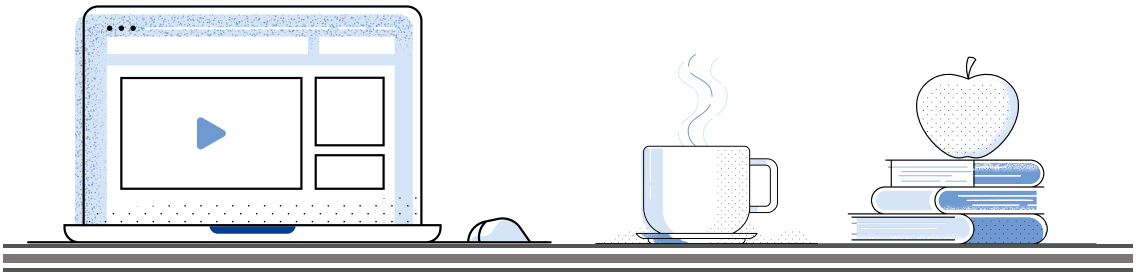
DIGITAL HEALTH LITERACY

HOSTING A GREAT WEBINAR

TIPS & TRICKS



"If you think you can do it, you can."

— John Burroughs

WHAT IS A WEBINAR?

A webinar is simply a presentation or seminar that is given over the internet rather than in person.

It is a tool used to inform and teach others through a video conference format. A webinar can utilize presentation files like PowerPoints, screen sharing, videos, live demonstration through video, live chat and many more engaging tools. Webinars allow many people from all over the world to be able to learn from this online virtual seminar.

WITHIN THESE PAGES:

- Presentation Tips
- Audience Engagement
- How to Practice
- Preparation Advice
- After the Webinar
- What if...?

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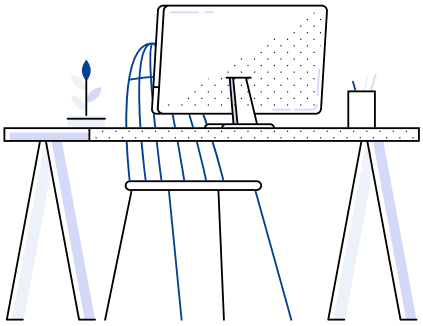


HOW TO PRESENT LIKE A PRO:

- Be confident
- Be professional and positive
- Be aware of your body language, tone and choice of words
- Make eye contact and speak to your audience
- Use facial expressions, be animated, smile! Your audience will have the same energy as you
- Don't read off the slides
- Use your own dialog/ script
- Be familiar with the presentation, and understand the info

AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

When delivering a webinar, you must consider who your audience is in order to ensure it is received well.

Factors to consider:

- Audience demographics and estimated number of participants
- Accommodations
  - Added 'closed captioning' for people who are hard of hearing
  - Explain using diagrams
  - Do not refer to colours as some people are colour-blind
  - Consider your audience's level of education, expertise, and background and alter your speech accordingly
- Before the presentation, ensure the audience has the information to join. Ideally have a test site or person they can contact with questions or problems
- Send out any pre-presentation materials well in advance

How to Keep the Audience Interested:

- Create a positive professional atmosphere
- Allow for the audience to feel like they can ask questions without judgement
- Keep text on the slides to a minimum and add visuals so people can listen rather than read
- Keep the content interesting by including examples, stories, videos, graphics, polling questions, etc.
- Provide some resources so attendees can be prepared and think of questions they would like answered about the topic
- Tell people how to ask questions (by voice or chat) and when they will be answered
- Collect feedback using:
  - Chat feature
  - Polling
  - Surveys
- Provide the speakers'/company's contact information for additional questions

> ***You are the expert!***
> *Most people have very basic knowledge of the topic you are discussing.*
>
> *Remember, everyone is there to learn, not to criticize.*

HOSTING A GREAT WEBINAR

HOW TO PRACTICE

- Practice the presentation script at least once (2-3 weeks in advance)
- Do a trial run of setting up the equipment/ webinar
- Consider recording yourself or presenting to others and asking for feedback
- Actually say the words, not just in your head
  - This way, you can work out any issues
  - Allows you to practice timing, tone, etc.

Remember:
You are the expert!

HOW TO PREPARE

Important items

- Send a reminder to participants the day before or day of the presentation
- All materials (speakers, notes, microphones, laptops, etc.) should be ready an hour before the start time
- Login an hour before the start time
- Have tech support ready to help you with your slides
- Ideally have a person who can help monitor the chat for questions and help people with connection issues so you aren't distracted

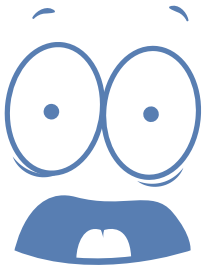
Things to think about during Preparation:

- What do you need to know to feel confident and prepared (e.g. read slides, research my topic, etc.)
- What atmosphere do you want to create? (Friendly, Professional, Positive, etc.)
- Establish a safe learning environment (People should feel comfortable asking questions)
- Consider when you want to have questions and discussions and leave time to do this
- Clearly state the topic (and key areas of discussion) and the purpose of the webinar (e.g. learning goals, facilitated discussion, desired actions, etc.)

AFTER THE WEBINAR

- Make notes on observations and things to improve for the next presentation
- Send an email thanking attendees
- Also include:
  - A feedback survey (this allows for improvements on future webinars)
  - The webinar slideshow and a summary of the information presented
  - Attach any handouts you would like to provide
  - A link to access the recorded webinar (in case they want to re-watch)
  - Information/advertisements about future webinars

WHAT IF...?



You are not sure if the audience is engaged?

- Summarize and ask the audience questions
- Invite them to be a part of the presentation by asking for audience participation
- Review your tone, energy and script

You are not sure if the audience learned anything?

- Collect feedback, ask what you could have done differently, use constructive criticism
- If they didn't learn enough, consider: was there too much or too little information, was it too difficult to understand, were things not explained clearly, or was the discussion not made relevant to the participants?
- Follow up documents may help the attendees with missing information or further learning

What if people know more than me?

- Generally, you are the expert on the topic you are presenting, but be open to learning from your audience
- Be clear about your purpose: is it mainly for you to provide information or is it for the group to share information?
- If other people know more than you, use that to your advantage and pair them up with someone who is struggling so you are still able to help others in the presentation. Alternatively, have a discussion in the group or small groups to share information
- Remember, even if you think they know more they still look at you as the teacher and the expert in the subject
- Don't lose confidence in yourself
- Your goal for the webinar is not to look smart but to make people feel smarter

What if I don't know the answer to a question?

- Tell them you don't have the answer now but you will get back to them. Record the name of the person and answer later
- You don't need to have answers to every question; you just have to be willing to find the answers and help the attendees

What if I don't remember my script/ mess up?

- No one knows what you are going to say except you; your audience will not know the difference
- Pause for a second, take a breath, organize your thoughts and get back on track

What if I can't control the audience?

- Sometimes people cannot concentrate for a long presentation or the topic is controversial and people have emotional outbursts. Take a break, allow everyone to have a few minutes to regain their concentration and start your presentation again and/or try something to engage the audience
- Ask the audience what they need to focus on the presentation and explain why you are presenting this information
- Treating everyone with respect usually helps to keep the audience controlled
- If people are too emotionally engaged, thank them for their contribution. Acknowledge that it can be an intense topic with many viewpoints and say that it is important to move along (to more content or to hear from others)

What if there is a technology issue?

- Stay calm and inform the audience of the issue and update them regarding the status of the webinar
- Be prepared for these tech issues and potentially have other alternatives present
- If possible, have somebody who is good with technology attend at least the first 10 minutes of the webinar to help with connectivity or other problems. You can't solve technology problems when you are presenting
- If issues still persist, it's better to restart or postpone the webinar to ensure a better learning experience

FINAL TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL WEBINAR:

- Performing a dry run will allow you to see if any final improvements need to be made, helps the speaker get comfortable with the material and allows for time to address any anticipated problems
- Allow ample time to promote the webinar: one month is usually ideal for maximizing the size of the audience
- Utilize several different types of social platforms to promote and invite attendees
- If possible, ask some key audience members where they would suggest advertising

Remember:

- You create the atmosphere and control the room
- Treat people with respect and they will treat you the same
- If you don't know the answer to a question, don't panic. You can address it later in an email

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