

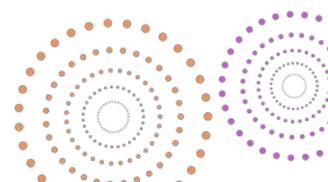
Guidance for Hosting a Successful Webinar

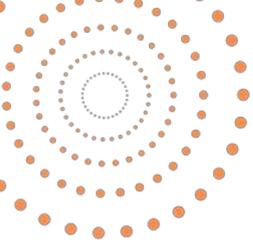
It almost goes without saying that facilitating an online session is very different to presenting in-person. More than ever facilitators must remember the trials and tribulations that their audience may be experiencing as they participate in your session. Key challenges might include:

- Keeping up with the flow of the session; one or two participants in an online session will invariably drop in and out of the session due to connectivity issues or other interruptions.
- Issues with sound and catching the detail of a conversation; often a proportion of your audience will experience some kind of issue with sound and their ability to seek clarification about the points they missed is limited.
- Loss of visual clues and the usual etiquette of face-to-face meetings; when we are sitting in a room together people notice non-verbal communication which help the usual rhythm of a conversation. Interruptions, talking over each other and failing to notice when someone wants to make a contribution can be more prevalent.

Top tips when hosting an on-line session:

- **Be prepared.** Make sure that your webinar content is interesting and impactful, and that you practice if you need to, test out all technology beforehand and choose a quiet room in which to hold the webinar.
- **Technology is key.** Test the audio and visuals of your webinar using your selected platform to prevent any technical issues during the live webinar. This opportunity also allows you to practice with your speaker(s) and get comfortable with each other. Have a back-up plan such as being able to dial in to your webinar or designating a deputy in case your connection fails.
- **Be clear about the etiquette for the webinar;** in the absence of tried and tested custom and practice you may need to state explicitly the etiquette for your webinar. How do you want people to contribute? How will you manage questions? How do you want people to use their mute button or other functionality? Will you be using the chat function and if so, how do you want people to get involved?
- **Help people keep track of the flow of the discussion;** a clear agenda which is regularly referred to by the presenter will help your audience keep track of the flow of the session. A simple slide deck may also help people to navigate the content of your presentation.
- **Plan with your co-facilitator;** when you present together you will rely on visual clues to make smooth transitions from one speaker to another. Without these it helps to agree some basic handover cues. You might agree to alternate agenda items or agree to bring each other in at the end of agenda items with a simple phrase.



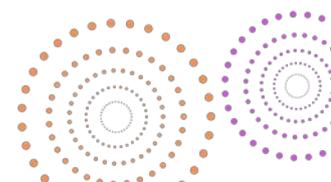


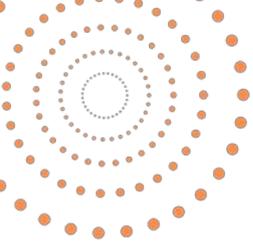
- **Use your name and the names of other contributors often**, especially if the participants do not know each other well. Voices are often more difficult to recognise in an online session and people can struggle to remember names. If you need to re-introduce yourself throughout the session. Adding your name and contact details to any slide deck may also help the audience.
- **Introduce contributors** and make sure the rest of your audience have heard any points they make. You may need to summarise more and repeat the gist of a question before you answer it. Adding your name and contact details to any slide deck may also assist your audience.
- **If you can, ask someone to help you** (usually) in the background. This back-stage co-ordinator will help make your webinar more professional and polished. Co-ordinators can ensure that speakers are on time and can handle technical issues that might crop up during the webinar. They may also be able to monitor the chat function if you decide to use it.
- **Consider using your accompanying presentation to display polling questions and mid-presentation discussions.** Polling your audience throughout your webinar to help keep the audience engaged by allowing them to question their processes internally. This not only gives your audience the opportunity to interact and share their opinion, but also gives you more insight on your audience and their experience/background.
- **Do your best to speak clearly.** This can be practiced during the dry run of your webinar the week before. Practice speaking directly into your device and vary your voice to avoid a monotone presentation. Check in with your audience to see if the sound quality is acceptable. You may consider using sub-titles technology if this is available.
- **End your webinar on time** and with a clear instruction about how to leave the 'room'. You may wish to summarise your conversation or add a slide with 'next steps'. An exit survey will help to find out what attendees thought and apply their feedback, both good and bad, to your future webinars. Send out an email to all attendees to thank them for attending and include a link to the survey a day or so after the webinar ends. Maybe ask registrants who didn't attend or who dropped out of the session what might have made them participate and/or stay longer.

Signposting in conversation

Signposting is a technique to help people follow the meaning of what you are saying. They act as guides to help people follow what you are saying throughout a conversation, helps in establishing rapport and helps them to categories what you are saying.

We all do some signposting in our natural conversation. Phases such as "on the other hand" and "in conclusion" are effective signposts that we use in everyday life. The best communicators signpost more often and more deliberately. Signposting is even more important in online sessions.





To begin introducing a point, you might consider starting with...

- I'd like to begin by...
- Let's start by...
- First of all, I'll...
- I'll begin by...

For finishing a topic try...

- Well, I've finished talking about...
- Well, that's everything I need to cover about...
- We've considered...
- In conclusion...

To start another topic, you might use signposts such as...

- Now, let us move on to.
- Next, let us consider...
- Turning to...
- Moving on to...

Applying signposting techniques in a discussion...

- So, where does that lead us?
- Let us consider this in more detail...
- What does this all mean?
- Translated this into real terms...

Giving an example...

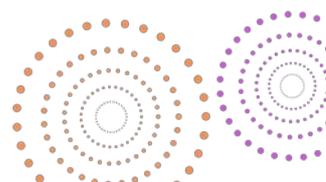
- Here's an example. I was...
- A good example of this is...
- To illustrate,...
- Let's consider a hypothetical situation for a moment. If you were to...
- Let me play the devil's advocate for a moment. What might happen if...

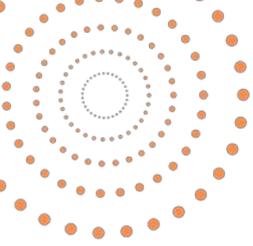
To summarise and conclude...

- In conclusion,...
- To conclude,...
- So, let's sum up, shall we?
- Let's summarise what we've covered briefly...
- Finally, let me remind you of some of the issues we've covered...

So to summarise...

- Remember your audience and pre-empt potential issues
- Take time to prepare
- Practice using technology





- Be clear about etiquette
- Use signposting techniques more often and more deliberately
- Plan handovers with your co-presenters
- Use names and introduce people more often
- If you can, ask someone to help you back stage
- Consider using a 'sign-posting' presentation
- Do your best to speak clearly – remember the sub-titles technology
- End your webinar strongly

