VIRTUAL BEST PRACTICES

For exclusively online events.

STAGING

Bring your best to a gathering

- Stage a nice background
- Reduce distractions
- Use good lighting
- Connect to Ethernet to decrease connectivity issues
- Dress to impress
- Use two monitors: 1 to see your audience and 1 to see your material
- Keep camera at eye level or a bit above your head

PRESENTING

Command an audience

- Practice screen sharing, video and audio sharing, power points and all technical transitions multiple times. Dress rehearsal is key
- Instruct audience to adjust screen for best view
- Practice transitions with a virtual audience
- Stay calm. Silence is okay. Questions to audience help smooth tech transitions
- Speak to the camera not the screen
- Connecting to an audience is challenging so focus on tight content
- Tone of voice emphasizes content. Body language puts an exclamation point on tone

ENGAGEMENT

Rhythm Enhancers

- Break audience into pairs or small groups
- Stand up activities and stretch breaks
- Use live Q & A and spotlight speakers
- Facilitate gallery audience discussion
- One-word responses from audience
- "Bonus" content from experts to supplement presentation
- Engage audience in a new way every 8 minutes
- Speakers and audience sit and stand up to increase energy

AUDIO VISUAL

Enrichment Tools

- Use countdown clocks during breaks
- Use interview videos from outside presenters as transitions
- Point camera and screen down at desk during work breaks
- Include video clips, interviews, homemade videos from presenting team
- Download videos or embed them in the presentation slides rather than stream live to decrease lag
- Background music during breaks or pre-gathering helps set mood
- Fun: "AHA Slides" and Jigsawplanet.com

TIPS AND TRICKS

Prep and Games

- Create a great cue sheet for Tech Team and Presenting Team
- Check in 30 minutes before gathering starts to test tech (again!)
- Make digital content available for audience (Slides, handouts)
- Reference pre-gathering assignments during the gathering and refer to any paper notebook as necessary
- Assign a Host and Co-hosts. Assign one staff person to help with all background issues or questions
- Send an early gift box to participants: snacks, notes pages or journal, fidget toys, and games to engage the group
- Connect with online games, in-person games (Office Bingo), and competitions (Olympics with group points)
- Give winners their awards live during gathering
- Recording on Zoom is from the perspective of the Host. Polls are not kept in a Zoom recording