Implementing Large-Scale Workforce Training With Webinars

2016 CEANY Conference

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Diane Hodurski-Foley, MPA
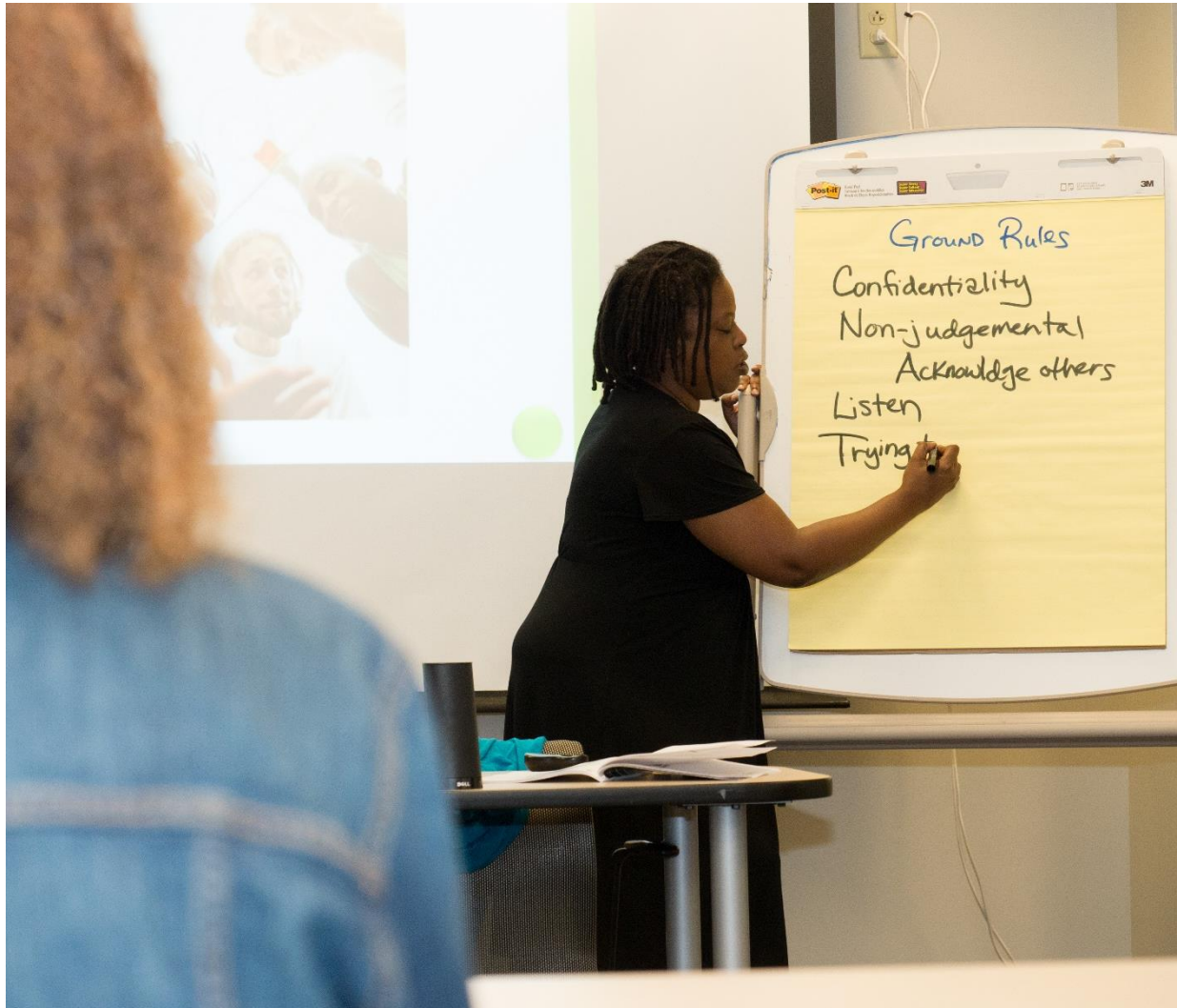
Professional Development Program Rockefeller College University at Albany

Implementing Large-Scale Workforce Training With Webinars

Deanna Cooper, PhD and Diane Hodurski-Foley, MPA

The Shift: From Traditional Classrooms

The Shift: To Virtual Classrooms

Session Agenda

- PDP Use of Webinars

- What Is An ABAWD?

- Why Use Webinar
  For ABAWD Training

- Considerations:
  - Planning

  - Course Design

  - Implementation

- Lessons Learned

- Best Practices

Session Objectives

By attending this session, you will learn:

✓ Best practices for using webinars for implementing learner programs

✓ Practical considerations for planning, designing, and implementing a large-scale workforce training initiative

✓ Creative ways to respond to emerging learner needs in a shifting program landscape

Background on PDP

PDP's Strength

Transforming policy into practice:

- Ability to bridge between policy and practice

- Ability to rapidly respond to emerging needs

- Ability to adjust to changing conditions

Mission

- To provide education, training, research and evaluation in support of the public workforce, government agencies, not-for profits, and affiliated organizations

Vision

- Helping government become more efficient

Value

- Furthering the university's public and community service mission (community engagement)

- Respond to emerging workforce development needs

- Provide Continuing Professional Education (CPE) for the public workforce (training and technical assistance)

- Creating opportunities for faculty and students

- Bridging policy and practice

PDP's Historical Trademark

Ability to:

- Work with diverse groups

- Cut through bureaucracy

- Be resourceful and creative

- Be results oriented

- Deliver "just-in-time" training

Implementing Large-Scale Workforce Training With Webinars

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
ROCKEFELLER COLLEGE UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY State University of New York

PDP Use of Webinars

Experienced With a Variety of Webinar Products

- Various versions of LearnLinc/ iLinc Virtual Classroom (2002-2015)

- Live Remote Classroom (2005-2011)

- Adobe Connect (2011-2015)

- GoToMeeting/GoToWebinar (2011-present)

- iLinc 12 Virtual Classroom/Webinar (Nov 2015-present)

Common Features of Webinar Products

- Accessibility

- Often requires paid licenses

- Maximum number of participants

- Supports small to large-scale workforce learning programs for participants in disparate locations

- Realizes efficiencies

Common Features of Webinar Products

- Interactive tools and polling

- Screen and application sharing

- Requires headset with microphone or phone access

- Affected by network conditions/capabilities at host and participant sites

- Recording features

What Is An ABAWD?

What Is An ABAWD?

Able-

Bodied

Adult

Without

Dependents

Target Audience

- Staff within the 57 NYS social services districts:
  - County staff
  - Service providers
  - Contractors
- State staff in six NYS regions
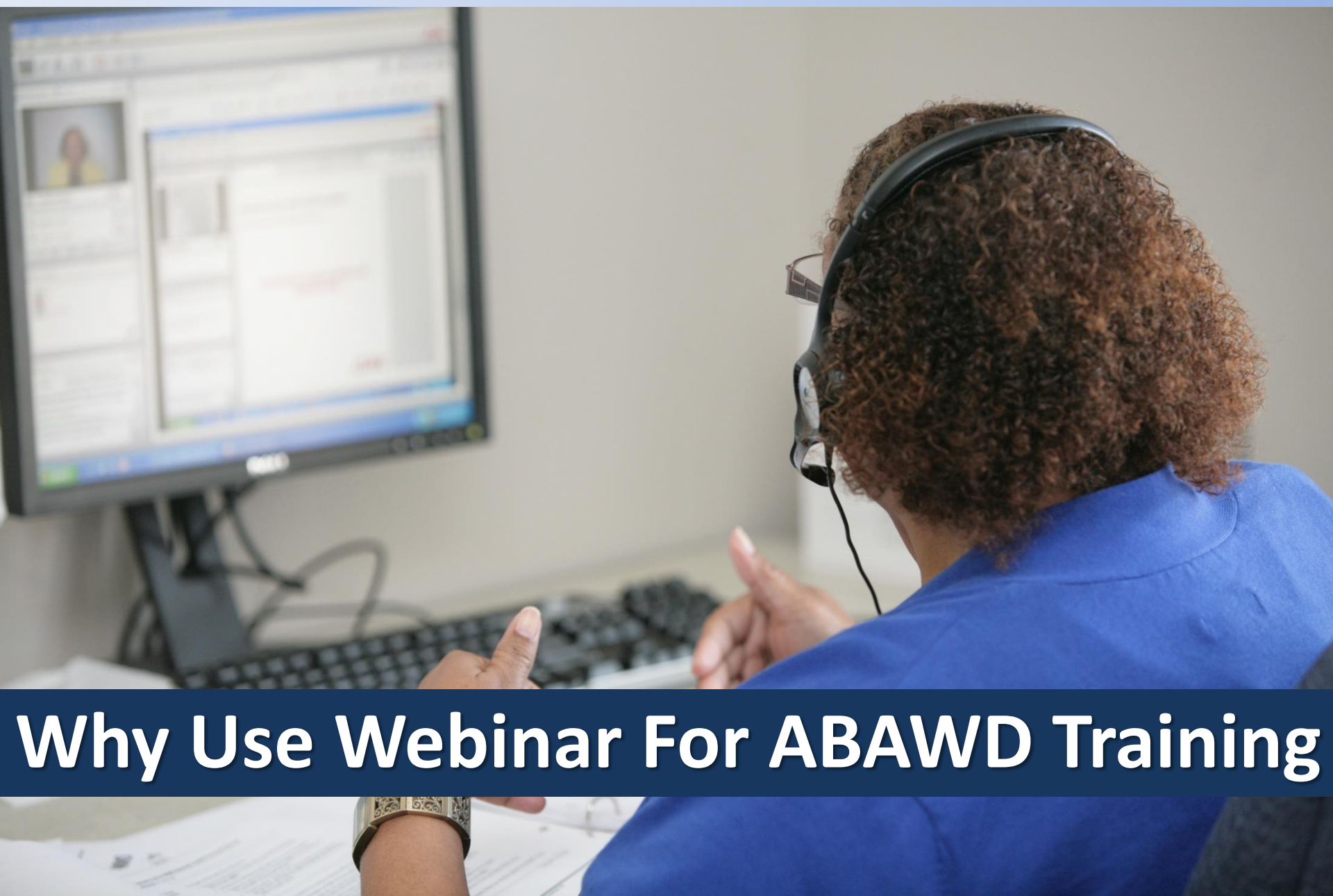
Target Audience

- Estimate of 4,200 staff

- Mix of worker functions

    - Employment

    - SNAP

    - Temporary Assistance

- Mix of job titles

    - Line staff

    - Supervisors

    - Local trainers

Why Use Webinar For ABAWD Training

Why Use Webinar For ABAWD Training

- Teach geographically dispersed and diverse workforce of 4,200 staff between November 2015 and January 2016

- Continue regular deliveries for new and reassigned workers

- Suitable method for teaching the content

- Consistency in delivery content, message, and format

Why Use Webinar For ABAWD Training

- Create the course series based on emerging federal/state policies within a short period of time

- Interactivity for active learning

- Instructor-led with Q&A for learning and custom situations
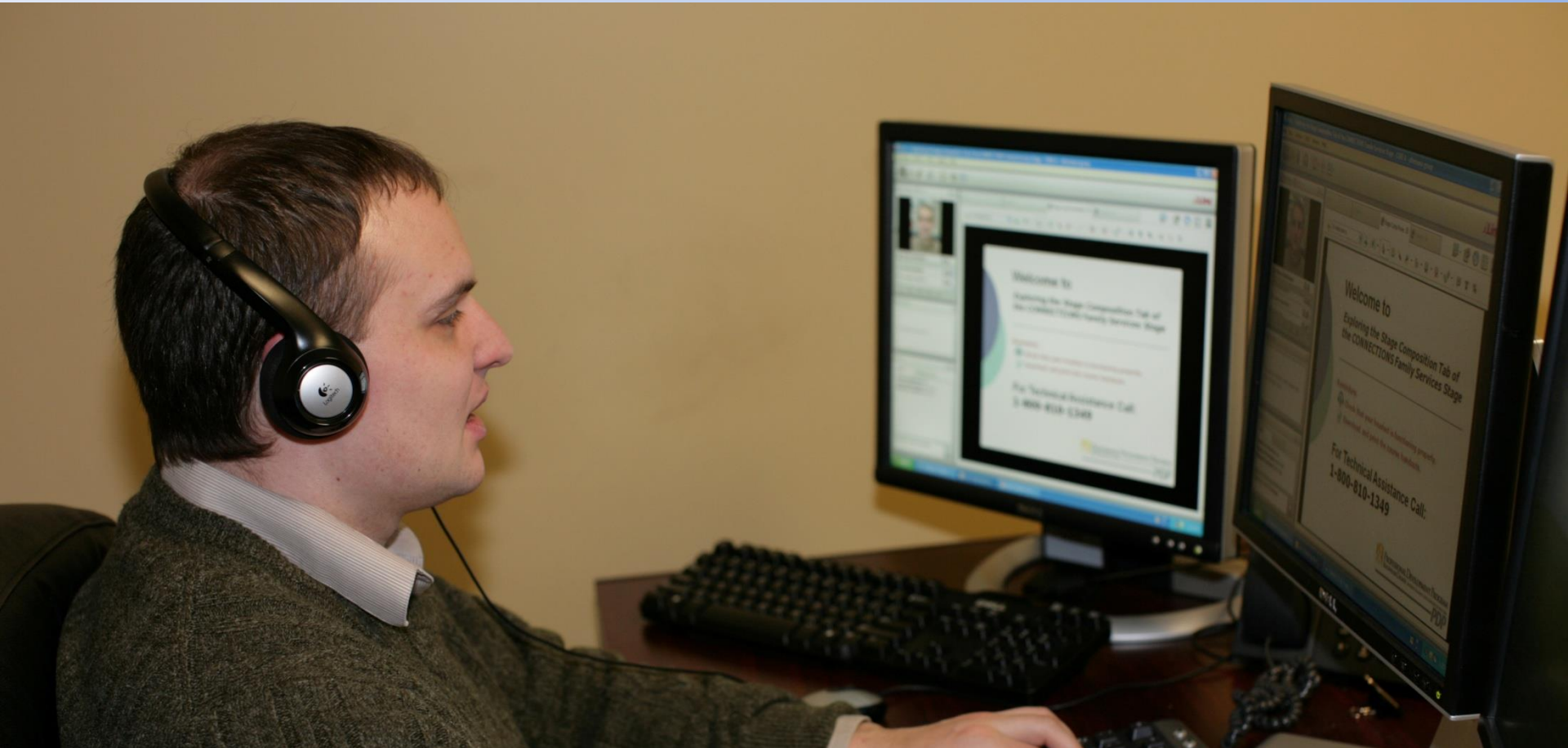
- Policy experts participate

Why Use Webinar For ABAWD Training

- Distribute job aids for key tasks and decision-making; teach how to use these on the job

- Multiple sessions due to participant availability

- Course could be recorded for on-going training or as an on-the-job resource

Considerations: Planning, Course Design, and Implementation

Considerations: Planning

- Length of course

- Timeline

- Resources

  – Instructors

  – Funding

  – Experts / Source Materials

- Number of participants and deliveries

Considerations: Planning

- Availability:
  - Broadcast locations/ rooms
  - Instructor
  - Experts
  - Participants

Considerations: Planning

- Audience and webinar technology
  - Access (headset, microphone, computer, network)
  - Proficiency

- Announcing the course

- Registration: How?

- Materials: What and how disseminated?

Considerations: Course Design

- Delivery format:

    – How many instructors?

    – Need a moderator?

- Length (over 2 hours is not recommended)

- If multi-part training, how to ensure consistency

- Suitability for webinar

- Maximize planned use of interactive tools

Considerations: Course Design

- Create a design plan, content outline, objectives, and activities

- Visuals, handouts, and job aids

- Time for open Q&A

- Vetted script

- Course evaluation

Considerations: Implementing

- Test and troubleshoot equipment and technology

- Instructor learning, practice, and training simulations

- Scheduling, piloting, and launching

- Finalizing materials plus retrieval or dissemination

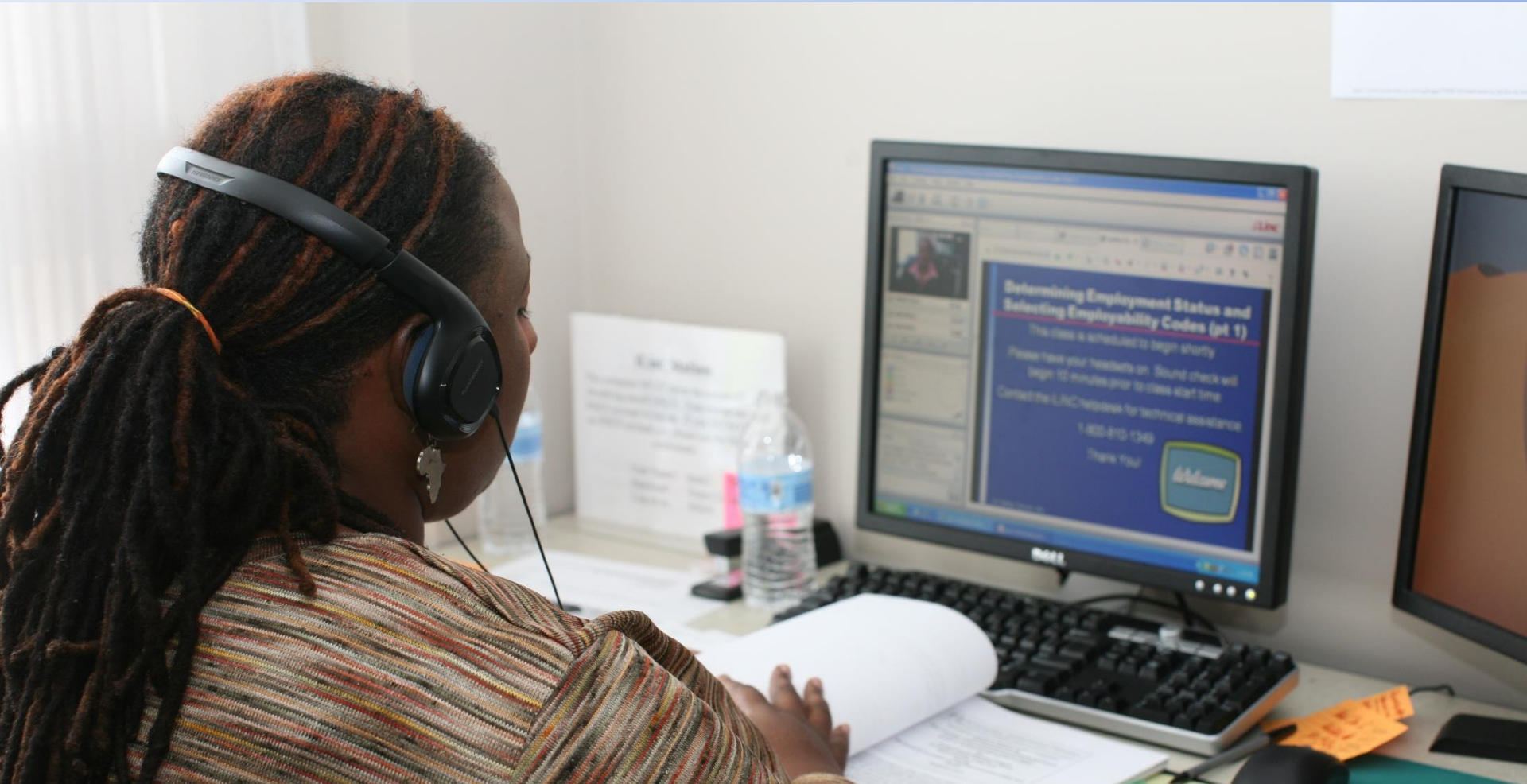- Communicating with target population (changes in materials)

Considerations: Implementing

- Monitoring/confirming registrations

- Point person to field questions

- Reporting (attendance, evaluation, progress)

Lessons Learned

Planning and Preparation is Key

- Have 2 instructors for large classes:
  - 1 presents
  - 1 monitors chat & troubleshoots tech
- Co-locate instructors in the same room
- Document sharing and other features, only when necessary

Practice, Practice, Practice

- Make sure instructors are well-trained

- All involved parties need to practice their roles (course content & use of technology)

- Use mock participants

- Field test the equipment (broadcast & participant sites)

- Pilot the course

Communicate, and Then Communicate Again

- Keep all involved parties in the communication loop

- If you encounter a problem, give all a chance to evaluate it from their perspectives

- When best practices are found, share them with all so that all can benefit

Don't Permit Congregate Viewing

- We were required to support this, *against our better judgments,* but you may not have to

- Webinars are not webcasts or videos

Best Practices

Best Practice: Think it Through

We developed a working procedural document for planning, organizing, and presenting a webinar.

Planning Best Practices

- Know your product's capabilities

- Develop planning forms

- Develop job aids and task lists

- Brainstorm what needs to happen and what can go wrong, then make a plan for it

Planning Best Practices

- Train all of your staff on procedures and technology:

  - Instructors
  - Support staff
  - IT staff
  - Subject Matter Experts

Course Presentation Best Practices

- Enter virtual classroom at least 30 minutes before start to test:
  - Content
  - Tools
  - Links

- Include a brief orientation to webinar tools

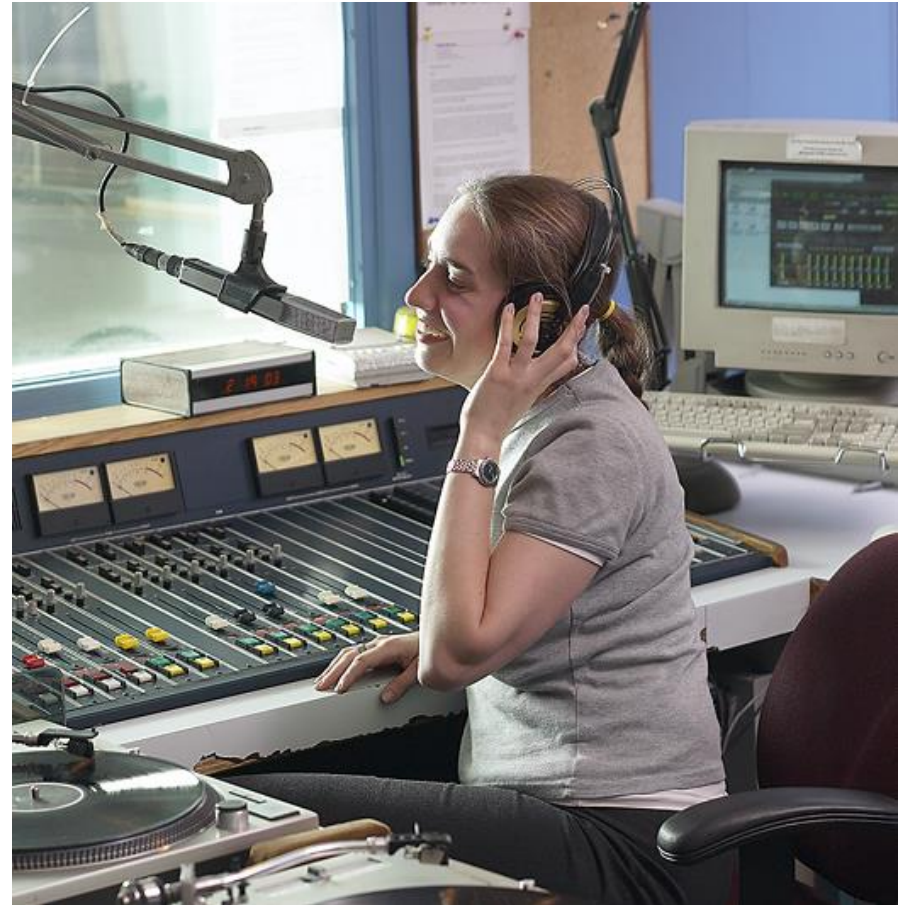- Save attendance list and text chat

- Debrief and refine

Handling Technical Difficulties Best Practices

If technical difficulties occur, keep talking!

- Remember, you are "on the radio"

- Communicate what is happening and what is being done about it

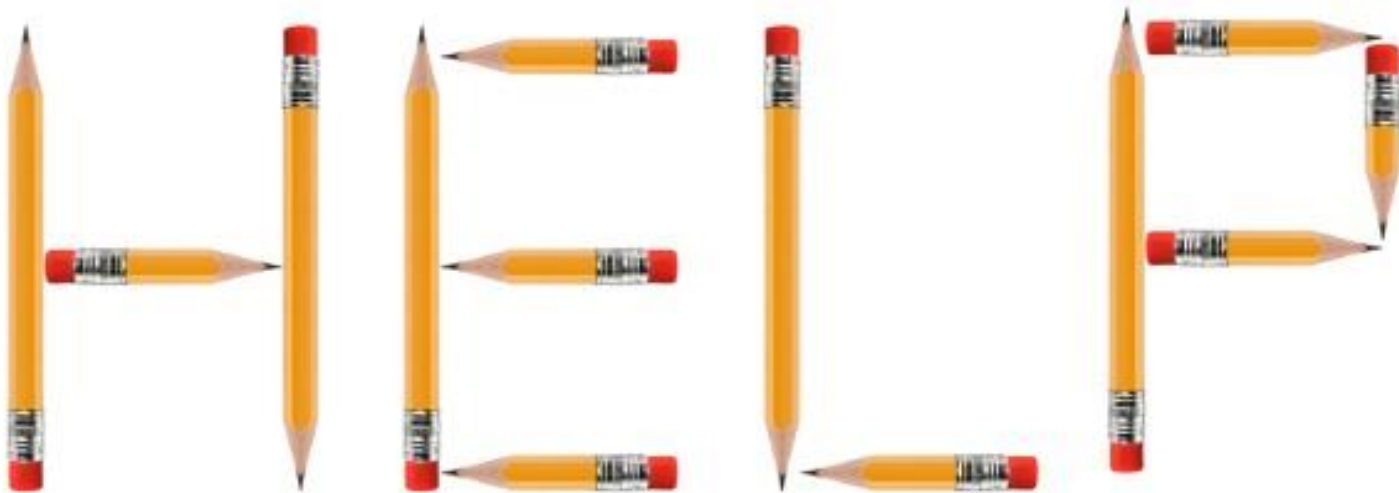- It is OK to pause course to deal with problems, but narrate throughout

Handling Technical Difficulties Best Practices

Have a technical difficulties plan that includes:

- Readily available information for contacting help desk or in-house IT support (for instructors & participants)

- Back up plans for when aspects of the technology don't work

Best Practice: Expect the Unexpected and Plan for it

We developed a log of possible technical difficulties and how to troubleshoot each issue.

Learner Engagement Best Practices

- Allow for interaction
  - Yes/No buttons
  - Polling
  - Raise hand to speak
  - Brainstorm in chat area
- Use meaningful images to engage the learner
- Change slides/images often
- For interactive elements, provide the answers immediately

Learner Engagement Best Practices

- Direct trainees to use the text chat area for questions

- Use participant's name in your response so it is known to whom you are responding

- Have one instructor dedicated to monitoring and responding in the text chat area

Best Practice: Keep Things Moving

We developed an FAQ document for a text grab; this allowed for a quick, comprehensive, spell-checked response.

And finally, acknowledge and enjoy your success!

Summary

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