



Case Study: Using a Flipped-Classroom Model with Adobe Connect to Create Successful Learning Experiences

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1. Introduction

[Hearing First](#) is a not-for-profit membership organization that helps children who are deaf or hard of hearing access services and support for developing their listening and spoken-language (LSL) skills wherever they are in the world. In 2016, Hearing First hired me to help design and implement a program that included live instructional sessions and self-paced materials. The goal: To teach a global audience of parents and professionals how to support these children. Upon my recommendation, we chose Adobe Connect as the platform on which to run the live, online sessions of this initiative.

In this case study, I highlight the thought processes and actions that we pursued in creating a blended-learning model that would advance Hearing First's mission. This paper covers:

- Basics of the flipped-classroom model
- Roles of key team members
- Production, prep, and planning steps
- Technical issues
- What our team at Hearing First wishes we had known in the beginning

2. Hearing First's Requirements

The learning experiences that Hearing First envisioned required several characteristics:

- **Scalability**, to accommodate hundreds of participants
- **Local availability**, to allow presenters and participants anywhere in the world to participate without traveling
- **Synchronous formats**, for group activities whose value rises when participants and instructor engage in a live, immersive conversation
- **Asynchronous formats**, for self-paced activities that participants complete independently

Exercise 1: Let's use chat right now. When I'm running a session, at this point I conduct this exercise: I ask learners to type in chat and mention the types of interactions they've seen or used in live online sessions (sessions with a live facilitator and logged-in participants). I tell learners I'm going to stop for a minute and read what they're posting in chat.

TAKE A MINUTE TO THINK ABOUT IT. What interactions have you used in online sessions?

Answers typically include just what you were thinking: raising hand to vote, using the microphone to verbally respond, typing questions in the Q&A pod, using polling for quiz questions, using breakout groups for team role-plays.

I then ask participants: What about when you're in a self-paced, on-demand, asynchronous environment? That would be any activity that's possible on a computer. Go ahead and type in chat.

TAKE A MINUTE TO THINK ABOUT IT. What types of interactions have you used in a self-paced environment?

Participant responses typically include: reading, watching recordings, using page turner and clicking and dragging eLearning modules, completing tests and assignments, talking on the phone, typing on a discussion board, applying and reporting.

Takeaway: While I could simply display my two lists first – “Live” and “Self-paced” – and read my items aloud, that would not engage learners. I would learn nothing about their experiences and ideas, and learners may question the value of joining this session live. By asking them to think and to use the tool to respond, I create a much more immersive activity than had I simply asked them to read a transcript or watch a recording at their convenience.

3. Flipped and Blended Models Defined

Corporate training sessions typically involve no prep work for the participants. Learners expect that the trainer will tell you what you need to know and do when you get there, and any assignments will be completed during or after the live session.

In a **flipped model**, the independent work happens first and the group work second. Think of a language course in which students read the material or listen to audio recordings first – and then, when attending the live class, expect to apply what they learned and get feedback.

The **blended model** describes the mix of formats available for conducting the independent and group work. Blended-learning design aims to match the delivery method with the content and desired type of interaction. Asynchronous delivery works fine for independent activities such as reading articles on a website or on paper, watching videos, or responding to questions on a discussion board. In contrast, ***interactions that require applying learning and receiving feedback make sense for live, group formats.***

4. Developing Content

The Hearing First team started with a design model developed by [Connie Malamed](#) based on [Harold Jarche's "Seek, Sense, and Share" framework](#). (For more context on our project, read this [Personal Knowledge Mastery For LSL](#) blog post from the Hearing First team.)

Jarche's model involves three steps:

- **Seek:** Discover new information
- **Sense:** Apply that info, personalized for our own work and our own experiences
- **Share:** Share that info so that others can learn from what we're learning

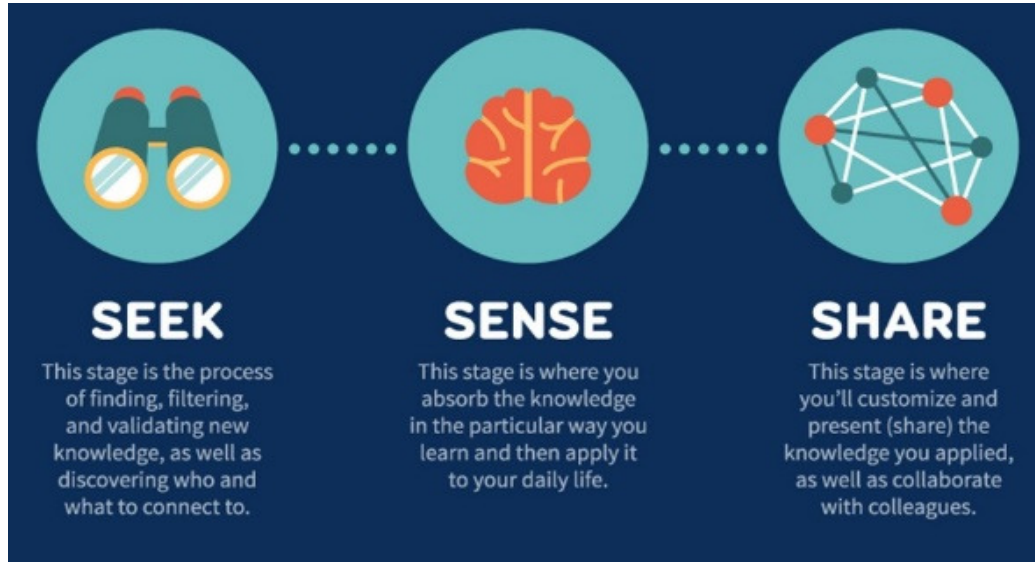


Figure 1. Harold Jarche's "Seek, Sense, Share"; Creative Commons BY-NC 2012; Jarche.com

Corresponding modalities. For each of the three steps, we matched suitable activities as follows:

- **Seek:** Participants engage in "pre-learning" by visiting the custom, private community space we've set up using the Telligent online community platform. We ask them to consume curated content such as recordings of therapy sessions and lectures, articles, white papers, and case studies. They meet each other through personal profiles and posts as well as private messaging.
- **Sense:** Participants connect key learnings with real-life situations. We ask them to use what they learned right away in their practice, or talk to colleagues about it today.
- **Share:** Ultimately, learners comment on the videos, share stories, report outcomes, or write reviews.

5. Assembling Our Team

Choosing facilitators to develop content. We identified industry professionals and recruited them to develop the content including pre-learning material, live-session content, and between-session content. When we learned that the facilitators needed help in developing content, formatting it, uploading to the right places, and managing in-session tools like chat and polls, we committed to coaching them 1:1 as needed.

Additional key people include:

- **Captioner.** Because much of our community is deaf or hard of hearing, we use a captioner who works inside an Adobe Connect pod.
- **Document manager.** Ensures that all the files get processed and posted in the right locations.
- **Visionary/team leader.** Determines learning goals for the entire course catalog.
- **IT support/programmer.** Adapted the Telligent interface (for asynchronous content). Also provides troubleshooting as needed.
- **Registrar.** Keeps track of participants, ensures they get the info they need, and responds to questions.
- **Graphic designer.** Creates and applies a look and feel to video clips, images, handouts, and slide templates.
- **Communications and marketing professional.** Prepares messaging for emails and community posts.
- **Project manager.** Monitors the massive task lists to ensure nothing is forgotten.
- **Visionary leaders,** whose love and determination brought this program together.

6. Delivery Platforms: Telligent and Adobe Connect

How we use Telligent online community software

The Hearing First program uses Telligent for all the “seek” and “sense” items such as:

- communication
- content including handouts, job aids, articles, and recorded lectures
- embedded video clips and transcriptions
- optional “Dig Deeper” material for the advanced or extra-curious student

Telligent also enables asynchronous tasks for participants including:

- communicating with discussion boards
- posting their own files
- accessing downloadable files per Continuing Education Units (CEU) requirements
- replaying recorded sessions

Pre-learning. In this phase, participants register, receive an ID, and log in. They are asked to spend up to an hour on tasks such as watching provided videos, reading provided articles, completing the assignments – and coming to the live session prepared to apply what they’re learning. Adjusting to completing the pre-learning in advance requires a culture shift for many; we help ensure this happens by sending clear messages up front and reminders later.

Pre-learning content includes:

- ✓ **Discussion boards**, which provide excellent collaboration opportunities for participants and facilitators. Facilitators can see what the participants are thinking and talking about before the live session, and can answer questions, make suggestions, or adjust their plans if necessary.
- ✓ **Recorded video lectures** that contain core content and exercise for participants. A quiz at the end generates a trackable data point that shows the participant watched the video. Because Hearing First has met the requirements of the relevant governing bodies, we can provide CEU credit for the pre-learning modules.
- ✓ **Recorded therapy examples** of kiddos in sessions – which are the most-used pre-learning element. [See baby Archer on YouTube](#). Charming and frequently hilarious, they provide an authentic experience of behaviors and language to analyze. A facilitator can include longer versions of such videos in pre-learning and ask participants to identify issues or opportunities, and request their advice or recommendations. The facilitator can then use shorter versions of these asynchronous clips synchronously, too – as elements of live, group sessions – for refreshing memories and stimulating structured discussions with feedback.

How we use Adobe Connect virtual classroom software

The Hearing First design model uses the following functions:

- Live Seminar session rooms, 90 minutes + 20 minutes for early login
- Uploaded video files, backup links
- Status indicators
- Voice over IP (VoIP) for audio
- Webcams for facilitators who choose them; webcams off for participants, unless in breakouts
- Polls, including a tech setup poll (see Figure 7).

- Chat pods, including regular and a tech chat pod
- Presenter Only Area (POA) with a presenter-specific chat and presenter notes pod
- Layouts that display needed pod configurations
- Recordings of all sessions, with URLs posted to the resources page in the community space
- Tracking and reporting
- Captioning. We load the Caption Stream app into a Share pod that I keep in the lower left. A professional captioner from [Caption First](#) logs into Adobe Connect as a host, and types as we talk. We post transcripts along with the session recording link under Resources in the community.

We initially used but now have discontinued the following functions, which involved a difficult-to-manage variety of network connections and devices:

- Breakout rooms
- Telephony for audio
- Webcams for participants

Adobe Connect Clock



Features:

- Shows the current time

Languages: None

Price: Free

Author: Alistair Lee

Compatible with HTML: Yes

Download

[Adobe Connect Meeting Extensions](#) are pod-based applications that can be added to an Adobe Connect session room. The available apps include:

- [analog clock](#) to help maintain schedule
- [timers](#) to countdown to start time, assignment or break time end
- [HandsUp](#) from Refined Data broadcasts sounds including tracks of much-missed laughter and applause
- [Vantage Point](#) to manage all webcam videos on one pod

We do not use any of the above pods at this time. We do use [CaptionStream with Stream Text](#).

Figure 2. Adobe Connect Clock App available to upload in your session room, from Adobe

Miscellaneous applications. Our Hearing First team uses the following applications to support our work:

- **Zoom** for team meetings, small-group sessions, and breakout activities in longer programs
- **Google Docs** for communications text around alerts and news items
- **Dropbox** for transferring large files, including videos; facilitators upload them, and we collect them on the other end and move them to the right places
- **Wistia** for secure, HIPAA-compliant video file storage
- **Microsoft Teams** for day-to-day communications
- **Microsoft Outlook** for email
- **HubSpot** for tracking attendance and reporting CEUs
- **Wrike** project management for forecasting and for tracking project details

7. Additional Ways Hearing First Uses Adobe Connect

In my experience, Adobe Connect's feature set far outperforms that of Zoom, GoToMeeting, and other virtual classrooms for live, instructor-led training. The **persistent session rooms** allow me to pre-upload and test materials days rather than minutes in advance. We screen-share only live demos, not everything. That's comforting!

Basic participant interactions for Zoom, GoToMeeting, Adobe Connect, and others include:

- **Set Status** to raise an electronic hand
- **Agree or Disagree** by showing green check mark or a red x (or alternate icon) next to the participant's name
- **Polls**, multiple choice and multiple response, short answer
- **Type in chat**, to Everyone and/or privately
- **Live application** or **desktop sharing**

But Adobe Connect also offers:

- **Stepped Away** status, which allows participants to indicate they're distracted from the live session
- **After-market applications** available for upload; some are free
- **Presenter-Only Area**, for staging pods and private messaging of presenters and hosts
- **Multiple pods**, which enable the presenter to capture participants' responses and messages. I typically use five or six, but can use more if I want. I can name them uniquely and number them to keep track of the order.
- **Pause webcam video** for when the presenter wants to show a still frame of his or her face rather than continue to stream video
- **Pre-set Layouts** for quick pod changes

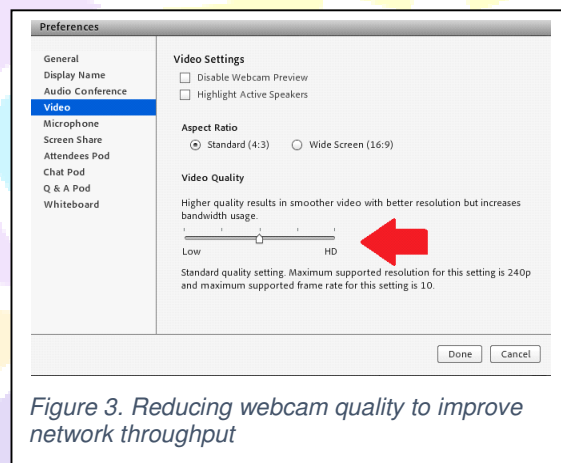
More Adobe Connect features that Hearing First relies on:

1. **Host control of what everyone sees.** In Zoom, windows are free-floating, and participants and presenters can be looking at different things and not realize it. In Adobe Connect, the Host determines what participants see and what is hidden.
2. **Pre-set Layouts.** These are session room "pages" that support quick transitions from showing one set of needed pods to another. See Figure 8.
3. **Storing elements in the cloud.** The advantage of cloud-based storage isn't obvious until you don't have it. If I want to show a PowerPoint (PPT) slide, for example, I upload it into a Share pod in the Adobe Connect session room before the session begins. When I display that Share pod, the users are not actually downloading, but instead are receiving or caching the static item from there. My personal upload speed and throughput do not affect the participants' ability to receive it.

In contrast, sharing in Zoom involves broadcasting my displayed file to the cloud before anyone can receive it. Because that streaming happens while I'm also broadcasting my audio over the same connection, any network problems I experience will slow us all down. (Zoom does have a workaround that allows the presenter to broadcast from cloud storage sites such as YouTube.)

But it's easier in Adobe Connect; we just upload in advance and encourage all to use consistent network connections with good download speeds, for best performance.

Note: Check your real-time connection regularly to understand your speeds. I use [Ookla Speed Test](#). If your download speed is EVER below 2.0 Mbps, expect audio to be choppy and videos will hiccup if they play at all. Your application-sharing to others will be slow for them. Forget streaming HD webcam video; in fact, deliberately reducing your webcam video quality will improve throughput on mediocre connections. See: [Adobe Tech Specs](#)



4. **Session rooms are persistent**, which means anything I upload today I can access tomorrow or next year, at the same URL. Because at Hearing First we planned to repeat our multi-week courses at least twice a year, we built unique session rooms, then uploaded that course content. Anytime we want to run that course again, we change the date, reset the polls, clean out the chats, rewind the PPTs to the first slide and the recordings to the first frame, attach a new username file to the room, and we're ready to go.

5. **Private chat.** The chat capability in Adobe Connect is quite robust, and I urge participants to use it as the primary source of communication among themselves. Learners can send a Private chat to anyone in the session – whether it's communicating technical problems, or reconnecting with a friend from school, it helps us keep the Everyone chat text on topic. (Note: Private chat text is not saved with the Everyone chat text tab.)

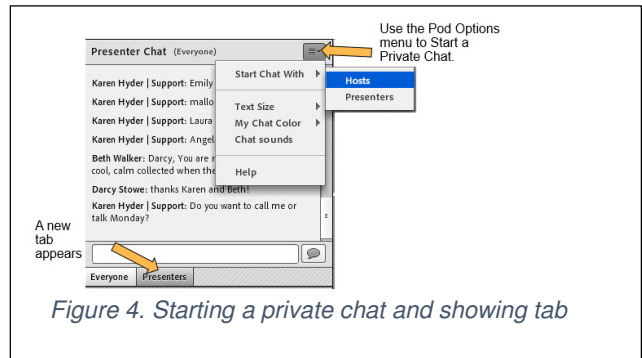


Figure 4. Starting a private chat and showing tab

6. **Support for multiple chat activity.** In her recent session, Hearing First's Teresa Caraway used an exercise that allowed participants to practice "languaging" – the action of choosing just the right words, in the right syntax, in order to elicit the ideal response. Built on some of the pre-learning content, "narrating" activities involve saying aloud what you're doing as you're doing it. If a little boy is putting his shoe on, you say, "He's putting his toes in first, then pushing down on his heel." The phrasing differs based on the child's age (baby, toddler, preschooler). Teresa prompts participants to tell her exactly what words they're going to use with which age group.

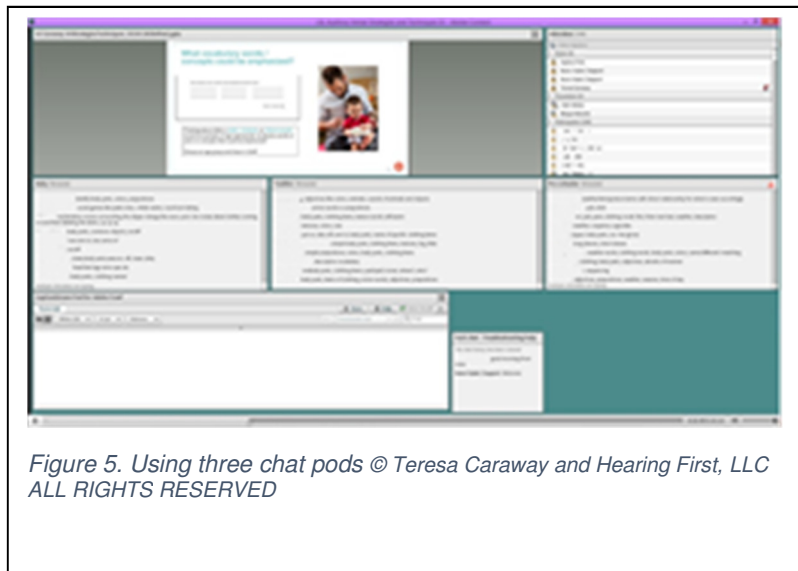


Figure 5. Using three chat pods © Teresa Caraway and Hearing First, LLC ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

The exercise involves three chat pods; participants pre-group their responses by baby, toddler, or preschooler. Though it creates a crowded screen, using three chat pods across invites autonomous participation, and generates a list of excellent examples that our facilitator can validate or correct. The presenter must ensure the pods are large enough for participants to use, and remember that only the presenter can move pods.

Teresa asked, "Thinking about either a BABY, TODDLER, or PRESCHOOLER, what are examples of age-appropriate vocabulary words and/or concepts that could be emphasized? Type an example in each labeled chat pod."

7. **Mobile app differences are manageable.**

Participants who are comfortable working on a desktop or laptop computer can get lost on a mobile app. Toolbars and buttons appear on the edges, and the slides appear in the middle of the screen – though that changes depending on what features are activated. Chat behaves differently, too, depending on the mobile device. With more of our participants using mobile apps now, it’s important to prepare them for the differences. I’ve added mobile app instructions to my live session intro.

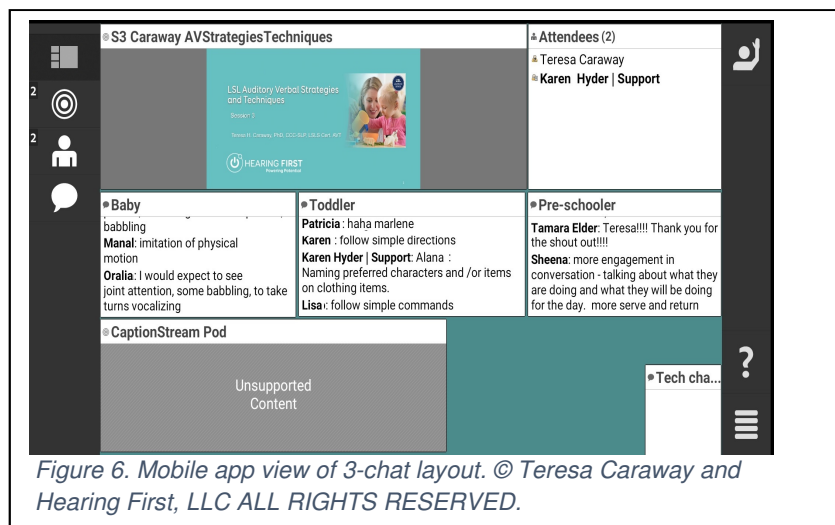


Figure 6. Mobile app view of 3-chat layout. © Teresa Caraway and Hearing First, LLC ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

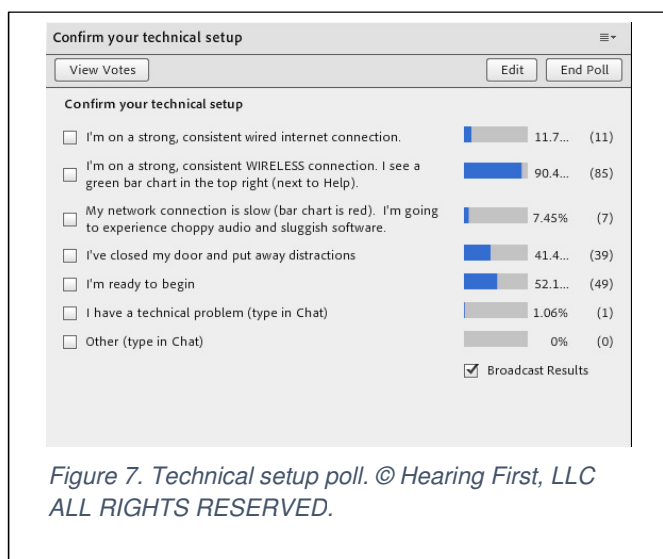


Figure 7. Technical setup poll. © Hearing First, LLC ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

8. **Polls.** I’m a fan of poll questions. They’re quick and much more usable than chat when you need to see aggregated answers and total tallies. A poll can indicate that people are not only participating, but answering correctly or incorrectly, giving you the feedback cues you don’t often get online. A poll can answer important questions like: “Do we need to go back and review, or can we move on?”

Polls are easy to create and versatile. I can copy blocks of text wholesale from another document or from a PPT slide and paste them into the poll pod. And they can be large: I've included 60 responses in a poll when asking, “Which of these software products do you use?” I use a poll as a technical setup checklist for participants as they join, to help them self-manage their systems.

TAKE A MINUTE TO THINK ABOUT IT.
Exercise 3: Using poll questions. How are polls different from “type in chat”-style questions?
 Responses will likely include: While chat-style questions are typically open-ended questions, polls have only a few possible answers, and participants must pick one or more.
 Write an example of a poll question you might ask in a live session. Include three possible responses to the question. _____
 1.
 2.
 3.

9. **Set Status.** There are at least three situations when we ask our participants to set their status:

- At the beginning, when they Agree to participate
- When a video has finished playing for them, so we can close the pod and move on, and
- When they want to raise hand and speak up on the microphone

More confident Facilitators ask for status feedback as they might in any conversation. Those might include:

- ✓“Are you hearing me?”
- ✓“Do you agree with my recommendation?”
- ✓“Can we delay our break 5 minutes? I want to get you set up for your next practice activity so you can get started when you come back.”

Participants I meet don't change their status on their own. I regularly ask participants to agree, confirm they can hear, are ready to move on, have experienced something like what I've described – anytime it would be helpful to see heads nodding. I'll admit, though: When you have to ask participants to change status to laughter to react to your joke, it's less satisfying than real applause and laughter! The [HandsUp](#) pod aims to solve that.

Remind participants who are using a mobile device that, in order to set status to Agree or Disagree, click the Raise Hand button first, then select.

Facilitators often use Stepped Away in the minutes leading up to the start time.

10. **Video clips.** Video clips are a joy or a struggle, depending on network throughput. Participants' connections vary and cause files to cache and play at different rates. Therefore, the playback finishes sooner for some than others. For live sessions, we limit videos to 2 minutes in duration and 30 MB. Larger files frustrate our learners who are on low-bandwidth, high-traffic, or irregular wireless network connections. (We post large videos in the pre-learning.)

Before we play a video, we say: “Please show Agree when the video has finished for you.” Once I see lots of green checkmarks, I know we can move on and I hide that pod. We often use a Layout with the video pod to the left and chat pods on the right side with questions for participants to respond to, such as: “What pragmatic skills did you observe?” and “What could I say to Mom about what I see?” As folks are watching the video, they're able to start responding. If we want them to wait, we cover the chat pods with the video pod.

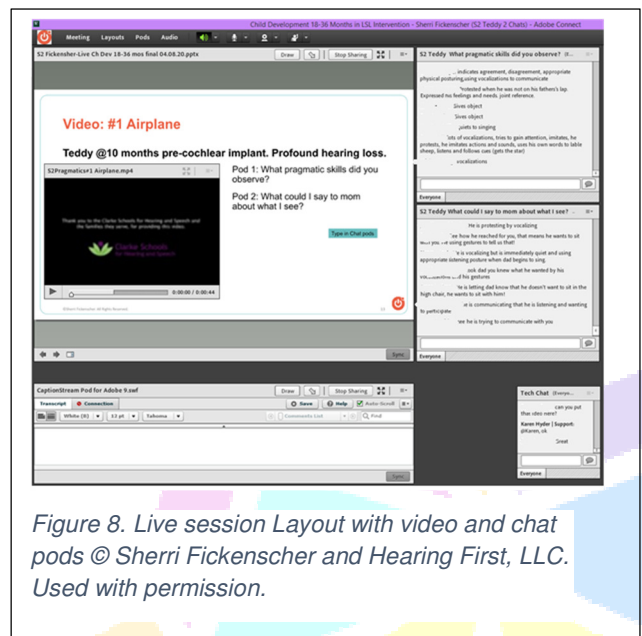


Figure 8. Live session Layout with video and chat pods © Sherri Fickenscher and Hearing First, LLC. Used with permission.

11. **Tech chat.** In addition to the main participant chat pod, I include a small tech chat pod for troubleshooting help in the lower part of each layout, next to the Caption Stream pod. Tech chat helps keep separate the messages that the facilitator needs to see and the technical issues I need to troubleshoot now. When we have 100 to 250 participants, invariably someone reports their audio is cutting out, or they hear an echo, the recording won't play, or an arrow is spinning – and they are looking for answers. Tech chat messages can be seen by all, and participants with similar issues can learn from posted instructions.
12. **Layouts.** In Adobe Connect, we pre-group pods onto layouts, which are like separate pages within this session room. Not unlike a workspace on a smartphone or tablet that group apps in one view, layouts display configurations of pods that serve a specific purpose.

Our standard slide layout displays:

- Share pod with the PPT slides
- Chat pod for messages from participants to the facilitator and to one another
- Tech chat pod
- Captioning pod
- Attendee list, if there's space

For Teresa's activity involving languaging for the right age group, I created and organized a layout with three chat pods. Another popular configuration is video plus two chat pods.

I pre-create all Layouts and name them; then I create, name, and put all the pods in all the right places. With a click of a button on the Layout bar on the right side (seen only by Hosts), I move easily from one Layout to another. I never have to drag and size multiple pods in front of a live audience. Because the room is persistent, I can reuse what I've set up each time we run the course. Initial setup costs may be high, but I end up saving time and effort later.

To create a new layout, I click the plus icon at the lower right of the Layouts toolbar; a dialog box prompts me to "duplicate an existing layout" to essentially take a snapshot of what's already there and gives it a new name. Once I create a Layout, I can change pod positioning or swap out pods until I have the right configuration. The new layout might still include the PPT file, the chat pod, Tech chat pod, and Captioning pod, but it might also include a video recording in a share pod and a poll with a quiz question unique to this Layout. If the screen gets too crowded, I can hide the PPT file, while the video is playing.

13. **Inventory.** Session rooms for multi-week courses can become unwieldy once several files are uploaded and custom pods are created. When resetting the room and clearing data, hiding and showing pods one at a time can be tedious.

To do my future self a favor, I create inventory Layouts that store all the pods used in that session. For example, in a session with six video clips, I created a Layout with six share pods and preloaded the files. I changed the title bar text to session number and order. Each time I prepare for that course, I check the recordings to make sure I have the correct ones, they're in the right order, and are rewound to the beginning. I create an inventory Layout for all poll pods, too. I go in after the live session, and save the polls if the response data is important to keep. Then, I clear the polls and uncheck Broadcast Results, and they are ready to use again.

TAKE A MINUTE TO THINK ABOUT IT.

Exercise 4: What pods would you include in a Layout to support your activity?

14. **Presenter Only Area.** What you might not know about Adobe Connect is that, on the right side where Hosts see the layout buttons, there's an offstage space called the Presenter Only Area that's hidden from participants. Presenters and Hosts can communicate in a Presenter Only chat, stage upcoming polls or other pods, and keep track of tasks. If I see something that came up in chat that the facilitator didn't notice, I copy and paste it from the left-side regular/normal chat to the POA chat, to draw the facilitator's attention. I change my text color, too, to make messages stand out. I often use this space when we have a large Attendees list, so that I can see all Agrees and Disagrees or move names to Breakouts.

A small team of our committed facilitators have agreed, on their own, to help each other manage live sessions by answering questions in chat. They know how challenging it can be to field questions while presenting.

15. **Presenter Notes.** Also in the Presenter Only Area, I use a Presenter Notes pod to keep track of tasks for each session. I include login reminders, times, and my phone/SMS number (in case they need to reach me outside of the Adobe room). I have a simple list of all the slide numbers and interactions so I'm ready to display the right pod or Layout. The list of cues helps the backup producer, too, when someone needs to fill in for me.
16. **Pasteables.** Also in the Presenter Notes, I keep common instructions and reminder text that I can quickly copy and paste into the chat pod when needed. "Pasteable" items include:
 - URLs such as the link where participants can view the real-time captioning app outside Adobe Connect
 - Any site, book, or article the facilitator might reference
 - The page where handouts and resources are posted

My backup option includes keeping the links to the uploaded videos we have planned for the live session. If the playback fails for a participant, the link will allow them to view the recording outside the live session room – in few minutes, if and when their connection improves.

TAKE A MINUTE TO THINK ABOUT IT.
Exercise 5: What text would you include in your pasteables?

17. **Breakout Groups.** If you decide to use Breakout Groups, you'll find it easy in Adobe Connect to move participants into them. When you're logged in as Host, click the second button at the top of the Attendees pod. Breakout room names are displayed. Drag and drop participant names onto Breakout group names as though you're moving files into file folders. I can move myself from one room to the next, the way I would move anybody; I'm just dragging and dropping or using a flyout menu. I can send broadcast messages like I can in Zoom that warn participants, "Hey, you've got 2 more minutes" or "Remember to assign a spokesperson who will speak for your group when we come out of the Breakout activity" or "Remember to assign a typist to type in the Note pod while you're in that Breakout group."

I often set up Breakout rooms with unique note pods and instructions where participants can read and type in, plus an optional video/webcam pod. I create a unique chat pod for the folks just in that Breakout room so that, if somebody's mic doesn't work, they can still communicate to complete the assignment. I keep the Tech chat pod visible so if they run into trouble, they can type to me. For more information about Breakout rooms, see Adobe's Breakout room tutorial: <https://helpx.adobe.com/adobe-connect/using/breakout-rooms.html>

I recommend that if you are going to use Breakouts, be thorough in providing the assignment and instructions, preparing the participants fully, and troubleshooting early. I don't send participants to Breakouts if they don't know what's going on. I give all the instructions up front so they know what to expect. I make sure they have the files that they need. I show them a Breakout layout with the webcam pod, the extra chat pod, the Note pod where they can type their notes. Before they go, I ask them show hand raise to let me know they're ready to move to breakout rooms. And if they don't raise their hand, I

assume they're not ready. If someone shows up and says, "Hey, what's going on? How come everything got quiet?" I can quickly catch him up with instructions and move him into a Breakout room.

Once a Breakout room is used, it shows up in the Pods menu. I can bring the pods that participants used in Breakouts back to the main room to debrief. Before participants arrive for the session, I've already created a Layout for all Breakout Notes pods.

Self-test. Anytime you plan to include people in a live session, I recommend sending them this self-test: https://<yourdomainhere>adobeconnect.com/common/help/en/support/meeting_test.htm. Add your domain to this URL and urge participants to run the test days before the first live session, and to report any issues so that you can address them. The self-test determines whether their connection and their system are ready to run Adobe. In addition, this system status link – <https://status.adobe.com/products/3011> – allows me to identify any network incident or maintenance that could cause difficulty.

18. **Force session to run in AC app.** Here's a tip from Karen Gleason at the [Learning Guild](#): If you want participants to launch sessions in the Adobe Connect app rather than browser tab, add `/?proto=true` to the end of the session room URL. It runs more stably and provides more space to display pods and tools. It helps keep the window on top should the user have multiple browser tabs open.
19. **Event time announcer.** We use the event time announcer at <http://www.timeanddate.com>, which shows what time the session starts wherever you are, in any time zone.

8. Things We Wished We Had Known from the Start

- **Unlearning habits around flipped classroom.** Participants needed coaching to unlearn habits and commit to the flipped-classroom model. They discovered the hard way that if they didn't complete the assignments up front, they would be lost in the live sessions. Facilitators also needed coaching to understand how to present their content and interact with participants.
- **Tech inexperience and varied hardware and network connections.** Many participants are inexperienced with technology but often resist the orientation sessions we offer. In addition, many use WiFi connections, which can be unreliable. We urge participants to connect to the best connection available and use a PC rather than a mobile device. We invite participants to sign in up to 20 minutes early for a technical tutorial and troubleshooting, if needed. By the second session, we've addressed most issues.
- **Breakout rooms unnecessary for learning outcomes.** Robust video scenarios plus polls and chat interactions as well as the community discussions provide the engagement we need.
- **The draw of CEUs.** We also didn't realize how motivating earning CEUs would be. Many participants are eager to attend all the live sessions and complete all the CEU requirements; we don't struggle to keep them coming back.

9. Wrap-Up

At Hearing First, we're very proud of what we've accomplished already. Since Q4 2016, we've delivered 60 of these learning experience programs with nearly 10,000 registrations and participants from 66 countries. Our participants have earned some 5,000 CEUs. Our learners are thrilled with what we're doing, and they're surprised at how much they can learn quickly. In particular, they love the pre-learning.

TAKE A MINUTE TO THINK ABOUT IT.

Exercise 6: What ideas are you taking away? What will you share with colleagues?

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## Appendix A. Tutorial: Getting Started in Any Successful Session

- **Teach the tools.** I start every session by showing participants how to use the interface's tools. Differences from interface to interface can confuse participants, as can the difference between using a mobile app versus a desktop. If you expect people to participate using the tools, show them how they work and make it clear how you want learners to use them.
- **Seek agreement.** Ask learners to agree to participate – to resist distractions, to ask questions, to contribute to the discussion by typing in chat. For some, that will mean showing Agree to let me know you're with me and ready to participate. Ask learners to locate the Set Status menu and click agree.
- **Tips for managing technology.** Ask participants to run the AC system test [https://<yourdomainhere>adobeconnect.com/common/help/en/support/meeting\\_test.htm](https://<yourdomainhere>adobeconnect.com/common/help/en/support/meeting_test.htm) and network speed test [Ookla Speed Test](#). Close unnecessary applications to free up system resources – it will also help reduce distractions.

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About the Author

Karen Hyder has been using technology to teach about technology since 1991 when she delivered instructor-led software applications courses at Logical Operations in Rochester, New York. Later, as director of Trainer Development, she taught classes that helped trainers improve skills and earn certifications.

In 1999, after living abroad for more than a year helping trainers achieve certification, Karen was hired to create a train-the-trainer course for people using virtual-classroom software to reach learners in China. She's been coaching and teaching online ever since!

In 2004, Karen helped launch The eLearning Guild Online Forums, a series of online conferences for eLearning development professionals. For the Guild, she continues to produce and host online events including the impressive Best of DemoFest, a multi-presenter, live-demonstration event.

In 2017, The eLearning Guild honored Karen with the Guild Master Award, recognizing her contributions to the Guild community and the eLearning industry. Karen provides presenter coaching and live event support for online learning experiences at Hearing First LLC, a not-for-profit that serves professionals earning CEUs and families supporting children who are deaf or hard of hearing.



For more information about running successful learning sessions or about Hearing First, please contact me at Karen@KarenHyder.com.