How to Make Online Meetings More Efficient

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Hello everyone. I'm Nozomi Namba from NIT, Tomakomai college.

In recent years, we have made remarkable progress in "online communication" since the COVID-19 pandemic. We can now contact each other online, not only in person. Besides, it has become quite common to have online meetings over the past years. However, I realized that online meetings have a serious problem. It's difficult to share information correctly. How can we solve this problem and conduct the meeting smoothly?

Now I would like to talk to you about how to make online meetings more efficient, based on my personal experience.

The other day, I participated in an online contest to propose a new business plan to JAXA. It was a contest to see which team can come up with the most feasible and profitable business plan. Team members were randomly assembled from Kosen students all over Japan. I had my first online meeting and many problems occurred; our topics were often forgotten, the issues needed to be resolved were lost, and the important information and good ideas were left out.

We had these problems because there was a lack of consensus among our team members. These problems hardly happen when it is easy to read detailed responses from facial expressions, gaze, and gestures. But it's difficult through online meetings.

So, what's important in order to reach a consensus? My solution, based on my actual experience, is to "visualize and share information in real time." I have come up with an idea to use minutes and mind maps. Group members can edit them online at the same time.

First, minutes are used to share the decisions made in the meeting and processes to achieve the object, to remind opinions and issues, and to describe the mission for the day or the next day. This prevents information from being scattered and allows us to review the topics discussed in an organized manner.

Then, mind maps help organize the information. It enables us to capture the ideas and thoughts of the team members in a clearer and more understandable way. In addition, mind maps also help to expand ideas by connecting them and capturing the complete picture. Also, visualizing the processes makes it easier to remember and review the topics discussed in the meeting.

These are the actual minutes and mind map I used in the meeting. My team members edited and shared their ideas using them in real time, so that we were able to have a consensus during and after the meeting. With these methods, what seemed to be unconnected ideas and knowledge can now be connected to other ideas.

Therefore, it is very important to " visualize and share information in real time." It is expected that online meetings will increase in the future, so in order to make meetings more efficient, why don't you try this effective method?

Thank you for your kind attention.