# Virtual Classrooms:

How to deliver using VC technology

# Introduction

**Virtual classroom learning is becoming an increasingly popular delivery component in the modern workplace. The advantages of providing short, live, online and synchronous learning that can be combined more easily with a learner's flow of work are becoming increasingly well recognised. Shorter durations, easy global reach, reduced training delivery and costs and opportunity to link with other digital approaches and technologies.**
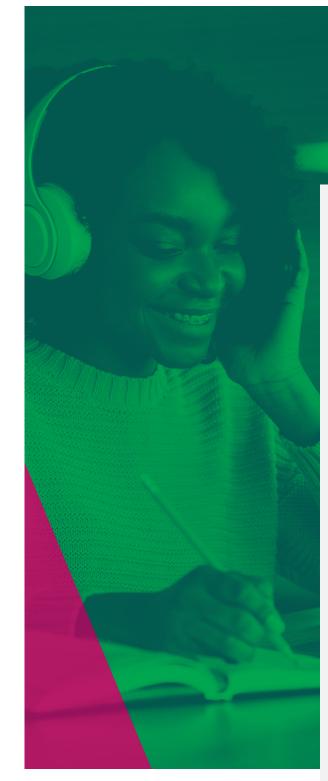
Converting traditional f2f delivery to virtual classrooms may be seen as a silver bullet. Especially from a cost saving perspective, thought should be given to its use, and how to get the best from it.

Virtual classroom technology does open up a whole lot of opportunities that traditional approaches can't offer, but equally there are downsides to going virtual that need to be understood and carefully managed and addressed.

We are seeing a steady rise in the use of virtual classroom technology and it is increasingly seen as the go-to solution when looking at either replacing or augmenting f2f classroom delivery. Virtual classrooms,

when used well, can provide be extremely effective in providing the interactive, synchronous elements of your blended learning solutions.

## 40%

**Research from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development shows that 40% of L&D professionals believe that virtual classrooms will have had the greatest impact on the L&D profession by the year 2020, second only to mobile learning.**

## 89%

**Global data from Towards Maturity (2016) shows that live online learning is the number one learning technology, according to 89% of L&D professionals.**

As we've discussed in **the sister guide to this** the key to effectively converting f2f programmes through the use of live online learning and the virtual classroom is to ensure the sessions are developed as a core component of and sit alongside all the other elements of a modern virtual blend – a true blend of video, recordings, documents, assessments, elearning, recommendations, web links, assignments, practice and social learning.
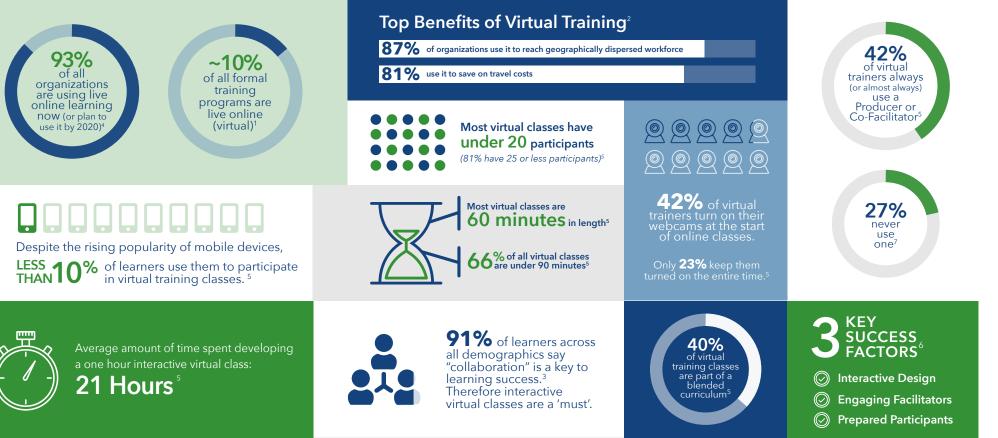
Through this guide we hope to provide you with some practical tips and hints to help you develop and design your own virtual classroom sessions.

# The State of Virtual Training 2019

Virtual training - live, online, facilitator-led classes - isn't new. It's become a common learning method for many organizations. Yet new technologies, new collaboration tools, and new ways of working mean that virtual training continues to evolve and grow.

This curated summary of key virtual training statistics comes from industry reports plus my own research studies that I conducted in mid-2017 and early 2019. Over 235 global professionals provided insights into their virtual training initiatives. How do these numbers compare to your own? Read more, and join the conversation here: https://www.cindyhuggett.com/blog/2019sovt.

**93%** of all organizations are using live online learning now (or plan to use it by 2020)[4]

**~10%** of all formal training programs are live online (virtual)[1]

## Top Benefits of Virtual Training[2]

**87%** of organizations use it to reach geographically dispersed workforce

**81%** use it to save on travel costs

Most virtual classes have **under 20** participants *(81% have 25 or less participants)[5]*

**42%** of virtual trainers always (or almost always) use a Producer or Co-Facilitator[5]

**27%** never use one[7]

**42%** of virtual trainers turn on their webcams at the start of online classes.

Only **23%** keep them turned on the entire time.[5]

Despite the rising popularity of mobile devices, **LESS THAN 10%** of learners use them to participate in virtual training classes. [5]

Most virtual classes are **60 minutes** in length[5]

**66%** of all virtual classes are under 90 minutes[5]

Average amount of time spent developing a one hour interactive virtual class: **21 Hours** [5]

**91%** of learners across all demographics say "collaboration" is a key to learning success.[3] Therefore interactive virtual classes are a 'must'.

**40%** of virtual training classes are part of a blended curriculum[5]

## **3** KEY SUCCESS FACTORS[6]

- ✓ Interactive Design
- ✓ Engaging Facilitators
- ✓ Prepared Participants

## Most Popular Platforms Used Are[5]

| | |
|---|---|
| **47%** | Adobe Connect |
| **38%** | WebEx Training Center |
| **29%** | Zoom |
| **25%** | GoToMeeting/GoToTraining |
| **22%** | WebEx Meeting Center |
| **17%** | Skype |

Others Mentioned: Blackboard Collaborate, Jigsaw, AirClass by Lenovo, Saba Virtual Classroom

## Top Challenges of Virtual Training[7]

| | |
|---|---|
| **38%** | Unprepared Participants |
| **37%** | Technology Challenges |
| **36%** | Unengaged Participants |
| **25%** | Unskilled Facilitators |
| **24%** | Non-interactive program design |
| **23%** | Lack of Buy-In |

1 Training Magazine's 2018 Training Industry Report

2 ATD Research. (2017). Virtual Classrooms Now: Using Technology to Reach Today's Workforces

3 Towards Maturity CIC Ltd, & Overton, L. How Modern Workers Learn.

4 Towards Maturity CIC Ltd, & Overton, L. Learning Technology Trends for 2019.

5 Huggett, Cindy. (2019). [2019 Research Study]. https://www.cindyhuggett.com/blog/2019sovt

6 Huggett, Cindy. (2017). Virtual Training Tools and Templates: An Action Guide to Live Online Learning, ATD Press

7 Huggett, Cindy. (2018). [2018 Research Study]. http://cindyhuggett.com/blog/sovt

**CindyHuggett**

# Virtual Classroom Design & Delivery – The basics

**Before getting into the detail of how to build good virtual classroom sessions, we want to highlight the important distinction between a 'webinar' and a 'virtual classroom'. Both approaches are equally valid and useful when included in an overall virtual programme blend, but its important to recognise the differences between the two.**

## Webinar

Is a virtual seminar where a presenter will use the virtual interface created through a webinar platform to deliver a content.

Whilst a good webinar presenter will use some interactive devices to help illustrate key points and engage their audience, webinar technology tends to lend itself towards more passive participant engagement.

Webinars are a good way to present larger pieces of content to large audiences whilst providing the opportunity for some limited participant interactions, usually via polls and chat.

The sister guide The Ultimate Guide to Designing and Delivering Webinars can provide you with some hints and tips.

## Virtual Classroom

Provides an interactive virtual environment through which a facilitator can pose questions, set problems and explore concepts with a group of learners.

Virtual Classroom (VC) technology lends itself to small group break-out where learners can discuss topics and ideas and can share experiences and understanding within a small cohort. VC technology supports interactivity and provides an opportunity for visual and auditory connection with peers.

92% of people multitask on virtual sessions, your challenge is to design a session that is active and engaging. A well designed and developed virtual classroom session will replicate the levels of interactivity and communication that occur more naturally when learners are working face-to-face.

As a VC session designer your challenge and goal is to recognise the barriers that working virtually naturally creates and through good design, excellent planning and production, and polished delivery create sessions that are not only engaging but have impact and add core value to an overall virtual blend.

# 92%

**of people multitask on virtual sessions.**

**1080 Group LCC on behalf of Citrix**

## Virtual classrooms session can provide the opportunity for the learners to:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Grow their knowledge and skills experientially** | e.g. a group may have the theoretical understanding of how a process or system works but through a live discussion session they are given the opportunity to explore and see how different approaches or decisions may play out |
| **Develop a supportive sharing culture in the group** | i.e. build an action learning based cohort that could be sustained well after the immediate programme has finished |
| **Create personal connections with peers and facilitators** | building personal professional networks that can be called on for support and collaboration in the wider work context |
| **Receive 'expert' input that they may not ordinarily may receive** | providing cost-effective method for utilising expert input to clarify, expand and explore key concepts or ideas |

# Practical Design Considerations

**Before getting into the nuts and bolts of the session design itself we suggest you consider the following three points as guiding principles to help guide your ideal generation and decision making.**

When designing a VC, especially if you're converting material from a f2f programme its very tempting to 'lift and shift' not only the content, but the programme, architecture and even the exercise and tasks. Whilst some elements may fit well in a VC environment others may fare less well so careful thought should be given to your design.

So, whilst the VC session may only be a part of an overall virtual blended designed, to deliver ALL the content you would have covered in a f2f programme, it's potentially the most important part. Therefore, selecting what is covered during the live session and what can be delivered through other virtual means before, during or afterwards will be the foundation stone of your final blend design.

**To do this here are some simple rules to follow when considering when converting a f2f into a VC session design:**

## 1  Make it shorter

It's like taking a book and making it into a film, you can't just lift the text from the book and turn it into dialogue hoping it will work. A good learning designer, like a good scriptwriter, will need to identify and take the core story lines and turn them into something that engages, entertains and encourages their audience to give their full attention and not to 'switch channels' half-way through.

Designing good virtual content for a VC session requires some preparation. Without carrying out an initial triage of the content to be covered and exploring how best that content can be delivered virtually, the temptation will be to try and put too much in the VC session themselves.

## 2   Consider what can be done 'offline' to the VC session/s

When considering what's in your 'off-line' and 'live' blend, start by looking at your aims and objectives and consider what sort of resource can be curated or developed (or already exists elsewhere) to deliver elements of the course 'off-line' and which parts will benefit from being explored during the live session.

When considering resources, the first (and easiest) step is usually send your learers some pre-reading. To develop a really engaging blend you will have to be more creative, consider which other asynchronous learning tasks and activities you can set up to engage learners before and after the live session/s.

### For example:
- Reading – curated online material
- Curated online videos, e.g. YouTube or other sources
- Pre-session task or activity
- Pre-session cohort or learner group collaboration
- An elearning programme or MOOC
- Pre &/or post session reflection and personal evaluation
- Gorilla Video – e.g. practice conversation with a learning partner
- Pre/post assessment and feedback

## 3   Select the right architecture

Consider a modular approach when deciding on what should be included in your VC session/s. The following best-practice guidance for virtual learning may offer some useful sense of how to best 'dice up' you're your content.

**Ideal Participant Numbers:**

- 6-8 = ideal
- 12 = OK
- 16+ = increasingly hard to engage

**Length:**

- 2 hours max. per session without break

- 3 hours max. of effective delivery, including a 15-20 min break

**Delivery:**

- Use images, animations etc. as much as possible to illustrate

- Keep messages simple and short - keep moving

- Aim to take no more than 1.5 minutes per slide

- Attempt to create an opportunity for individual interaction every 3-5 minutes

- Use cameras/ webcams whenever possible

# Virtual Classroom Session Design & Delivery Principles

**Converting content that would have been traditionally delivered in a face-to-face environment into a virtual classroom session may seem daunting and require a step well outside an individual's comfort zone.**

Once you have decided on which content will be best served through the live VC session or sessions, much like designing f2f training session there are some principles that will help ensure you build an engaging, informative and impactful learning session.

**For each virtual classroom you should try to design a wide range of learning activities designed to:**

- engage participants and encourage their commitment and participation
- bring into the sessions existing knowledge that participants may have
- help explore the topics through group discussion and activities
- consolidate understanding and check knowledge
- fulfill any attendance requirements by the regular confirmation that all participants are taking part in the whole VC session (through trackable activities like polls)

## Structuring your VC Session

**The following is a suggested general structure for a virtual classroom session. Obviously it can be added to, amended and changed but maybe it will provide you with a useful starting point for building your sessions.**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Chat** | What have you learnt from your activities since the last VC? Any questions or queries? This allows participants to bring to the group any issues that have arisen thus building an action learning set relationship which could be maintained after the initial programme has been finished. |
| **Presentation or activity set up** | This could be some core principles being presented or could be a brief set up of the main activity or activities that will make up the bulk of the VC session |
| **Activities** | This could be a range of activities either involving the full group or using breakouts. They should always be fun and challenging and involve a mix of consolidation of key principles that can be introduced via elearning prior to the session and new experiences for them to reflect and learn from. |
| **Summary and next steps** | This would be a very visual summary with the facilitator bringing in all the experiential learning elements that came up during the session. The next steps will then be identified with everyone asked to explore with colleagues some of the key principles introduced and explored during the session. |

Once you have settled on the structure of your session, you will want to populate it with activities. Whilst some of the tasks you set as part of f2f sessions can be relatively replicated in a virtual context other may need some re-work to fit in the new virtual setting.

**Below we have listed and detailed some of the main functionality you will find in most off-the-shelf virtual classroom platforms. Whilst each platform will have its own idiosyncrasies and you have to design to them, in the main they all have to a lesser or greater degree the following.**

Show examples or processes (by screen sharing) – this is particularly useful for walking through set systems and proceses

Ask a question for participants to answer by providing a thumbs up or thumbs down response. For quick responses from the group, this is sometimes better than formal multiple choice questions or a chat

Get the group to contribute ideas and opinions by using highlighter or other markup tools on a shared whiteboard or pre-prepared slide. This great for getting participants to add comments into diagrams and tables.

Use chats for the group to discuss topics, share opinions, ask questions or give feedback. You can have a main chat or a series of parallel multiple chats can used if needed and these can be positioned as slide overlays

Show a video or animation, but bandwidth has to be quite good to ensure everyone gets an acceptable quality of presentation

Use break out groups (with participants moving to and from main classroom) to explore ideas or topics as small groups. The facilitator can listen in or observe the chats and each group can have pre-loaded exercises or use a whiteboard to gather ideas and build presentations

Get participants to raise their hand to indicate they are ready or want to talk. This is essential as the facilitator cannot otherwise know that people have questions that they want to raise at that moment. It's great for more introverted learners as they can more easily get attention than in conventional classrooms.

Share microphone with one or more of the participants for conversations or debriefing presentations after breakouts.

Use multiple choice poll questions for getting group views, opinions and checking understanding. If used regularly they are a good mechanism to ensure your participants are still there and attending!

Set up file downloads or weblinks so additional resources can be used by individuals or groups in breakout rooms. These links are set up before the virtual classroom starts and the set up can saved for future programmes.
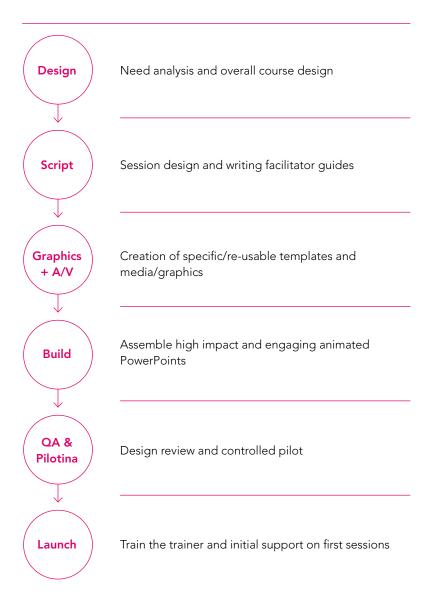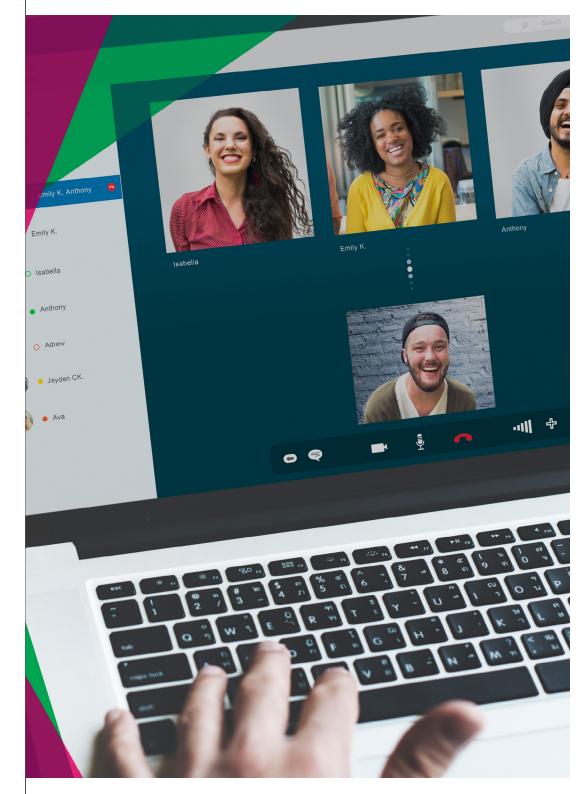
Ask group to use a course workbook which can be downloaded via the virtual classroom

**At the end of the guide you'll find a simple functionality matrix that provides information on how well each of these key functionalities are met by some of the main VC technology solutions in use at the moment.**

VIRTUAL CLASSROOMS

## To pull it all together we have devised a step-by-step process which helps define the key activities that need to be completed before you're ready to deliver your first virtual session

**Design**
Need analysis and overall course design

**Script**
Session design and writing facilitator guides

**Graphics + A/V**
Creation of specific/re-usable templates and media/graphics

**Build**
Assemble high impact and engaging animated PowerPoints

**QA & Pilotina**
Design review and controlled pilot

**Launch**
Train the trainer and initial support on first sessions

# Hints & Tips for Successful Delivery

**You have completed your design and are about to go-live, before entering the realm of virtual training theses hints and tips may prove useful. Delivering virtual sessions can at first be a challenging new skill to acquire, however as with f2f training, the key to success is through planning and preparation.**

These principles have stood us in good stead when preparing for and delivering virtual sessions, hopefully they'll be of some help to you now too.



**Get a co-presenter (or producer) if possible**
This is especially helpful as you can reach out to the group and run the event whilst the producer looks at chats and lines up the next poll or populates the syndicate rooms with the relevant resources. They can also provide support offline to the learners who simply can't log on. You can't stop the session to get learners on-board but the producer can go offline and call them up and talk them through what they need to do

**Prepare relentlessly**
You need to be as seamless as possible when you move from slides to activities. Practice with colleagues to set up syndicates or whiteboard activities. You need to know the functionality of your virtual classroom technology backwards. You do not want to be figuring out how things work when you have a dozen people waiting for you to do something!

**Interact from the start**
Talk to the group as they join and get them to start using the chat areas and connect with the other participants

**Engage an unseen audience**
By directly using people's names – make a habit of talking to each learner directly (and perhaps getting a response from them) every 10 minutes minimum

**Multi-task effectively**
If you are on your own (i.e. you don't have a co-producer), you need to prepare everything and get it all loaded. You should also take your time to pause your presentation to review the chat comments and directly address all of them. This will make your learners feel connected with you and possibly allow you to go into deeper detail on topics that they are most interested in

**Make the most of your voice**

it is the only thing you have in the virtual world, with no eye contact and body language, you need to come over as dynamic and welcoming through the voice alone. Don't rush it but keep the energy levels up.
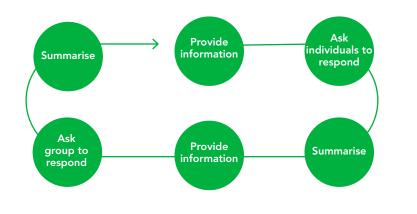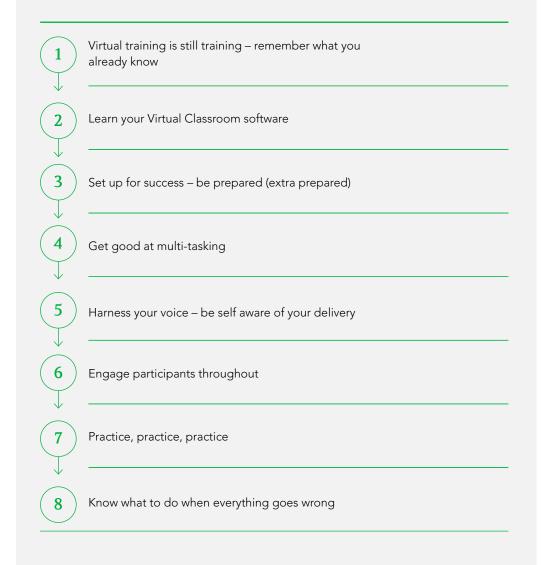
**Keep it simple**

it is always worth keeping things as simple as possible in a virtual classroom as there are less ways in which you can control attention. There is a danger that learners can get lost or overwhelmed. Here's a very useful model to follow:



**Make notes of what people say**

The learners' response could be via chats or subgroup discussions, even everyone sharing a whiteboard and annotating a diagram. Capture this information and use it to engage your audience – conversation and participation is key to a great VC experience.

| Name | Role | Level of Experience | Areas of interest | Possible questions to ask |
|------|------|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Rob | Consultant | Basic | Interactions | Which interactions would you use? |
| Mark | Trainer | High | Design models | What model do you think would work for your audience? |
| Susan | Relationship Manager | Advanced | Best practice advice | What worked well for you in the past? |

## The following we hope provides a simple breakdown of some of the key things to remember:

**1** Virtual training is still training – remember what you already know

**2** Learn your Virtual Classroom software

**3** Set up for success – be prepared (extra prepared)

**4** Get good at multi-tasking

**5** Harness your voice – be self aware of your delivery

**6** Engage participants throughout

**7** Practice, practice, practice

**8** Know what to do when everything goes wrong

# Common pitfalls when delivering virtual classroom session

**We've saved this section for last. We have considerable experience of using virtual classroom technology ourselves and supporting other do so too. Whilst not wanting to dwell on the things that can wrong, sharing what we have learned may help flatten out your virtual classroom learning curve.**

These principles have stood us in good stead when preparing for and delivering virtual sessions, hopefully they'll be of some help to you now too.

| Potential pitfall | How to avoid it |
| --- | --- |
| **Too many people within the session** | 12 is a good number of people, 16 would be the absolute maximum. |
| **Lack of participation, death by Virtual PPT** | Be creative and try and come up with the broadest range of activities possible. |
| **You fail to get through your content** | Whilst sessions can last up 3 hours including a break, we suggest 90 mins is a good duration for a virtual classroom. You should allow 50% of the time for chats and activities so you ideally have no more than 15-20 main content slides to talk through. |

| Potential pitfall | How to avoid it |
| --- | --- |
| **A number of participants dominate things** | This may be harder to tackle in a virtual session, but you may need to be bold and deliberately shut some people down, and more actively cold-call on others for their contributions. Use regular polls and questions to bring everyone in and make sure any questions that participants put into chat areas are answered or acknowledged. There is often more chance of introverts to contribute to virtual classrooms than in a classroom so construct exercises that encourage this. |
| **Participants have difficulty logging in** | Allow time for this (at least 10 minutes is a good idea) and provide very clear instructions. If it is the first time to use a virtual classroom for some learners, you should specifically ask them to log in 15 minute early to be safe.<br><br>Ask those people already logged in to be patient. You can give them a task to prepare for while waiting. |
| **Technical issues** | Always have a back-up plan – best to have two laptops logged in and then you can see how the session looks to the learners (checking out screen refresh delays etc.) and this can also act as your back up if you then make that laptop also a presenter. |
| **Dialogues between participants and the facilitator and between themselves (in chat areas) are hard to track while you are presenting** | Plan to have a producer to review and facilitate online chats and gather queries and questions from the group whilst the main presenter focuses on the presentation of information and running the main activities. |

# Supplementary Practical Support

**In this section we detail a number of 'exercises' that are tried and trusted. Some may lend themselves to certain platforms over others, but they should provide some useful examples of the sorts of exercises you can incorporate into different stages of a VC session.**

**General comments**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Whiteboard slides** | Create whiteboard slides for participants to write on with predetermined activities as part of your slidedeck. |
| | When you end your session you get the option to save your presentation with all the annotations from participants still on it. |
| | *NB You also have the option to open a blank whiteboard spontaneously in the session in a separate tab alongside your slides. You can structure this – eg create a grid to record ideas – using the square and line tools.* |
| **Chat** | If you use chat for an exercise, put a producer note to type a heading for the exercise in CAPS first to distinguish this from general chat that has been happening |
| **Breaks** | Breaks – If there is a coffee cup icon in the emoticons you can flag this in the tools intro. Though there is a risk that this might encourage people to step away |

**Starting slides**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Rolling slides as** | On a loop of 6-10 seconds: e.g. chat to Host if tech probs; session length |
| **people join** | breaks; have workbook with you; have pre-work ready; put video on, mute if noisy; turn off other apps |

**Icebreakers & energisers (generally for a series of sessions, once participants are familiar with the tools)**

| | |
|---|---|
| **"What's in a word'** | Ask to write on screen their definition of e.g. 'Late' with the Text tool |
| **Acrostic** | Create a table with 2 columns – narrow left, wide right. Put the letters of a word (e.g. TEAM) in separate rows down the left column. Ask them to write words to describe the concept in the right column using the Text tool |
| **Decorate a mug/house** | Create a table of squares and put a blank mug or house image in each square. Ask them to use the Drawing tools to decorate one mug/house |
| **Mindful Minute** | 1 minute of mindful breathing |
| **Spot the difference** | Two images on screen; ask them to circle the 10 items that are different |
| **Breakout In trios** | 3 minutes to find 3 things in common; Report back – spokesperson shares for each group |

# Introductions

**If the group is on a journey together, then it is worth investing in longer intros/icebreaker to build connections. If not, or it is a big group, or you are tight on time, do a quick intro and use interactive activities related to the training topic quickly to get everyone participating – e.g. breakout or plenary group activity**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Pax Thumbnails** | If you can get photos of all participants, create a slide of them and ask them to put their pointer on their photo. Then do a round table – or if it's a big group, ask them to put their role and location in the Chat, or just go straight in |
| **Round table – basic** | Share name, role, location and why they are there/what they want from the session. Ask the Producer to write first name and key words from their answers on the screen as they speak.<br><br>You can also put an image of a table and ask people to take a seat with their Pointer, or have a map and ask them to indicate their location with their Pointer<br><br>To keep to time: role model what you want them to say or show your timer on your webcam, say everyone has max 10 seconds and use it! |
| **Round table – Object** | Bring an object that tells us something about you. Ask them to hold up to their video camera, or describe it during the introduction round |
| **Round table – Window** | Ask them to describe what they can you see through their window. This helps people to connect on a human level |
| **Chat** | Just ask them to put their role and location in the chat and go straight to an icebreaker |

# Plenary group activities

## General comments

| | |
|---|---|
| **Brainstorm on whiteboard/chat** | **Whiteboard** – all put pointer and ideas on screen, OR you create a grid for each person to choose a cell<br><br>**Chat** – all write in chat (put a heading in first). You can then read them out or ask them to read them and then send a message to a person whose comment they liked, so that they are doing the work. Then just summarise<br><br>Verbal discussion and producer (or you) types the key points on the slide with the **Text** tool |
| **Polls - Test group opinion/ experience/ knowledge/ retention of learning** | **Use the Poll function**<br>Use Single answers or Multiple answers; Free text answers are complex to manage<br>1. Set the poll up in advance (you can save it and use it each time)<br>2. Make sure you unblock pop ups on your computer<br>3. Reassure people the answers will be anonymous<br>4. Have a backup slide with the questions<br>5. on to use the Tick function instead if the poll fails<br>6. Tell them to restore their panels after the poll – close the poll (arrow) and open the chat and participant arrows<br><br>Or ask them to select answers on screen using the **Pointer** or **Tick** tool |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Video / audio clip/ online podcast** | Max 2 minutes. Upload into the slide as an MP4 if bandwidth ok. If not, put link in **Chat** and ask them to mute their audio, watch it on their browser, then come back and share their comments in **Chat** and start debriefing those while everybody returns (they will not all be back at the same time).<br><br>Ask for a **Green Tick** when they are ready<br>Or ask them to do it as part of the break if you have one |
| **Case study/ simulation** | Put the scenario on the screen; ask someone to read it out for the group. Ask participants to write in **Chat** what they think the main challenges are. Then ask for a volunteer to suggest how they might handle this, and say you will then ask 2 others to give alternative views/feedback (so they all have to listen in case you ask them) and anyone can write comments in **Chat**.<br><br>Before the exercise starts, have the producer write a heading for the exercise in capitals in the Chat box. |
| **Hot seat practice/ Fishbowl** | Give the scenario; ask for two volunteers to play the two roles, or for one volunteer to facilitate while you play one of the roles. The rest are observers. You could ask the observers to make suggestions to the role player how to handle it before it starts and/or ask them for feedback afterwards, using **Chat** and one or two verbal comments |
| **Facilitator demo** | Do a demo with a volunteer or the Producer. |
| **Mini presentations** | Get participants to pre-prepare a short presentation/demo and get them to present. Feedback from the group via chat (as participants can save this at the end) and ask 1 person for verbal comments |

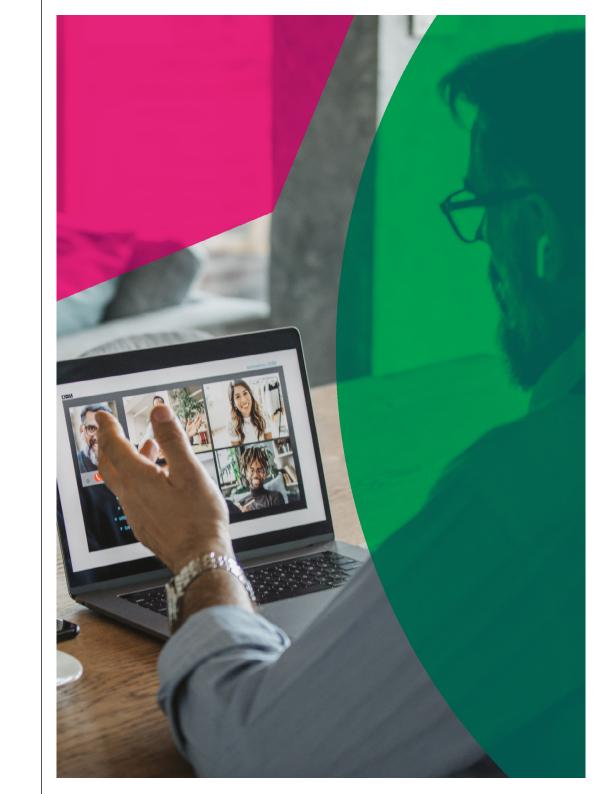| | |
|---|---|
| **Action learning Ask for topics in a table.** | Then for each to choose their top 3 with the **Tick/Check Mark**. Deal with them in order of priority. In a small group each person can give a comment/ask an open question in turn. In a big group, ask for **Raised Hands** or do warm/cold calling |
| **Apps** | Mentimeter, Klaxoon and Kahoot can all be used in virtual classes Mentimeter: put app link and code on screen, ask them a question and they answer on their smart phones. The results emerge live on the screen eg as a word cloud |
| **Sharing other docs** | E.g. Word. Do by sharing your screen with a pre-opened document. PDF is best – can be annotated on. Don't touch the screen if they are annotating |
| **Plenary debriefs** | Put up a slide with the points you want them to consider an ask people to use their **Pointer** to indicate which point they would like to give input on. Say how many inputs you will take.

Or do a round table/cold call/ask for comments in **Chat**

Or ask for written comments on a **whiteboard slide**

It works well to give 2 options – verbal/whiteboard/chat to accommodate different learning styles |

# Getting individual contributions in plenary

## Warm and cold calling

**Raised Hand** – "please raise your hand if you would like to share your experience/opinion. I will take 2/3 inputs." (If nobody comes forward, move to warm/cold calling to avoid overlong silences!)

*'Who would like to share their thoughts …'*

**Warm calling** – "I am going to ask 2 people for their views on this, and I would like you to build on each other's thoughts when youspeak" (this means they have to pay attention – very effective!)

**Cold calling** – "X (name), what do you think about this?" "X (another person), how would you add to that?" In a virtual workshop personal interaction by name is one of the most engaging methods. Make sure you flag in your participation agreements that you will be doing this. Even if you have reservations about calling directly on people, try it! Keep track of how many times each person has contributed in your session tracker to ensure that this has been as equal as possible by the end.

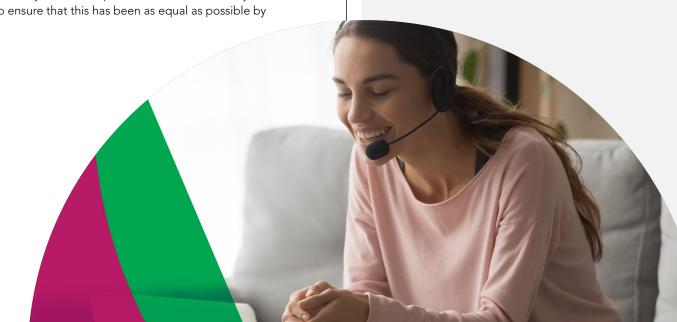## Individual written inputs 'Let's catch your ideas on a flipchart'

**Whiteboard slides** with a delineated space for each person to write: e.g. a blank table - squares or rows - post-it notes or blank speech bubbles. Ask them to choose a cell/row with their **Pointer**, then write their answer using the **Text** tool.

This ensures people do not write on top of each other – so long as you remind them to press 'Enter' to create new lines in their cell.

Blank slide. Ask them to put their **Pointer** somewhere on the screen and write their answer (or questions if you are asking for their questions) under it using the **Text** tool.

This can be messy, but allows for more freedom/individuality **Chat** – put a heading in CAPS in the chat and ask them to contribute their ideas. Quickly summarise/acknowledge/build on each idea. If Chat make sure they all send to 'All Participants'

You can give them 2 options – write on the screen OR share in Chat so they can choose what they prefer

## Make ONE choice 'Which is the biggest challenge/benefit out of these options?'

By name: Provide the options (eg a continuum, or selection of photos, or speech bubbles, statements in a grid, or a wordcloud) on a **Whiteboard slide** and ask them to choose one with their **Pointer**

This enables you to follow up with names individuals for further input eg 'X tell us more about why you chose that'

Anonymous: Provide the options as above, then ask them to use the **Square** tool (or the **Circle** in the dropdown menu under it) to circle their choice

## Make MULTIPLE choices 'On the flipchart, mark all '

Anonymous: Provide the options on a **Whiteboard slide** as above, then ask them to use the **Tick/Check Mark** (from the dropdown menu under the **Square** tool) to tick all that apply

## Categorising information

Use the **Arrow** tool: on a **Whiteboard slide** have a list of items in a column on the left and 2 boxes on the right. Ask them to allocate the items into the correct box (e.g. open questions/closed questions; characteristics of 2 personality types)

## Draw a picture

Provide a delineated space on a **Whiteboard slide** and ask them to use the **Pencil** or **Pen** tools to draw an image physical drawing – ask them to draw on a blank sheet of paper and hold it up to their **Video camera** (need to tell them to have paper and marker ready beforehand)

## Offline activity

Have a break, including doing some research, preparing a presentation, preparing for a real play

## Small group breakouts (detailed instructions referring to Webex platform)

- Small group activities – discussions or practice - need to be simpler than in face-to-face as you cannot see if they have misunderstood
- Instructions need to be super clear – what to do and what to come back with
- There are no videos in Webex breakouts
- You/the Producer has to unmute people before they go in
- Remember to put your timer on when they start
- You can load instruction slides in the Webex breakouts but this has to be done individually for each group. So, ask them to write down the instructions first, or put them in the workbook
- The person with the ball in each breakout can create their own whiteboard – or they can write on your slide. The allocated presenter can 'pass the ball' i.e. drag the presenter ball from their name to another participant's name if they wish (e.g. if there is someone who is more adept with the tools)
- You have to ask them for permission to bring their whiteboards back to the main room to debrief each group. Rename the title of each one so you know which is which
- Visit each room to check they are ok – or provide feedback. Tell them before the breakouts start if you are going to do this
- When you hit 'End' there is a 30 second delay, then they are cut off and brought back to the main room
- If you have more than 1 breakout in a session, mix up the groups

**Brainstorm on flipchart in 4-6 and report back**

Share the assignments for each breakout group. If you want them to choose which group to join, they can chose using their **Pointer** and your Producer can manually allocate them to the relevant group (or you can with some practise!). If not say they will be in random groups.

The Producer can load a prepared slide with their assignment to each group, with instructions what to do and return with. If you want this can include space for their results, OR they can create their own whiteboard, as they would a flipchart, using the square and line tools to create a grid, and writing using the **text** tool – or even drawing a picture with the pencil.

They can bring back their work to plenary. The breakout group presenter has to give you permission to bring the whiteboard in and it will appear as a new table alongside the slides. Renaming the tabs makes it easier to debrief each group smoothly

**Group debrief**

The person with the ball in the breakout reports back for the group –
or use another debrief method (see x)

**Group feedback tools**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Checking questions** | Use the **Green Tick/Red Cross** in the Feedback tools Use this ALOT. E.g.: 'Give me a green tick if you:<br>• are ready for the breakout'/ are ready to move on'/<br>• are ok with the participation agreements'/ have done the pre-work'<br>• have experience of …'/'find it difficult to ..'/ |
| **Checking in** | Ask them to choose an **Emoticon** in the Feedback tools to describe how they are feeling |

**Energisers**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Standing up** | Suggest they stand up for breakout exercises so they are not sitting for the whole time |
| **Shake** | Simply ask them to get up and have a shake, and sit down. Give you a green tick when they are done |
| **Spot the music** | Play a series of music clips. Have a slide per clip. Ask them to put their **Pointer** and then write with **Text** tool the name of the song |

## Closing activities

| Peer feedback | Ask them to send an appreciative message to their partners in the breakouts via a private **Chat** message |
| --- | --- |
| | In small groups have a photo page or list their names in a slide during a breakout, then ask each person to choose one person to give appreciative feedback to, and either do it as a round table verbally, or via private **Chat** |
| Quiz/test on learning content | Use variety of **Whiteboard slides** – pointer, writing on screen, circling, matching with arrows. Have a slide with the topic heading and exercise followed by a slide of the model to reinforce the learning (e.g. feedback model, GROW model, BECKS, GRIP). Or use a **Poll** or **App** like Kahoot |
| Learning reflection | 'Continuous writing': say you will ring the bell and time for 2 minutes and ask them to start writing whatever comes into their head about what they have taken away without lifting their pen for 2 minutes, and stop when the bell rings again |
| | Give quiet time to do this in their workbooks |
| Action planning | Or run a Silent Coaching exercise – e.g. ask the group to choose their key action. Ask 6 GROW questions to help them develop an action plan for this, pausing after each question to allow them time to think and write their answer |
| Share actions/ takeaways | Verbal round table Or written individual inputs – on **Chat** or a post-it or grid **Whiteboard slide** |

| Further resources | Paste links into the **Chat** for them to copy |
| --- | --- |
| Q&A | This Webex function allows participants to send a private message to the facilitator so that the question does not get lost in the **Chat** box |
| Last slide | Allow them to use any of the tools to send a message before they leave |

## Platform Functionality Matrix

| Video chat and collaboration | Full webinar features | Dedicated learning tools |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | WebinarJam | WebEx Training |
| | GoToWebinar | Adobe Connect for Learning |
| Microsoft teams | | Blackboard Collaborate |
| Skype for Business | Zoom* | WizIQ |

| Often feature: | Often feature: | Often feature: |
| --- | --- | --- |
| • Video and text chat<br>• Screen-sharing<br>• Recording<br>• Whiteboards | • Polls and surveys<br>• Annotations<br>• Raise hands and reactions | • Advanced interactions<br>• Breakout rooms<br>• LMS/VLE integration<br>• Quizzes |

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Everything we do at Kineo and The Oxford Group stems from a simple idea – if we design a better learning experience, together we'll get better results.

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**So, how can we help you?**
Get in touch to discuss how we can support you with converting face-to-face to virtual, or for support on bespoke blends.

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