

# THE BIG REVEAL

FEATURING FUTURIST **AMELIA KALLMAN**

# Introduction

---

Welcome to this 'Special Edition' of The Big Reveal!  
This month I want to share with you my **Top 10 Tips for Online Conferences**.

I just facilitated a week long 'Virtual Offsite' for Unilever, and while I don't claim to be an expert, I did learn a lot! I thought some of my insights might be more relevant and valuable to you this month than my regular format, so hope you enjoy!

Biggest take away: IT'S NOT EASY! Attention, focus, timing, homework... the Online Conference is its own beast, but I do believe it can be tamed!

Let me know if you have any questions, or would like to speak further.

Wishing you all the best,  
Amelia

[www.ameliakallman.com](http://www.ameliakallman.com)



Photo by Andrew Leo

# 01 Breakouts

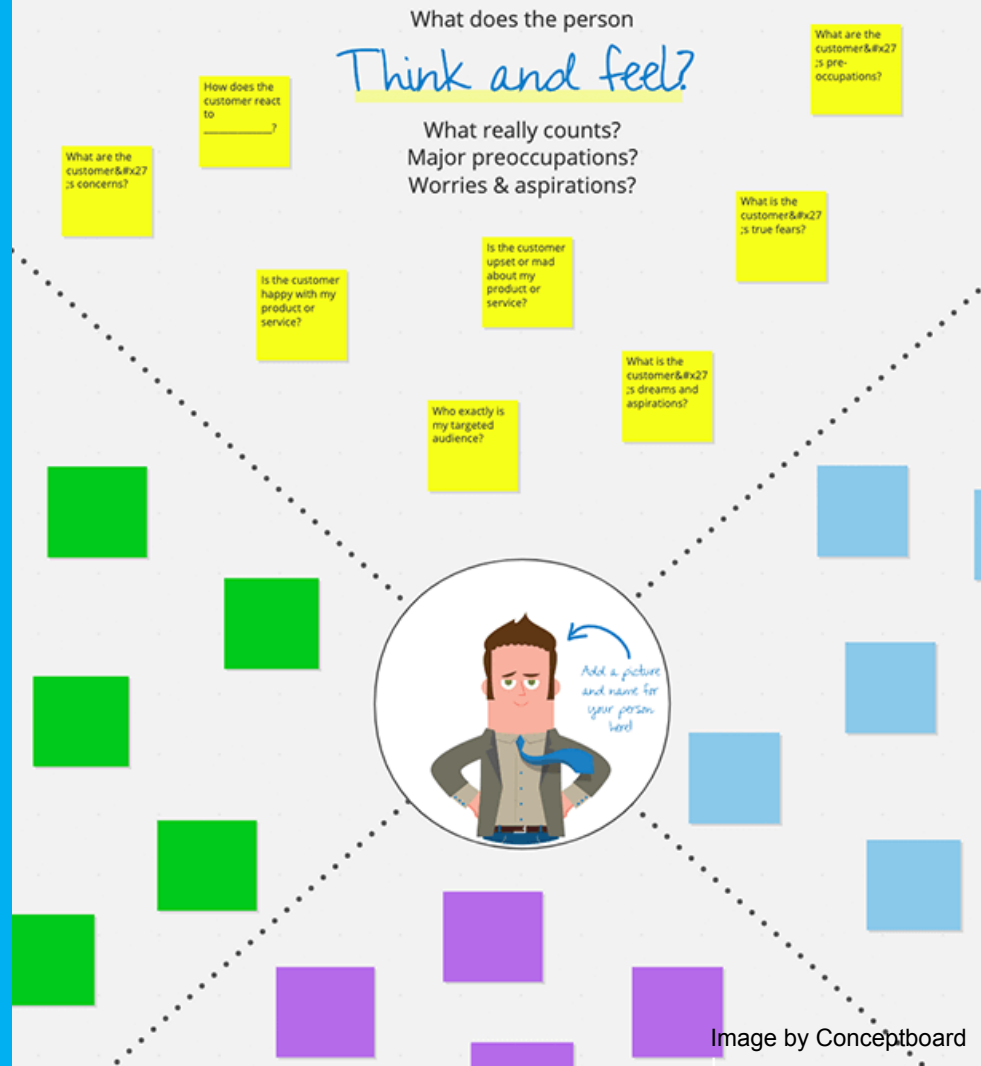
While getting everyone into 'one room' might be the point, breakouts into smaller groups of 2-3 are a lot more comfortable for people. Breakouts keep the energy up, keep people engaged, and give everyone a chance to share and talk through their POV. You can encourage people to do these calls on phones outside or while walking around.



Image by FaceTime

# 02 Visualisers

When possible, correlate homework and breakout outputs into one document during a break or overnight. Having something live to look at and annotate really helps the thought process and flow in a bigger group. Providing worksheets and filled-out examples help to streamline instructions and activities.



# 03 All Platforms

I went in thinking we would use Zoom and Mural. We ended up using Zoom, Mural, Teams, Zoom Whiteboard, Zoom Chat, WhatsApp, FaceTime, Google slides, Powerpoint, and Google XL... and it was great! It allowed us to stay flexible and use the right tool for the right job. We had multiple WhatsApp groups that helped us stay on the same page behind the scenes, and using a range of platforms meant we never limited ourselves or felt unempowered by a learning curve, and kept everything running smoothly.





# 04

# Interaction

Because we're remote it's much harder to read the room. Encourage people to 'nod' more than usual, signalling when they understand, don't understand or disagree. Thumbs up, clapping and the raising hands features on Zoom should be encouraged - you cannot have too much interaction! Voting and polling really helps streamline conversations and keeps things moving. We kept a picture of Elmo in our chat group that anyone could flash when people went on too long or went down a rabbit hole.



# 05

## Future 1st

Starting the conference by looking at the future really helped to get people out of their everyday mindsets, thinking bigger, and engaged with the objective of the week. It contextualised the conference and ultimately ensured that the output was informed and future-fit.

(Not to be confused with the rapper, Future, although I'm sure that would also capture attention!)

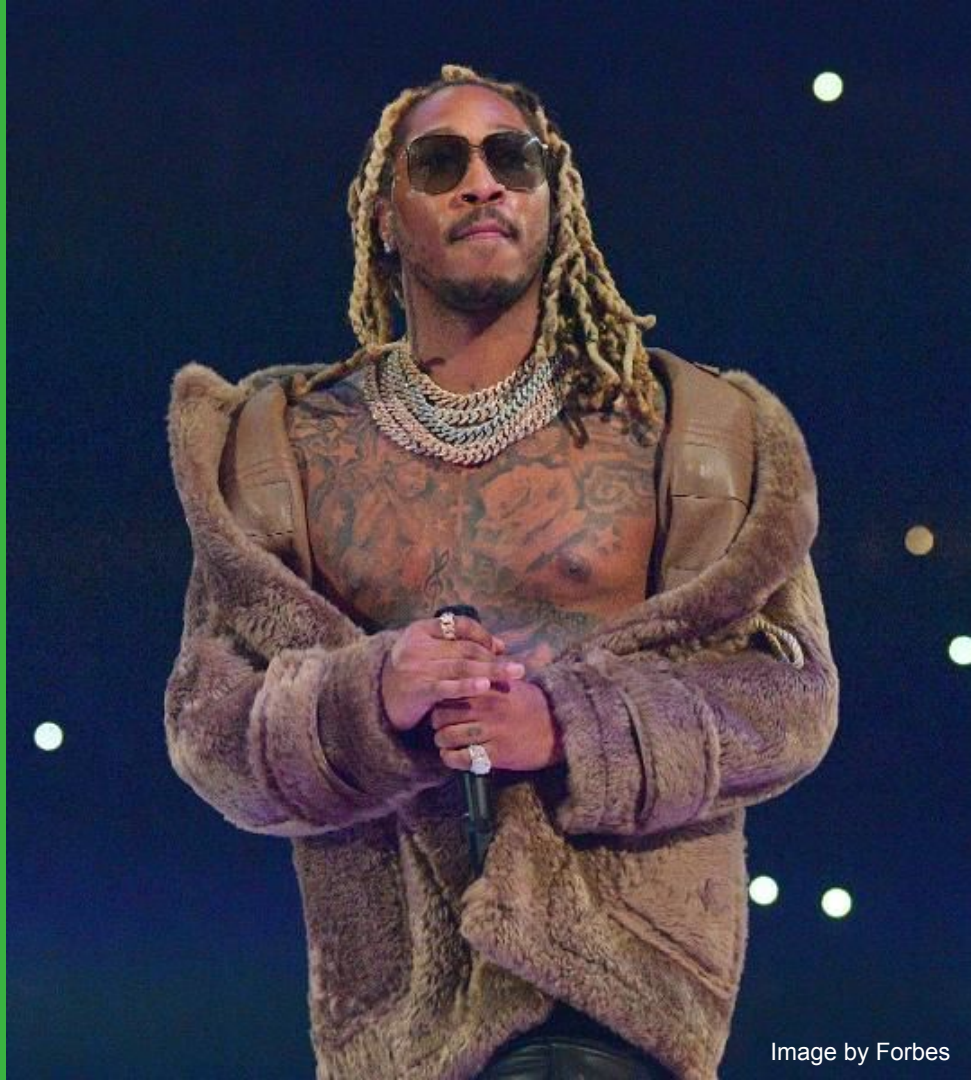


Image by Forbes

# 06 Time

We did 3 hours a day and that felt right. People need a break approximately every 45 mins. Often we broke into groups and said the activity was 20 min., but to come back in 30, giving people some flex time. The conference was global, so it's important to remember some people may have just woken up, while others are at the end of a full work day. Any longer than 3 hours and people just wouldn't be able to handle it at home. Any shorter, we would've struggled to get anything accomplished.





# 07 Energisers

I found energisers especially helpful for keeping the energy up and people engaged during transitions. Spanning Zoom and WhatsApp, we used mental and physical exercises that could instantly change the vibe and put smiles on people's faces. I'd wondered if people would be receptive to these, and actually think they were less self-conscious than they would've been in person. Everyone got involved and seemed to really appreciate them.



# 08

# Objectives

Be over vigilant that you clearly state what you want out of the conference, what you want out of the day, and what you want out of each activity. While it falls to the facilitators and leaders to set the objectives, you mustn't forget to be clear about what is expected and where you are in the process, as this drives buy-in, momentum, and motivation.



# 09 Flex

Be prepared that things are not going to go as planned. Don't cut off important conversations just because of a time schedule, but don't hesitate to shelve sidetracked conversations for later. Leave some flex in the schedule because you are going to need it. Also, don't rely on people doing homework to inform the next day's activities, as many will struggle to find time outside of the allotted 3 hours/day.



Image by Wordpress

# 10 Don't Panic

These things are hard at the best of times, and moving everything online makes it even harder. That said, the remote conference is definitely necessary and worth doing. People loved seeing each other, getting a glimpse at each others 'real lives', goofing around in the transitions, working together on activities, and the feeling that we're all in this together, no matter where we are in the world. And the joy of accomplishing our goal by the end of the week was even greater for all the challenges we'd overcome. It was one conference I guarantee no one will ever forget.



# Thank you

**Amelia Kallman**

Futurist - Speaker - Author

[amelia.kallman@gmail.com](mailto:amelia.kallman@gmail.com)

[www.ameliakallman.com](http://www.ameliakallman.com)

[@AmeliaKallman](https://twitter.com/AmeliaKallman)

[@TheBigRevealUK](https://twitter.com/TheBigRevealUK)

