

How do you ensure a higher participation rate on virtual learning workshops?

steps

As we move to a hybrid model of working, it's becoming more challenging for participants to engage with virtual learning. So how do you address the key questions and barriers they have?

WHY SHOULD I GO?

1

Create a promo! If it is for the first session, it can be the Lead Facilitator talking them through how the session will run and what to expect. For later sessions, have leaders or colleague advocates who have been on the workshop talk about their experience - hearing this from people they trust makes a difference.

WHAT IS IN IT FOR ME?

2

Use written communications, a promo or other meetings to remind people why this session was designed in the first place! What its objectives are, how it links to the organisation's strategy and values, why it's important to the individual and their development. All answering the question of why it's worth them taking time out to be there.

MY MANAGER CAN'T SPARE ME

3

Engage with the managers at an early stage. Ask them to support those participating by blocking out time for the session, asking prospective participants to think beforehand what they want to get out of it and then following up with them afterwards to find out what they learnt. Make this session a part of the individual's wider development and career progression - and a key part of their working day.

I MEANT TO ATTEND, BUT I LOST TRACK OF TIME

4

Reminders, reminders, reminders. This can be done via email, text, Slack - whatever method you use internally that you know will get people's attention. Think of setting up a virtual group for the participants of each workshop beforehand - it's a great way send reminders and pre reading/videos (and you can use it afterwards for follow up such as post-learning material, nudges and setting up buddying/support groups).

IT'S TOO LONG/AT THE WRONG TIME OF DAY

5

Define the optimum length and audience for your workshop. What do you know works in your organisation - are people more likely to give it one dedicated amount of time or is it worth splitting the learning through pre-work, live in session, and post-workshop learning? Does a particular time of the day seem to be better attended? Monitoring the programme over time to spot these trends can be helpful.

AND ONCE THEY'RE IN THE SESSION - SURPRISE THEM!

We use drama-based techniques and innovative methodologies such as the Steps Studio to make the experience feel closer to the live-in-the-room experience than to a webinar. The interactive nature of our work and its power to enable social learning is unexpected for participants - leading to a high level of engagement and the session being recommended to their colleagues. So, whatever your choice of delivery technique - don't be afraid to inspire people differently!