



Virtual Education Delivery: 40+ Tips & Strategies



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Background

As educators, members of Behavioural Support Ontario's (BSO) Knowledge to Practice Community of Practice (CoP) experienced a significant shift in education delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic. Infection control regulations required education sessions, including team huddles, in-services and all-day events, to be shifted to a virtual format. Through this experience, educators expanded their skillsets in virtual education delivery. In order to foster collective professional growth, a Knowledge to Practice CoP meeting was held in the spring of 2022 and dedicated to the rich sharing of insights and learned strategies to engage learners virtually. A follow-up survey was extended to the CoP membership to provide any additional insights. The combined tips and strategies have been compiled in this resource with the aim to share valuable learnings amongst seasoned educators, as well as new educators. The strategies are not meant to be prescriptive, but rather ideas to consider when planning and delivering virtual education.

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Interested in joining the BSO Knowledge to Practice CoP?

The Community of Practice meets virtually on the 3rd Thursday of the following months: Jan/April/June/Sept/Nov 9:00 am -10:00 am EDT / EST. If you are interested in joining, please [click here](#) and fill out the form.

Contact Us

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Promoting Virtual Education Sessions



Tips and Strategies

- ✓ Have an up-to-date and comprehensive contact list for your target audience.
- ✓ Create and share a monthly/quarterly/yearly education calendar.
- ✓ Align sessions with [BSO core competencies](#) and learner needs. Consider using the [Knowledge to Practice Planning Worksheet](#) to support the planning and determine the needs of the learners.
- ✓ Promote upcoming sessions during team meetings and existing education sessions. This may include team huddles or at network meetings.
- ✓ Target promotion to various teams. This may include teams in acute care, LTC, community or across sectors.
- ✓ Post promotional material such as posters and information sheets in team areas.
- ✓ Use electronic communication platforms such as email, online newsletters or a monthly communique.
- ✓ Promote on social media in accordance with organizational policies. This may include networks such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.
- ✓ Consider promoting upcoming education sessions to neighbouring regions.



Logistics and Planning for Virtual Education Sessions



Tips and Strategies

- ✓ Stay organized using electronic tools. This may include using Doodle, SurveyMonkey Eventbrite and Outlook calendar. Don't forget to book the required virtual education platform (e.g. Microsoft Teams or Zoom)!
- ✓ Include and highlight meeting details within electronic communications. This may include highlighting key details like passwords in colour, reducing the wordiness of critical details and sending meeting invites that embed details into participants' calendars.
- ✓ Send reminders for scheduled sessions.
- ✓ Provide access to online learning materials when possible.
- ✓ Confirm and coordinate the preferred delivery location for any physical learning materials.
- ✓ Provide participants with a basic tech features guide prior to the session . Ensure participants know how and who to connect with for technical concerns during the session. Consider providing phone connection details for those who can not connect via the video platform.
- ✓ Use reliable technical equipment and services.
- ✓ Test equipment and materials prior to the start of each session. Have your organization's technical support contact details on hand in case of any issues.
- ✓ Plan according to geographical Internet connection limitations. This may include pre-loading learning materials, requesting participant camera and audio be turned off when watching learning videos, and requesting participants turn off any unnecessary bandwidth using devices.



Maintaining Engagement During Virtual Education Sessions



Tips and Strategies

- ✓ Review technical platform features at the beginning of the session. This may include how to mute/unmute, use of the chat pod, reaction icons and raising of hands, and how to turn off video self-view.
- ✓ Communicate shared expectations and virtual education etiquette at the beginning of the session.
- ✓ Facilitate creative ice breakers and introductions.
- ✓ Support learners by using various teaching styles and tools.
- ✓ Use interactive tools such as surveys, polls, break-out rooms, and collective post boards (e.g. Menti and Padlet).
- ✓ Take stalk of learners' goals at the beginning of the session and work to align key concepts with identified goals
- ✓ Relate content to learner experiences. For example, "Have you experienced this before in your practice? Tell us about that."
- ✓ Ask open-ended questions to confirm understanding. This may include frequent knowledge checks and revisiting key concepts.
- ✓ Incorporate frequent breaks and opportunities for physical movement. This may include stand-and-stretch or movement based activities.



Responding to Challenges During Virtual Education Sessions



Tips and Strategies

- ✓ If you notice participant fatigue or disengagement, incorporate additional physical movement, screen breaks, group exercises and content-related activities throughout the session. Let participants know of upcoming breaks.
- ✓ If participants are struggling with technical components, ensure they know who to connect with for technical concerns. Provide any technical tips or alternatives in the moment such as a call-in option, and/or suggest staying on during a break to review any technical features.
- ✓ If there is disruptive background noise, consider muting all participants and encourage unmuting for participation, and the use of other online communication features (e.g. chat box, reactions, etc.).
- ✓ If a participant is monopolizing, find an opportunity to review session expectations and the hope to hear from everyone in the group. Consider adding additional opportunities for pair or group activities.
- ✓ If there is lack of participation, continue to ask open-ended questions that require a response verbally or within the chat pod. Rephrase questions and avoid trying to rapidly fill periods of silence.

Despite our proactive efforts, challenges in virtual education delivery can still arise! It may be helpful to:

1. Communicate openly and honestly
2. Set and revisit session expectations as needed
3. "Keep a pulse" on your group and adjust accordingly
4. Have a back-up plan and be flexible!



Eliciting Feedback On Virtual Education Sessions



Tips and Strategies

- ✓ Use online and/or printed feedback materials. This may include an online link to an external survey website or using embedded platform features.
- ✓ Allow for accessible means of providing feedback. This may include providing alternative feedback methods, such as via telephone or having participants provide feedback privately to the facilitator during the session.
- ✓ Provide opportunities for qualitative feedback from various stakeholders. This may include participants, team leaders or other educators.
- ✓ Ask for informal feedback throughout and after the session.
- ✓ Require formal feedback in order to obtain a certificate of participation, when appropriate.
- ✓ Stay online after completing the education session to allow participants to engage with you, ask questions and provide feedback. Let the participants know you plan to stay on prior to wrapping up.

