# Tips for **delivering workshops virtually**

As a practitioner, you know the impact that your workshops can have for teams. So, what happens when you need to run your programs virtually?

If you've already delivered virtual workshops, you know that giving people the opportunity to learn about each other virtually can be an invaluable experience. If you're new to this environment, now is a great time to learn how to get started.

Here are a few tips for delivering workshops in the virtual environment.

## 1. Plan ahead

As with a face-to-face workshop, think carefully about the purpose. What result does the group want to get from the workshop? Take this into account when you design your workshop.

Also, think about timings and whether you need to send participants a copy of their interpretive report during the workshop. For an MBTI® workshop, participants need to self-assess and then receive their MBTI report before deciding on their best-fit type. You might want to plan a short break so you can email participants their report before coming back to the virtual workshop. This allows for some reflection and gives an opportunity for participants to ask questions.

Extra tip: Work with a "Host" who can help with the technical aspects of the virtual workshop. Get them to be ready during the workshop to send out reports at the right time (after the self-assessment only) and to help with any questions and/or comments that come in via chat.

## 2. Allow time for building rapport

Simple things can help people to build rapport with each other at the beginning. Welcoming each participant by name, asking how their day has gone so far, or asking them to share a random fact about themselves are great ways to do this. Getting participants invested early and throughout the virtual workshop is crucial to a successful event.

## 3. Create a group contract

Ask participants to create some ground rules. Ask something like, "What can we do to make sure this workshop meets your expectations?" You can include things such as how often participants need breaks, remaining respectful to others, and how you'd like participants to use the technology (e.g. video cameras on or off).

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## 4. Make it interactive

Depending on your virtual delivery software, there are different ways to make a virtual workshop interactive. For example:

- Ask participants to use their videos so you can all see each other
- Use the "chat" tool or the "raise hand" tool for participants to ask questions while you are presenting
- Put participants into chat pods/virtual breakouts, or smaller groups or pairs, to take part in exercises
- Share your screen or use a few "whiteboards". Then you can write up participants' points during a group discussion, like you would with a flipchart

## 5. Think creatively

Add variety to your virtual workshop by using video clips to demonstrate the preference pairs. Or consider different learning tasks/activities you might run.

## 6. Avoid getting distracted

Make sure you yourself are in a private area free from distractions, and that others are too. Check in with participants about half an hour into the virtual workshop to see if the pace is too fast, too slow, or just right for them. Then adapt accordingly so they remain engaged.

## 7. Signpost clearly throughout

A simple yet essential thing to remember is to signpost clearly. Do this by referring to the structure of the virtual workshop. Keep informing participants where you are in the process, e.g. "Now we are going to explore some questions to help you think about how this preference is relevant to your development". If you are using support materials, make sure you let participants know where to look. This will avoid confusion.

## 8. Encourage note taking

Avoid over-reliance on auditory information by asking participants to write down their results. Encourage them to also write down any notes or development points they want to take away from the virtual workshop.

## 9. Use visuals

Consider using visuals to brighten up your virtual workshop slides and bring it to life. Fewer words and more visuals on slides help to keep participants engaged.

### Key terms

A ***host*** manages the logistics of the virtual workshop, like helping participants with technical issues, assisting the presenter with chat comments, and sending soft copy reports and/or documents at the appropriate time.

***Status icons*** let you quickly get input from participants where they can vote or "agree" or "disagree." Helps the presenter identify "raised hands" for questions along with who has volunteered for specific learning tasks.

***Chat*** gets participants' input by letting them write comments to the presenter and each other throughout the virtual workshop.

***Chat pods/Virtual breakout rooms*** help you place participants into smaller groups so they can accomplish a specific task.

***Whiteboarding*** encourages participants to share ideas through brainstorming and capturing ideas on a topic all at once.

***Polling*** engages participants by getting in-the-moment feedback, which allows them to compare their responses to each other.

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