Lessons Learned for Virtual Workshops

2021 EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION SUMMIT

October 18-20, 2021

earlychildhoodsummit.org

It Starts with Us: Navigating Our Shared Future

1 When using **breakout rooms**, remember:

Recording continues during this time - generally, presenter and moderator are still in the main room. Consider addressing the questions the breakout groups are discussing in order to avoid "dead air" for those who are viewing the recordings at a later date. Above all, keep conversations **on topic** and **professional!**

2 Speaking of **recording...**

Recording begins automatically - please do not turn recording off at any time during your session.

3 Keep **introductions** brief

Be careful of how much time you spend on introducing presenters, especially if there are a number of panelists. Get to the content; if necessary, provide a handout giving more extensive biographies of those presenting.

4 Mom was right - **practice** makes perfect!

If at all possible, do at least one practice run-through with your assigned moderator.

- **Test everything** - volume, transitioning in & out of videos, breakout rooms, polls, any other tools you are planning on using
- Check exactly what participants are seeing on their screens - your left eye only? Your presenter notes?
- Helps solidify whether you have too much/not enough/just the right amount of content
- Helps in staying focused on content - participants quickly lose interest if presenter "wanders"

5 Use pertinent **examples** to make your topic resonate

Use real life, authentic examples and anecdotes to illustrate your points. Theory is great, but remember to tie it directly to what it will look like in the participants' work environments.

6 Provide clear **instructions** for Breakout Rooms

Participants can be shy in Breakout Rooms, and even more so if they aren't sure what the task is. Be sure to give time for participants to ask clarifying questions before they are placed in Breakout Rooms. Consider entering the task in the Chat Box so that groups can refer back if they are unsure of the assignment.

7 Remember the importance of **movement**

Be intentional about including **physical activity** throughout your workshop, either as part of the content or as a planned break. Sitting in front of a computer for long periods can be mind-numbing!

8 Participants work in a variety of **environments**

Summit participants come from Home-based child care, Head Start classrooms, Child care centers, Home visiting programs, Early Intervention, School Districts, Early Learning Resource Centers, Higher Education, and many other settings. Be respectful of all roles, and strive to incorporate different ECE settings in your examples.

9 About those **slides...**

Remember that participants will be viewing your presentation on many different devices. Ensure that the text will be large enough to be **legible**, especially if you were not able to provide slides in advance.

10 Focus on the appropriate **age group** of children

If your title advertises "..for Infants and Toddlers," make sure your content focuses on children ages birth through 2 years. ECE folks generally think of "Infants" as birth - 1 year; "Toddlers" as 1- and 2-year-olds; "Preschool" and "PreK" as 3s and 4s ("PreK" sometimes more focused on 4s); "Kindergarten" as 5s and 6s; and "School-Age" as 6 - 12s, especially the younger half of that group. Your examples, resources, and visuals should depict children of the appropriate age group/s.

11 Check **ambient noise** levels

If your computer emits a loud hum, consider checking to see if you can borrow another. Put your phone notifications on silent during your workshop if at all possible.

12 **Voice modulation** will contribute to your success

Pacing your speed of speaking, shifting your pitch and tone, and emphasizing selected words reflect confidence and help in engaging your audience and convincing them about your material.