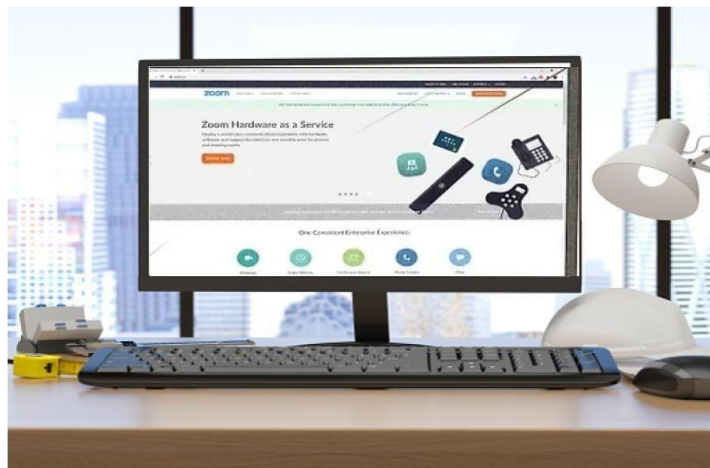




Lights, Camera, Action, Look- For Our Virtual Class

COVID 19 has changed the traditional teaching to the virtual or flip classroom. We, teachers spend our instruction time through Zoom for video meetings most of the day. There is always this question running in the back of my head, "How can I look my best in front of the camera?" Some of us are not lucky to be photogenic like the rest. So how can we fix it? Well, I am going to share 7 tips and tricks that will make us ready for the next Zoom meeting.

1. Light plays a vital role in looking good on camera. The biggest mistake is when we sit in front of a bright open window. This open window has light coming into the room, and sitting in front of it will result in a dark silhouette on our face causing the camera to underexpose. A lamp can be placed in front facing us; remember not to have a yellow light but replace it with a white soft light for a better effect.



2. A hidden background plays an important role while we're on a video meeting.

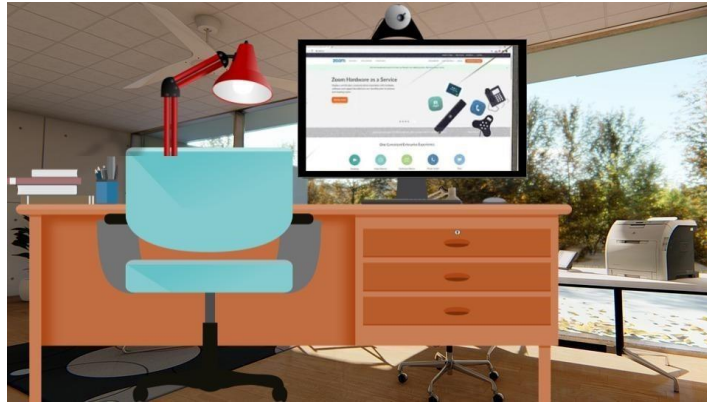
Remember if we have things like shelves or pictures that are behind us it will distract the children and be unprofessional. We should have a dedicated workspace where we can block, hide, or customize the background using apps from zoom or the Microsoft team.



3. We should be close to the camera. Let the camera be aligned to our eye level just enough to give that flattering angle view. If we're too close, the camera can pick up the flaws that are on the face. Be sure not to be too far either because the laptop camera is not created to get a wide-angle.



4. Speaking about the cameras, a built-in camera for the laptop is not so great. Instead, a webcam (Logitech or any 4K pro webcam) with higher quality can sit on the top of our laptop which can be used as an external display and be adjusted.



5. As we look good, we should sound good too. Kids miss school they would love to hear our voice. If we have a clear teacher's tone, we can have the kids' undivided attention. A good microphone or just a simple pair of headphones or just a pair of wired earbuds plays the trick. It gives a better sound compared to the built-in microphone from the laptop.



6. Zoom has a built-in feature just to make us look better. We'll find it on the Zoom desktop app which says "touch up my appearance". This option helps us to apply some skin smoothing. This is not so good but people love to cover their flaws or scars and give a more "I am ready for this glamour-lights action look." Remember this feature works well with white soft lighting we have created for the room.

7. We need to continue with our morning routine though we are at home—take shower, have breakfast, get ready for our students. Look professional with outfits we would wear if we were in school. Avoid the temptation of being in our PJs; though they are comfortable they are not professional.

Bonus tip - We should not forget to preview our appearance before we go live. We should adjust our setting so that Zoom interface will show us a preview video before we start our class. This is the time we can decide if our outfit looks good and our appearance looks clear or go ahead and switch or change our outfit and toggle with the “touch up my appearance” setting on Zoom. This may take a minute or so but surely will make us feel confident and ready to meet the challenge of the day.

We, the Southwest Union teachers, ARE THE BEST; we belong to the BEST TEAM. Let’s bring the fire, zeal, and dynamism back into our class. Students need the best education they can ever get and we have the best education program ever possible on planet Earth because we prepare them not only for this world but for eternity. As we give the best, let’s look the best **“lights, camera, action”**.

by Alwina Kindo
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