

5 Tips for Holding a Successful Webinar



In an age of social distancing, it is now more important than ever to connect remotely with your peers. Webinars are a great way to do this. But not all webinars are created equal. Here are a few tips to ensure that your audience gets the most value from their time with you.



Don't Create Slides That You Plan to Read Verbatim

It would seem this goes without saying. People read faster than you can talk, so not only are they finished reading before you are finished speaking, they are distracted by your voice. Remember, your stories fill in the space between the bullet points, so use only key words on the slides. Without your story, what value is there in joining the webinar?



Collaborate Rather Than Lecture

Work to make participants partners in learning. You may be hosting the webinar, however many that are joining the call have a great deal of experience and can contribute in driving interaction. Consider calling on participants by name (let them know ahead of time that you'll be doing this). Use this strategically to encourage dialogue, collaboration and participation.



Connect With the Audience

Going back to the first bullet, do not "READ" to them! Nothing creates a barrier between you and the audience like reading from slides, cue cards or pieces of paper. Audiences can often see and hear it. It hinders the connection between you and them. The more you're able to effectively connect with people who are not in front of you, the more you can engage them. As we all know, closer engagement often leads to trust.



Don't Forget to Take A Breath

Just because the webinar is on a strict schedule doesn't mean you have to speed-talk your way through the presentation. It's a good idea to take a breath and pause. This gives the audience some time to process the information. This time also allows you to ask questions to the audience to ensure your content is on the right track.



The End is Often the Beginning

After completing the webinar presentation, it doesn't mean the experience has come to an end. Instead, it's the start of the next phase, assessing everything that went right or wrong, as well as understanding the audience experience. What are the key objectives of the webinar? Did you create an action plan to follow up? And did you provide supporting information and tools that can support the presenter's information?