

Introduction

A well prepared and engaging workshop can have a significant impact on participant learning. However, presenting to a group can provoke anxiety even in seasoned facilitators. The following tips and suggestions may be helpful in preparing for—and delivering—your workshops.

Create an inviting space

Don't underestimate the importance of room set-up for audience engagement. Grouping people at tables, as opposed to setting chairs up lecture-style, allows participants to more readily connect and network with each other, and facilitates better small group discussion.

It is also crucial to check sightlines throughout the room to ensure that all participants can see the screen(s) and you, the facilitator.

Presentation delivery

- Polish your verbal and nonverbal skills.
- Know your material.
- Express confidence.
- Be yourself.

VERBAL SKILLS

Speak clearly: Be sure to pronounce and articulate your words clearly. You will also want to speak loud enough that the back row can hear you clearly (depending on the size of the audience, you may want to ensure that microphones are available to use). If you are using a microphone, test the audio ahead of time, so that the sound levels are adjusted to your voice and you know how closely you need to hold the microphone to your mouth. If you are using a hand-held microphone, make sure that you have extra batteries in case the power runs low.

Speak expressively. Speaking with expression isn't just a matter of not speaking in monotone. It is about working on your emphasis, pace and timing, which will help your audience better understand the information you are delivering.

Pausing is a great way to emphasize key points and always refocuses the audience's attention.

NON-VERBAL SKILLS

Dress professionally and appropriately: Avoid wearing anything that distracts the audience (e.g., clothing or jewelry that jangles, distracting patterns, etc.). A good guideline is to dress slightly more formally than your audience. If you plan to use a lapel microphone, it is better to wear something with a collar (to affix the microphone) and something with a pocket or waistband (to affix the power pack).

- Be aware of your mannerisms and body language: When you present, what are your face, hands and feet doing?
- Keep audience attention by making eye contact.
- Don't forget to smile.
- Avoid defensive gestures such as crossing your arms or putting your hands on your hips.
- Watch for repetitive hand gestures that can get distracting.
- Keep your weight evenly on both feet; crossing your legs, bouncing or tapping can be distracting.
- Move around to avoid getting "glued" to the podium. Use the space at the front of the room.
- Be ENTHUSIASTIC! If you are excited about what you're presenting, the audience will be excited to learn about it.

KNOW YOUR MATERIAL

Practise! Practise! Practise! Try practising the material one section at a time.

Practise each session until you are comfortable and fluent with the material. Try to avoid relying too much on speakers' notes or your own notes.

Visual aids and activities: Get comfortable with using visual aids and activities, as these are great tools to engage and maintain interest with the audience.

Questions: Questions can be challenging, but they also provide further learning opportunities. It is a good idea at the beginning of the presentation to tell the audience when you are going to take questions. Will you designate time at the end of each section, or throughout the presentation? If you do not know the answer to a question, it is always best to say "I don't know," but be sure to follow up with the answer later on.

EXPRESS CONFIDENCE

If you have done your homework, and have practised the material until you feel comfortable with it and with the visual aids, you should feel confident and ready to present. Nonetheless, nervousness and anxiety are both common and normal.

Here are some tips to alleviate “performance anxiety”:

- If you can, exercise or go for a walk before the workshop to help burn off excess energy.
- Getting to know individual audience members prior to the start of the workshop can help alleviate anxiety. This allows time for you to (a) connect with some members of the audience before the workshop begins, and (b) better understand the learning needs of some of the group members.
- Be sure to focus on your breathing: take deep, slow breaths.
- If something goes wrong, don't ignore it. This can be an opportunity for humour and to show the audience how calm and collected you really are.

Read the group

Be sure to stay connected with the participants and be mindful of their body language and expressions, as this will help you understand how they are absorbing the material. Be prepared to adjust your instructional style to suit the learning needs of the participants. This can be challenging, but will have a positive impact on both the presentation flow and participant learning. If people seem to be tuning out, perhaps it is time to call a short “stretch break.”

BE YOURSELF

When giving a presentation, remember that you're presenting yourself, not just the information. Authenticity goes a long way in connecting with a group.

Keep the following checklist in mind when preparing and practising your material:

- Practise delivering your material out loud at least once or twice.
- Speak clearly.
- Speak at a good pace, using pauses to emphasize points.
- Take advantage of the visual aids, demonstrations and exercises in this toolkit.
- Use variety in your voice.
- Move around, but don't pace.

Motivational Interviewing in Respiratory Health Care

- Be a little conversational.
- Use humour if you are comfortable doing so, but make sure that it is respectful and appropriate.
- Plan to take some time during the presentation to review and summarize if the content is complex, or if the group will be unfamiliar with the content.
- Relax, take a breath, be yourself.

Keep the following checklist in mind during your presentation:

- Talk with participants before the session and during the breaks.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Check for understanding and keep the group involved (i.e., ask questions, poll the group).
- Watch the group's attention span.

Seven tips to activate your session

It is important to pay attention to the mood in the room. Although this Motivational Interviewing Trainers' Toolkit includes interactive instructional design, there may be times when you as faculty would like to introduce an added interactive technique to further engage participants. Here is a list of possible constructivist strategies. Note also that a more detailed description of specific interactive learning exercises can be found in the "Facilitator Resources" section of this toolkit.

1. Large group Q & A (time varies, dependent on facilitator)
 - Audience interaction should be encouraged throughout the session, with faculty prompting questions and facilitating discussions.
 - Having standing microphones and/or microphone runners available throughout the room can help facilitate contributions from participants.
2. Case scenarios (15–30 minutes)
 - Case-based learning activities and a compendium of case examples are included in this toolkit. Time can be allotted for case scenarios to be discussed and/or practised within pairs and smaller groups, and then debriefed as a larger group.
3. Role plays (15–30 minutes)
 - Role plays allow participants to practise particular skills, such as MI skills, or to observe how one of the practitioners would respond to a specific issue or client statement.