This reference sheet was put together to provide you with the virtual presentation creation 10-step process in a highlighted version. For a more in-depth experience, check out the Taking Your Virtual Presentation from Ordinary to Extraordinary video and accompanying worksheet located on the AFDO web site under Resources in the Presenter Toolkit.

STEP #1: IDENTIFY PURPOSE/MAIN MESSAGE

The purpose of your presentation influences the content you will be sharing, your presentation style, and also affects the amount of audience interaction. By nailing down your purpose, you are building a strong foundation for your presentation.

1. Was the topic of your presentation given to you or did you choose it?
   a. Do you need to tap into additional resources to gather more information on your topic if it was given to you? If so, who or what are possible resources?

2. Why are you giving this talk? (to inform, to analyze, to persuade, or to inspire)

3. What's in it for your audience to sit through your presentation?

4. What is the main message of your presentation that you want your audience to walk away knowing or doing differently as a result of your presentation?

STEP #2: ANALYZE AUDIENCE

Knowing about your audience is important to ensuring your depth of content sharing is appropriate.

1. How many people do you expect to attend your presentation? (For example, at a general session expect between 600 – 1000 participants. Breakout sessions can have anywhere from 50 – 300 participants.)

2. What knowledge level do you anticipate your audience to already have about your topic? (For example, at a traditional education conference you will have anywhere between experts and first year experience participants.)

STEP #3: LIST PRESENTATION CONTENT

Now that you have determined the purpose/main message of your presentation and have evaluated your audience, it's time to brainstorm all the content you would like to support the main message of your presentation. Use an outline, bullet points, or any other method that is most comfortable for you.

STEP #4: REFINE CONTENT

Break down your content from step #3 into three main points… if you want it to be memorable for your audience. This will become the middle of your presentation. Each main message point should have identified subtopics. Avoid putting too much detail in your outline.

(Three main points are based on a 20-minute presentation. Adjust according to the length of your presentation and type of presentation.)

1. Main Point #1
   a. Subtopic
   b. Subtopic
2. Main Point #2
   a. Subtopic
   b. Subtopic
3. Main Point #3
   a. Subtopic
   b. Subtopic

STEP #5: CREATE A POWERFUL INTRODUCTION

You have about 60 seconds to capture your audience's attention, establish credibility, orient them to your topic, and motivate them to listen. Here are some options for how to start your presentation in a way that will make your audience tune in!

- Tell a story
  - Storytelling can increase audience retention by up to 26%.
- Share a video clip (No more than 60 seconds.)
- Use humor (Humor should be well thought out. Know your audience and make sure it's appropriate.)
- Share a shocking statistic
- Share a captivating visual/gripping photo
- Quote an influential person
- Incite curiosity
- Ask a question
- Use a prop

Most of these presentation starters are successful because they appeal to human emotions such as curiosity, awe, surprise, or fear.

1. How will you grab your audience's attention during your virtual presentation introduction? What will your first 60 seconds look and sound like?

STEP #6: INCORPORATE AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

Audience engagement is a must for ensuring an extraordinary virtual presentation. The attention span of a typical audience last about 5 minutes before you run the risk of losing them.

Here are some suggestions for engaging your audience throughout your presentation.

- Pick a theme for your presentation. Weave the theme throughout your presentation.
- Have an interesting or unique title for your presentation.
- Ask thought-provoking questions to your audience that are relevant to the main message of your presentation.
- Share stories to illustrate a list of information.
- Share a simplified diagram to represent a body of data.
- Make your presentation into a game for your audience.
- Have a downloadable handout for your audience to fill out as you present.
- Play music.

- Share appropriate humor.
- Change up your visual aesthetics. Don't use just one visual throughout your presentation. This will hold your audience's attention because they won't want to miss anything.
  - PowerPoint Slides
  - Props/Costume
  - Your Facial Expressions
  - Video Clip
  - Photographs
- Zoom Platform
  - Chat
  - Polling
  - Reactions

Look back at your main points and subtopics in step #4.
1. Where can you add in audience engagement? Make sure each engagement makes sense and provides value to your audience.

STEP #7: CREATE MEMORABLE CONCLUSION

The ending of your presentation is extremely important because your audience will remember a presentation's beginning and ending most clearly. Here are some options for ending with a "BANG" instead of a "fizzle".

- Share an inspirational quote that emphasizes the main message of your presentation.
- Summarize two of three main points of your presentation.
- Echo the core message of your presentation. Repeating a theme of core message mentioned in your introduction can create a powerful conclusion. You can do this by:
  - Setting up a question in your introduction and finishing your presentation by answering it.
  - Concluding a story that you started during your presentation.
  - Give your presentation a memorable title, then share that title at the end of your presentation for your conclusion.
- Present a strong call-to-action.
- Share a brief story. Make sure the story is related to the main points of your presentation. The story should also be relatable to your audience and encourage empathy.
- Share a visual image.
- Ask a rhetorical question. This will ensure your audience will continue to think about your presentation long after it has concluded.

1. How will you create a memorable conclusion for your audience to experience? What will your conclusion look and sound like?

STEP #8: ADD VISUAL DESIGN ELEMENTS

Visual design elements can include using a prop, sharing a video clip, or using PowerPoint slides to compliment the presentation message you are sharing with your audience.

1. Where in your presentation can you use visual design elements to compliment the content you are sharing?

STEP #9: TIME OUT PRESENTATION

Timing out your presentation is one of those final steps that is absolutely critical to ensuring an extraordinary presentation. To do this go through each of the sections of your presentation and write down the planned time that it should take. Make sure to add in extra time for participant interactions.

1. How much time were you given for your presentation?

2. How much time will your introduction take?

3. How much time will the middle main message point sharing part of your presentation take?

4. How much time will your conclusion take?

If your presentation is too long, ask yourself the following questions.
1. Do I have too much content in the introduction, middle, or conclusion of my presentation?

2. What content can I remove that is not directly related to my presentation main message I wrote in step #1?

3. Do I have too much audience interaction for the allotted time of my presentation? If yes, what can be removed?

STEP #10: PRACTICE OUT LOUD

We all sound brilliant in our minds but then the words come out… sometimes not the way we envisioned. Practicing out loud is a must to having an extraordinary virtual presentation.

Here are some tips to keep in mind while practicing out loud.
- Do not read from your notes while presenting virtually. Your audience will know you are reading from a script and all of the sudden your presentation becomes a lot more formal and distancing.
- Know your message points from step #4. Use these as a guide to sharing your presentation.
- Practice out loud **at least three times** prior to presenting. Do this in front of a mirror, so you can also evaluate your body language.
- Practice out loud at least once virtually using the virtual platform and virtual tools for audience interaction.
- Practice how you will introduce participant interactions and how you will respond to audience responses through "chat, "polling", or "reactions".

While practicing out loud, evaluate the following.
- Your background and how it translates on the virtual background.
- Is your camera looking up your nose or at the side of your head?
- Are you in the center of the screen?
- Is your head being cut off by your camera?
- Is your background distracting to your audience?
- Is your outfit appropriate for your presentation?

Evaluate how your body language is translating to your virtual audience.
- Are you smiling?
- Are you conveying enthusiasm for your topic?
- Are you using your hands while talking to draw your audience in?
- Are you using appropriate voice inflection? Do you sound conversational?
- How can you use your body language and voice inflection to create more impact while sharing messages?
- How can you use pausing to draw attention to information you are sharing?
- Are you making eye contact with your virtual audience?
- Are you using "umms" and "uhhs"?

Congratulations!

Through focused effort and time, you have created an extraordinary virtual presentation that will be an impactful and memorable experience for your audience.