

5 Tips for Designing Impactful Virtual Events

1

Define Purpose and Participants

What's the purpose of your event? To inform, to connect, to design, to inspire? Be clear and transparent about what you are trying to do and who you hope to engage. Know what your participants need to know and why they would give valuable time to your event. Ensure your purpose is relevant, timely, engaging and unique.

2

Pick the Platform

Identify the best tools to utilize to achieve your outcomes. Consider what's easy and engaging for your audience. One platform may not meet all of your event needs, so don't be afraid to engage multiple complementary tools.

3

Design for Impact

Develop your event theme and design a story arc. Segment your program to make specific points that tie together and reinforce the theme. Consider how different program segments flow and build in transitions where participants can take a break. Insert short videos to illustrate concepts. Design the arc to wrap with actionable ideas and collective strategy to advance the field.

4

Engage and Connect

Everyone comes to an event as an expert in their space. Create ways for people to be heard. Welcome introductions in the chat box. Set up Google docs for simultaneous sharing. Design polls that surprise. Asks questions for reflection. Coach speakers to not only share their expertise but to wonder, deliberate, and request ideas from participants.

5

Prepare and Produce

Every hour of a virtual event requires three in preparation. Prep with speakers on their content and provide tips to make sure they shine with good lighting and appropriate backgrounds. Prep the technical team with a dry-run where you rehearse transitions and define roles. Prep the moderator with scripts and back-up plans in case of glitches. Block 60-90 minutes before an event for a final walk-through and polish.