

Hints and Tips for Running a Successful Webinar

Pre-webinar

Your audience

- Allow people to submit questions when they register – this also helps you to ensure your presentation addresses their needs
- Review attendee list to ensure the content is relevant to their role/ organisation

Location

- Some rooms can echo, or you may hear people outside the door. Check the sound in your room via a practice webinar. (Another reason why you need sound cancelling headphones).

Equipment

- Use sound cancelling headphones to ensure your audio is exceptionally clear for attendees and that any sound within your area is cancelled out.
- Undertake at least one practice webinar to ensure that you are familiar and comfortable with the equipment and webinar software and that you have received presentation feedback from someone else.
- Different webinar software offer different facilities so it is important to familiarise yourself with what is available for the software you will be using. For instance, some allow the audience to raise their hand and clap using a hand icon. The hand raising tool can be useful particularly at the beginning of the webinar to check that everyone can hear you, see you etc.

Creating your presentation

- Create polls to keep your audience engaged. You can set one up ahead of the webinar and share the results at the beginning. You can also do short polls during the webinar to stop them drifting to opening an email, reading a text message etc.
- Ensure poll questions are set so that the answers add value to the attendee, drive your presentation content forward and provide you with useful insight to develop your own thinking.
- Create 4 fall back questions that can be posed to you should your audience fail to submit questions during the webinar.
- Tailor your content to your target audience on your webinar. If there are people on your webinar who do not meet the agreed target audience criteria, do not adjust your content for them.
- Some webinar tools allow you to provide attendees with supporting materials during the webinar. Consider what might be appropriate to your audience that will enhance



your presentation – i.e. survey report, case study. However, do not provide content early in the webinar or attendees will be distracted open it and reading it when you want them to focus on your presentation.

- Keep slides simple. No fading in, fading out, coming in from the left etc – this is very distracting.
- Keep content on slides to a minimum – not lists of bullets or lots of text. Use, for instance, a graph which clearly demonstrates what you are talking to. Visual prompts are more effective than words.
- Have a final slide with your contact info on that can be displayed during Q&A

During the webinar

How you present yourself

- BE YOURSELF. Let your personality come through. People will engage with you when you are authentic. Nerves can dry the mouth in a way that no amount of water can drench. A simple means of combating this is by running your tongue all along your upper teeth (with your mouth closed). It takes just a moment to do and will stimulate your saliva glands to do their job.
- Before you begin try Box Breathing, which is a simple way to help calm your nerves. It involves inhaling to a count of four, pausing to hold the breath to a count of four and finally exhaling to the count of four. Repeat several times. Enjoy the feeling of relaxing into the flow of your breath going in, being held and then released.
- Speak clearly and a little slower than you might normally. Leave a breath after a statement to allow it to settle with the attendee. (Practice with someone listening to give you feedback.)
- Ensure you are not monotone. Bring enthusiasm to your voice
- If you are appearing on screen, ensure there is nothing distracting about the room or on you i.e. plant behind you which looks like it is growing out the back of your head.

Q&A

- Tell the audience up front that they can pose questions throughout the presentation but that these will be dealt with at the end during a Q&A
- If not all the questions can be answered in the allocated time, respond directly after the webinar and tell them you will do this

Closing the session

- Summarise the key themes and learnings that you personally are taking away
- Conclude the session on time
- Acknowledge all the speakers
- Thank the audience for their participation
- Explain the process for follow up such as sending copies of slides or handouts