CONTENT TIPS FOR
ENGAGING VIRTUAL PARTICIPANTS
HOW TO MODIFY YOUR CONTENT FOR A VIRTUAL AUDIENCE

ADULT LEARNING PRICIPLES

Various studies show that within 1 hour, people forget 50% of new information presented. Within 24 hours, that number rises to 70%, and within a week, it rockets to 90%. We encourage you to use the following guidelines to help tailor your presentation to adult learners. [Reference: The Learning Process]

CREATE A POWERFUL POWERPOINT

Unlike in-person presentations, virtual attendees gravitate to multi-tasking if they are not engaged. Keep them interested by applying a handful of these tips when designing your PowerPoint:

- Emphasize your main takeaway per slide; your message should be front and center
  - Keep text short and easy to read; replace text heavy sections with visuals
  - If you include graphs, zoom in on the most important data
- Advance your slides every 1-2 minutes or incorporate text animations so new text/graphics appear every so often; virtual presentations should have more slides than an in-person delivery of the same content
- Alternate between presenters often for a change in voice and perspective
- Reserve time at the end of your presentation for live Q&A

ESTABLISH YOUR VIRTUAL ENGAGEMENT STATEGY

Establish Rapport Through Stories: It is no secret that it takes more time to build rapport in a virtual space vs. face-to-face. Use stories to capture the attention of all types of learners (audio, visual, etc.) and keep them engaged throughout the entire program. Virtual participants are more likely to remember you *and* the content if you provide multiple but brief examples.

Body Language & Eye Content Sets the Tone: If you are accustomed to presenting on a stage, deliver your virtual presentation while standing! If you are more comfortable sitting, watch your posture and avoid slouching. Don't forget to make eye contact with your video screen. If you look disengaged, your audience will be!

Focus on the Virtual Participant: Pose thought provoking questions participants can mull over while you are presenting. Prompt participants to submit questions and connect with their peers via group chats.

Watch Your "Virtual" Nomenclature & Pace: Treat your recording as the live presentation and avoid referencing dates, times, and the recording itself. It is our natural tendency to speak quickly when presenting, especially in a virtual environment. Speak slowly to allow listeners time to digest what you are saying.

SET YOUR "STAGE"

Clear Your Space: Find a quiet place and give yourself some "breathing room" by closing applications on your desktop and clearing the physical space around you. Not only will it keep you focused, but also virtual participants who may be distracted by your surroundings.

- If you prefer using virtual backdrops - have some fun and show your creativity.
- Keep water in arms reach and silence your devices

Lights, Camera, Action: Turn on your webcam and position yourself in forward facing light so participants can see you. Similar to in-person presentations, keep your attire professional.