and that the answers for the Mac are different. Make sure you know how to solve the game yourself!

Producer: Decide who is sharing the visual of the four challenges and confirm it is ready. Make sure that Zoom settings allow participants to rename themselves and that chat is also enabled.

The Activity

SAY	DO
Facilitator: "Let's get you all working together and exploring the features of Zoom before we get started. There are four challenges. Work together to solve each challenge. The goal is to experience some of the Zoom features we will be using throughout our program. The game will be complete when all of you have finished Challenge Four in the chat. I'll be here to offer hints if you need them."	*Producer:* Display the Challenge visual. *Facilitator:* Allow time for the group to complete the challenges. Remind them they can access the Zoom menu if they hover over their screen. Provide hints as needed. See the provided hints below.

Transition after the activity:
Facilitator: "Congratulations, you've broken into Zoom engagement! Remember to use these tools, reactions, and the chat as you participate in the session today."

Spice it up with this alternative

- Place participants in breakout rooms to complete the challenge. Ensure they have the challenge sheet available to them in their handouts. Ask them to return to the main room once they complete all four challenges. Remember to have a way for them to ask for help.
- Use content from the training to create challenges each person must answer before they are cleared to exit the session.

Sample Challenge Sheet

(Be sure to check your version for any updates to the software/features)

Challenge 1: Fill in the blanks with Zoom words to decipher the right reaction.
 	
P _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
      5
C_ _ _
   1
S _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
    4
R _ _ _ _ _
 	
L _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
      3
R _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
  2
 	
__ __ __ __ __ = _____ = 5
1 2 3 4 5   **Reaction Answer**
	Challenge 2: Find the 3-digit combination**.**
	
	Key: 👏 = 1 ❌ = 8
	(Applause emoji) (red X emoji)
	
	Combination: ❤️ 👍 ✅
	
	Decipher and note the combination. You'll be asked for it in Challenge 4.
	
	Complete Challenge 3.

Challenge 3: Update your screen name. The answer for challenge 3 is the word on the blue button when you enter your new screen name. | **Option 1**	**Option 2**
• Right click on your picture • Select Rename • Update name (see below)	• Select the Participants icon • Hover over your name • Select More • Select Rename • Update name (see below) | **Update name with the following information:** Preferred Name, Attendance Name (if different)	**Challenge 4:** Complete the game! Type the following into Chat and then Raise your Hand. **Type:** [Challenge 1: Reaction Answer] [Challenge 2: 3-digit combo] [Challenge 3: Blue button code] **Raise Your Hand.** **That's the game!**

Hints to provide:

Challenge 1:	Challenge 2:
• Find the words in Zoom that fill in the blanks • The first word is "Participant" • The numbers reveal a secret word. • The first numbered letter is "H" • Answer: Heart	• Symbols correspond to a number • Applause = 1 and red x = 8. So, what are the rest of the numbers? • Challenge 1 showed us Heart = 5 • Answer: 5 2 7
Challenge 3:	**Challenge 4:**
• Follow the steps to confirm your name or make changes • There is one rounded rectangle in blue • Answer: OK	• Combine the answers from the three challenges. • Type them in the Chat and then raise your hand • Answer: Heart (or ❤️) 527 OK

Backstory: I connected with Rachel via LinkedIn and met her in person at a local ATD Chapter conference a few years later. Rachel's dissertation for her PH.D of Education in Organizational Leadership.is on using escape games in leadership development. It immediately intrigued me, so I asked her to create an escape game activity for those of us who use platforms like Zoom to teach online. I did not fully understand how something like this could be used until she came back with this sample. I know you will enjoy it as much as I do and am excited to learn more about what others create as a result of this inspiration.

–Kassy LaBorie

"Challenge, Action, Reward. This escape game puzzle flow aligns well with learning design: problem, learn, apply, feedback. Escape games are a fun way to teach content as well as teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills."

—Rachel Arpin, Learning and Development Consultant

KASSY LABORIE

Kassy LaBorie is the principal consultant at Kassy LaBorie Consulting, LLC. She is a speaker, instructional designer, classroom facilitator, and author who specializes in virtual learning, teams, and live online technology. Kassy is passionate about helping organizations, learning teams, and training professionals successfully move to the virtual environment.

In her previous role at Dale Carnegie Training, she was the director of virtual training services, a consultancy that partners with organizations to help them develop successful online training strategies. Kassy also served as the product design architect responsible for developing the company's live online training product and experience. Prior to this, she was an independent master virtual trainer, a Microsoft software trainer, and a senior trainer at WebEx, where she helped build and deliver training at the WebEx University.

Kassy is the co-author of Interact and Engage! 75+ Activities for Virtual Training, Meetings, and Webinars (ATD Press 2022) and Producing Virtual Training, Meetings, and Webinars (ATD Press 2021). A frequent speaker at industry conferences since 2006, she has presented at Training Magazine events including their yearly conference and Online Learning Conferences, Chief Learning Officer symposiums, The Virtual Learning Show, ATD's TechKnowledge and International Conference & Exposition, as well as many local ATD Chapter events.
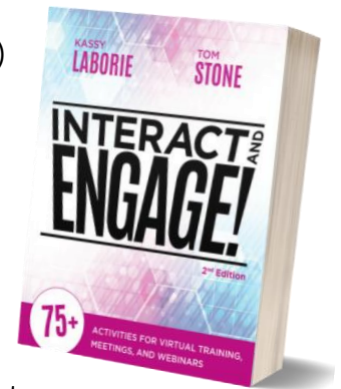
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