

Video 3 script

In the previous parts of this module we discussed the various types of the events which can be delivered in the virtual environment in both synchronous and asynchronous mode. We had a closer look at the steps for preparation and methods and tools to be used. But how to use them and when? How to face and react to the most commonly occurred situations?

Well, we might be mean ☹ and tell you: **PRACTICE, learn and practice and learn and share...**and then carry on until you reach your mastery level.

However, this video part is not for telling you: **do it yourself**. We rather want to **share and show** you the most frequent situations you might face while being a virtual learning facilitator and also give you a hand and tell which method or tool to use in case such a situation occurs.

Many virtual learning sessions begin with the never-ending text slides. You might feel like a talking head wants something from you and is really boring and intruding. Remember our discussion about the various types of engagement and importance of their nurturing? So here we are, **the first very common situation: bored participants, lack of any type of engagement and motivation**. Instead of having eager and motivated participants, we face virtual zombies. What shall we do?

SAY NO TO VIRTUAL ZOMBIES.

Include dynamic, fun and interactive engagements. Consider adding challenges, storytelling opportunities, the opportunity to brainstorm and collaborate. How do we get from zombies to buzzing? Planning for engagement is the secret sauce. The key is to develop a space that promotes the exchange of knowledge, the will to share, and not to forget fun. How to make this happen? Do not worry we can cover it. We will go through some tips and tricks here, but you also can dig into the FAVILLE app - our digital application full of virtual methods, tools and techniques at

<https://favilleapp.ht-apps.eu/>

During your virtual learning lesson or any virtual event try the following:

► **Be entertaining and gregarious**

- **Have a fun welcome activity.** Use your favourite icebreaker which can serve 2 purposes here. First, to get everyone practicing with the IT tools you are using. Secondly, this might be your sly way of checking for possible technical issues. From the FAVILLE app you might choose the COUNT UP method. <https://favilleapp.ht-apps.eu/repository/count-up/>
- **Start with an interesting question.** Not the typical boring one, like “How was your weekend”..... Ask people about their bucket list **vacation destination or guilty pleasure**. It can be asked aloud, or typed in the chat, and be sure you have a welcome slide with the question on it.

Also, define clearly how you want the attendees to respond. Repeat the instructions every few minutes as the people trickle in. Be encouraging but firm. This activity is setting the expectation that interaction will be the name of the game. You are setting the tone that it won't just be a boring talking head meeting or lesson.

► **Create slides that are mini-activities by asking thought-provoking, open-ended questions**

like: What would be the first step you would take if a VIP customer has become non-responsive to your emails? Check the picture and text on the screen – what mistakes do you see?

Do not forget, if all that you are doing is talking through your slides, participants don't need you – record it and send via email.

► **Raise your hands!**

Raise your hand if you know, you are finished with the task or want to start. This is also a slightly different paradigm than in the classroom. In a class, people will just shout out the answer if they know it. In a virtual event, it might be for example: Everyone go to Google and search for “2 EU countries that have the highest birth rate in the last year”. Come back and raise your hand when you have the answer.

► **Use the Whiteboard**

Have the participants brainstorm on the whiteboard! Ask a brainstorming question, “List the attributes of a good virtual facilitator.” Show them how to grab the text tool and write on the screen. You might share the answers with the group after the lesson.

Simply said: **Get people engaged.** Get them on camera, doing / commenting / pressing things every 5 minutes or so. Set tasks. Use breakout rooms to get them working together in smaller groups where there is more accountability, interest and individuals can contribute more easily.

Keep your session on track

Some people say that they find it more challenging to keep things on track when they are facilitating online sessions, but the same principles apply as when you're facilitating in-person events. Use and share an agenda, learning objectives or goals in advance. Flag when one part of the agenda is complete and another is about to start. Create a 'car park' or 'parking lot'. For more details on this go to the FAVILLE app, our digital application. <https://favilleapp.ht-apps.eu/repository/parking-lot/>

Prevent lack of visual feedback

For sure, it might be rather difficult and challenging to spot visual cues and read non-verbal signals online, in comparison to a F2F event. So set the rules and always make sure that delegates have the video on. Be sure, they know it in advance of the session to avoid any issues. Scan facial expressions and body language on gallery view from time to time to see how everyone is doing. Because you are the facilitator, it's important that you make sure that people can see you easily and pick you out from the gallery. A tip is to wear a bright, block colour that pops on screen and doesn't blend in with your

background. Use your hands, speak with some movement and be visual in how you engage and speak to camera. Use your voice as a tool.

...and finally The Chat! Use the Chat!

It's frustrating when presenters turn off the chat function, or only allow for direct questions to the presenter. UGH! If you want engagement, let people talk, and the only way they can talk in a virtual session is through the chat feature. Here are some tips about the chat feature.

- Don't try to control the chat. People will talk about stuff. Let the chat flow.
- The chat will require you to talk and "listen" at the same time. Do not be afraid of telling: Give me a sec so I can catch-up with the chat, I am looking for unanswered questions. They will be cool with that.
- Be sure to read the questions aloud. Some people may have missed the question, you repeating and answering it is quite helpful.
- Address the questions by name, e.g. Miranda. had a question about ... at this point you can throw the question to the audience to see what suggestions they may have. Then wrap up the answer by saying – "Miranda, did that answer your question?"
- Have fun with the chat. "Everyone with me?" If so, type "JAZZ HANDS" in the chat. If not type, "SO LOST".

Of course, we discussed just some of the situations and tools or methods to be used. There is much more in the 3 modules of our course for you.

Easy and funny, right? ☐ and keep in mind, as we said at the beginning: PRACTICE, learn and practice and learn and share...and then carry on until you reach your mastery level and enjoy being a perfect virtual learning facilitator.