

## Five Tips for Facilitating Remote Presentations

*For many companies, transitioning your workforce from their familiar office environment to a remote or at-home situation may surface the need for something new: “remote presentation skill development.”*

*ALULA has worked virtually for almost three decades. During those years, we discovered and refined key skills to have when preparing/presenting remotely.*

*The following five tips present core skills needed to facilitate remote presentations that are both engaging and effective.*

1 Plan it well!
<b>Know your audience size</b>
This determines whether to deploy a “Presentation style” or a “Workshop style.” A presentation is one-way, lending itself to a larger audience. A workshop is two-way (or more) with opportunities for exchange of ideas, and is best for smaller groups.
<b>Establish event duration</b>
One hour (or less) is a good length to avoid losing the attention of participants. A good general plan is an intro of 5–10 minutes that includes some warm, friendly dialogue and establishes the agenda. Follow this by a 45-minute presentation/workshop. Make sure to include a 10-minute Q&A at the end for presentations. For any questions that cannot be answered during the Q&A, capture them and answer via email after the presentation.
<b>Best time for presentation</b>
Know the locations of attendees and establish a best time for all, considering their obligations and time zones.
<b>Agenda and pre-conference communication</b>
Send an invitation with the start time 10 minutes ahead of when you want the real presentation to begin. (For example, “start” the presentation at 1:00, but plan to have it formally roll at 1:10.) Include information on how to log in to the presentation and how to connect audio (phone numbers and meeting numbers are typically needed).  Let attendees know ahead of time if you want them to log in using the video feature. When working remotely, using the video feature can help personalize and create engagement, especially in small groups.  A few days before the presentation, send attendees an agenda and any information they may need to prepare.
<b>Presenter’s environment</b>
Choose a quiet area with minimal background noise and good Wi-Fi connection.
<b>Prepare for roles as Host, Moderator, Presenter, and Operator</b>
If you are presenting alone, you will need to be adept at all these roles. If co-presenting, you can share the roles. In each role, be upbeat and a good communicator, and keep things moving. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Host</i>—this role is to welcome everyone and open the presentation or workshop by reviewing the agenda, objectives, and communicating the rules of engagement.</li> <li>▪ <i>Presenter/Moderator</i>—throughout the event, provide the presentation objectives and agenda, present information, handle Q&amp;A, launch polls, manage chat, and organize and communicate questions. Also keep time for the event. A skillful presenter/moderator improves the audience experience.</li> <li>▪ <i>Technical Operator</i>—sets up and runs event behind the scenes. Monitors attendees logging on and assists with troubleshooting if someone has difficulty accessing the presentation.</li> </ul>

2 Familiarize yourself with the presentation platform.
Many platforms are available for remote presentations, workshops, or meetings. Consult with your systems administrator to determine their preferred platform.
Familiarize yourself with the platform’s operations. Make sure you know how to view attendees, how to mute/unmute audio, be comfortable with monitoring and responding on the chat, Q&A, presentation-sharing, and other features.
If you are new to remote presenting, do a dry run with someone so you can practice using the platform’s features and receive their feedback and coaching.

3 Present with confidence.
<b>Present in a clear and comfortable manner</b>
Make it conversational, but crisp like an announcer.
Enunciate very clearly with good volume, but not excessively.
Use clear, simple visuals on the slides, but . . . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Don’t read them word-for-word. This makes people impatient and they may tune you out and just read the slides.</li> <li>▪ Put enough on the slides—but not too much—so notetakers won’t become frustrated trying to write too much; and/or offer a copy of the slides following the presentation.</li> </ul>
Make sure to test your audio connection when you launch the presentation. There is nothing worse for participants than static, feedback, or other sound issues during a remote presentation.
If you are presenting content with deep detail, pause periodically to check that the audience is tracking. Use an activity, question, or poll every few slides to keep people engaged.
If something unexpected happens, talk it through, make a light joke if you’re comfortable doing so, and do the best you can in the moment.
If you lose internet connection or audio, keep your audience updated using chat or text to communicate what’s being done to solve the problem.

4 Structure your presentation to maximize time and encourage engagement.
<b>How to open the presentation</b>
Nothing beats a good welcome and introduction. This is very important, as it sets the tone for the entire presentation. Make it neither too long nor too brief: 5–10 minutes is usually about right.
Introduce any guest speakers—include brief speaker bio if they are not known by attendees.
If attendees all know each other, this is easy. But if they are mostly strangers, you need a warm, interactive welcome to build some “instant camaraderie.” Here are a couple of suggestions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Log in 10 minutes early to set up and engage those who join early. This gives people a few minutes to chat, break the ice, and catch up before the webinar gets down to business. (You can make this 10-minute “icebreaker” optional, so people can choose between it and logging on at the formal meeting time.)</li> <li>▪ Ask an opening polling question(s) of the group:</li> <li>▪ For larger groups, use polling available on your presentation platform or another application such as Mentimeter. Multiple-choice questions work well here.</li> <li>▪ For the small groups, use a simple slide with question(s) and keep the audio open for verbal discussion of the questions and answers.</li> </ul>
Encourage imaginative/think-outside-the-box and/or funny answers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ “If you had a million dollars, where would you vacation?”</li> <li>▪ “If success is ensured, what would you do?”</li> <li>▪ “What does our team need to do more of?”</li> <li>▪ “When I get off this call, I’m going to . . .”</li> </ul>
<b>Review housekeeping items</b>
Request that everyone be engaged and not multi-task (close email, no texting and IMs, and silence phones).
Review how to use the platform: chat, Q&A, polls, leaving the webinar, feedback, etc., and how to get help if participants experience issues. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Explain how questions will be gathered <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For small groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Encourage dialogue as the presentation progresses</li> <li>– Via chat and Q&amp;A during the presentation</li> </ul> </li> <li>• For large groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Establish that questions will be answered at the end of the presentation. It helps to ask questioners to include the associated slide number with their question.</li> <li>– If there’s a lot of information to present, avoid taking questions during the presentation—it can disturb the flow and the presenter’s cadence, confuse the audience, and make the event time run over.</li> <li>– Prepare a “scripted text line” to use when you acknowledge chat questions: “Excellent question. We will answer yours and other questions at the end of the presentation—thank you.”</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Present objectives and agenda</b>
It’s a good practice to present the objectives during the opening and again at the end of the presentation to establish if additional dialogue may be needed to achieve all objectives.
Review the agenda and, if applicable, the time allotted to each agenda topic. This helps to keep the meeting on track.
<b>Present core content (the presentation or workshop)</b>
<b>Wrap-up with closure</b>
Provide a summary slide—you can use your agenda and objective slides as a guide
Do a quick round robin and ask the audience: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What was new?</li> <li>▪ What resonated?</li> <li>▪ What was the most impactful thing presented?</li> <li>▪ Next Steps—let attendees know what to expect after the Webinar, and if/how you’ll follow-up.</li> </ul>
<b>Conduct a +/Delta regarding the presentation facilitation and impact</b>
What did the attendee like?
What could have been better?
Any additional input?

5 Post-event communications.
Share any resources—slides, meeting notes, or other follow-up.
For larger groups, it can be helpful to conduct a post-event survey. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ For maximum response, ask 1–3 poll questions during the event, at the very end, as your final activity.</li> <li>▪ You can also conduct a post-webinar email survey, but response rates tend to be lower.</li> </ul>
Establish timing of any follow-on presentations.

*We hope you have found these tips useful! They will help your presentation or workshop to be professional, memorable, and well-received.*

## About ALULA®

ALULA® is a management consultancy founded in 1993 as Continuous Learning Group, Inc. (CLG) to assist Fortune 500 companies with improving strategy execution. Today, ALULA exists to inspire and accelerate the extraordinary growth of individuals and exceptional performance of business. ALULA employs proven principles of behavioral science to help organizations more efficiently and effectively implement change, enhance leadership capability, and improve performance.

