

Validated practices for remote training delivery

(with a detailed description)

Category: Complete Opening

Mini training on how to use Zoom/MS Teams

Before starting the session, the trainer will ask the participants about their proficiency in using the video platform for training. This creates the opportunity to demonstrate the software's key features so the level of platform stress among the participants is reduced.

Open cameras

The trainer will encourage participants to keep their video cameras open.

Opportunities:

- Praise the ones that started the video camera at the beginning of the session ("Thank you very much for starting and keeping the camera on. It really helps the group to get a better learning experience")
- When presenting the video platform, by focusing on "on/off", blur and background images, outlining that these options help achieve a certain degree of privacy. Recommend using blur or background image.
- When mentioning the success factors/ground rules – "Let's see each other 😊 ... this is the most powerful way of communicating"
- After any break by greeting the participants: "Welcome back, if you are attending, please give us a sign (open up the camera or show us a reaction)"

Opening sequence (1h+)

Jumping right into presenting the main content is the perfect solution to a learning experience disaster. It is crucial that the trainer builds an opening sequence that

prepares the field for real engagement. The opening sequence should achieve the following objectives:

- Offer minimal instruction on using a video platform
- Provide the participants with the opportunity to connect with each other and with the trainer
- Learn about agenda points
- Discover learning objectives (optional)
- Share their expectations
- Learn the success factors
- Clarify the course schedule (durations, breaks, software platforms, etc.)

Socializing, small talk, empathizing (~ 10 min)

Participants arrive at the training session or back from the breaks at different times, leaving the room for casual conversation. The trainer should encourage social interactions among the attendees for periods of time providing a safe space for human interaction. Participants benefit from increased connectivity, and this enables better collaboration during team activities.

Increased individual engagement

While in the classroom, communication follows a more spontaneous pattern the trainer should pay attention to creating a space and the opportunity for each participant to have a voice during thought sharing or table round activities. This is usually done by inviting all the participants to speak one by one.

Category: Adapt Content

Activity slides with visual signalling.

Moving from a content lecture to a practical activity that implies the group's organisation using breakout rooms could rise some confusion related to the duration of the activity, key tasks, requirements and what document/platform will be used, etc.

Every practical activity will be introduced to alleviate these transitions using a presentation slide that will visually signal the above-mentioned information.

A maximum of 3-4 slides per idea/message, with amplified visuals

Lecturing kills the attention and engagement among the groups by consuming the mental energy of the participant. It is highly recommended to minimize the content to no more than 3-4 slides per idea or message and use visuals that amplify those messages.

Content transformation: 3-4 days of effort for a 2-day training course

When transforming the content for remote delivery, trainers should be aware and allocate enough time for such transformation. No less than 3-4 days of effort for a standard 2 days of training.

Category: Follow the Flow

Connecting with the topic (context/contrast activity)

Connecting with the key topic of the training should be the entry point for content delivery. CARTA recommends a contrast or a context discovery activity where participants could freely share their perspectives on the topic. No good or bad answers, no judgement, just a sum of perceptions and facts inventory.

Videos/Movies with written debrief questions

Using video materials is informative and could be a structured and immersive way to convey ideas, messages and facts while providing an engaging experience.

Unfortunately, many of the participants can remember only a “minuscule” part of the watched content (the beginning, the end and maybe the most interesting passage). Using a short questionnaire help participants allow time for personal reflection which leads to better integration of the learning experience. Reaching consensus inside the group creates a better understanding of the content. Sharing every group’s solution in the main room creates diversity and memorability.

Extended debriefing by involving all the participants

Sometimes you need to build a complete picture of the past activity/experience. If the participants had the opportunity to think individually about a certain topic, they deserve to share their perspectives even when others have already mentioned similar thoughts. It is the trainer’s job to ensure the inclusion of all points of view.

Training delivery split into 4/8-hour sessions

Splitting the training into smaller more manageable sessions could have a positive impact on engagement as the participants could balance their job duty and training attendance. Our rank of preference is 4-hour sessions > 8-hour sessions > 2-hour sessions.

Printed workbook, mailed to participants.

To avoid screen fatigue, using printed material in conjunction with video may be the key. Some training titles are better served by sending or mailing hard copies of the course materials (Example: Stress Management).

Activities for value realization

Just a small percentage of the participants make a spontaneous understanding of the value received through training activities (our estimate is 7-8%). Consequently, participants show a low level of retention and low capability of taking the learning to real life.

The trainer needs to start activities to create the space for value realization, allowing the participants to push valuable ideas and pieces of information to long-term memory.

Category: Learning in teams

Team activities and games: 2-4 activities within 4 hours

With remote training delivery, trainers could save time thanks to a timed approach with the start and end of activities. This gives room to infuse more activities and transform content lectures into practical activities (2-4 activities within a 4-hour time frame).

Coordinator and observer roles implemented within each team

Coordinator role

Very often in the classroom, you could notice that some participants emerge as group leaders/coordinators. The usual tasks they claim responsibility for are:

- Collecting group ideas and write them down on a flipchart/whiteboard
- Facilitating group interaction and work

- Presenting the team's output of the activity to the large group

While in the classroom, this may spontaneously occur, with online training trainers to explain why this role is needed and encourage participants to take on the role of the teams to nominate a representative.

Observer role

Some participants being in the middle of the action during practical activities may not be their cup of tea. This category will learn better by observing others and by sharing their observations and the end of the activity. Playing the observer role benefits the participant and the team as they get a different view of their past activity.

The trainer must run a briefing on how to play the observer role and hand over the observers a suitable observation sheet. During the debriefing of the activity, the observers will be invited to contribute their learning.

Additional trainers, co-trainer, training assistant

As remote training opens the opportunity for larger groups to join a training session, more trainers/co-trainers/training assistants may be needed to facilitate group activities and games during breakout rooms, keep time, provide technical help, monitor, and answer the chat.

The key trainer must ensure that all the resources are available at the right time.

Dedicated software solutions for team activities

Team activities are a great way to implement peer learning and using dedicated software could step up the engagement and the output of such activities.

The software solution could cover various scenarios like brainstorming, voting, applied games, note-taking, drawing, and experiential learning.