

Creating Your Session

Be intentional about how you will engage your audience throughout your session. Find out the capabilities of the technology you will be using and whether your session will be pre-recorded or live.

Audience Engagement

- Reduce the amount of content in a virtual environment. Distinguish between *need to know* and *nice to know* information.
- Consider using stories, illustrative examples, reflection questions, or group discussion questions.
- Help participants apply the information.

Technology Tools

- Use *Polling* to solicit opinions or check understanding.
Note: If pre-recorded, polls may not be an option.
- Use *Chat* to share ideas, solicit group input, and facilitate Q&A.
- Use the *Whiteboard* to record ideas, create a 'parking lot' or take notes.

Visual Aids

- More slides will be needed in a virtual presentation to maintain attention.
- Avoid text heavy slides. Use a downloadable handout to convey detail.
- Use more graphics (photos, images, charts, diagrams) rather than text.
- If using photos, ensure diversity in the people represented.

Preparing Your Environment

Test and optimize the space and equipment you'll be using for your presentation.

Location

- Choose a quiet location with limited distractions.
- If using Wi-Fi, choose a location close to the router.
- Ensure a professional, uncluttered background.
- Choose a brightly lit room with the main source of light facing you, not behind you (such as a window).
- Check the lighting in the room during the time of day you will be presenting.

Computer

- Review system requirements in advance.
- Hardline internet is recommended over Wi-Fi. Test the speed of your internet connection at <https://www.nperf.com>.
- If using Wi-Fi:
 - ✓ Minimize its use by other people
 - ✓ Close all unnecessary applications
 - ✓ Place router in an 'open space' (not tucked behind something)
 - ✓ Use 5Ghz if it is available through your provider
 - ✓ Turn on your cell phone hot spot as a backup
- If using a work computer, disconnect from and do not use VPN. Be aware of any firewalls.

Audio/Video

- For the best video quality, use an external webcam over your computer's camera. Models such as the Logitech C920 are good.
- If using an external webcam, turn on the high definition (HD) setting.
- Place the camera at eye level and clean the lens.
- If you're unable to have a professional or neutral background, consider using a virtual background.
- A wired headset is preferred over a speakerphone, laptop or webcam microphone. If using a Bluetooth headset, ensure that the batteries are fully charged.
- Test your audio in advance.

Delivering Your Session

On the day of your session, give yourself plenty of time to get ready.

Eliminate Distractions

- Place a 'quiet' sign on your door.
- Turn off your cellphone, email pop ups, alerts etc.
- Close all applications on your computer that you will not need (but have your presentation and any videos open).

Speaking Tips

- Mute yourself when you are not speaking.
- Use an energetic tone of voice and gestures to maintain interest.
- Avoid saying "good morning" or "good afternoon" (if being recorded).
- Keep a glass of water nearby.
- When speaking, look directly into your computer's camera not the screen.
- Refrain from swiveling or rocking in your chair.

Best Practices

- Practice delivering your presentation with the technology.
- Print a copy of your slides as a back-up.
- Don't wear busy patterns. Avoid white and green solid colors; blues and pinks look best.
- Don't draw attention to technical glitches, since most people will not notice.
- Consider using two monitors so you can view your notes.