

Before the Webinar

Hosting a good webinar is like hosting a regular meeting or training. Preparation and knowledge are the most important tools.

- **Practice with the webinar application** – Learn your webinar application. Be comfortable with the features you wish to use.
- **Solicit ideas and narrow topics** – A webinar should not be too broad. Communicate with participants and gain their input. Narrow your topics down to the essentials.
- **Invite early, use reminder emails and RSVP's** – The earlier you invite participants, the more likely it is that they will receive the emails and be able to attend. Most webinar applications will automatically send a reminder email before the start time and some will allow RSVPs. If you have not received many RSVPs, resend the invitation or reschedule.
- **Create an outline** – Know what you are going to discuss and make a plan. With an outline, you will be able to stick to your topics and send it to participants so that they can prepare as well.
- **Set a maximum number of participants** – Like every meeting, the more people that participate the harder it is to run. Though participants are not physically present, too many can tax presenters.

Webinar Information

A webinar, or web conference, is a way to host a meeting or training over the Internet. For more information on webinars, please see “HAPSavers – Webinar Overview” and for information on choosing a webinar application, please see “HAPSavers – Choosing a Webinar Vendor.”

During the Webinar

- **Be flexible** – Despite planning, be open to changes. People are often late to webinars and often have to leave unexpectedly. Be ready to field questions and go off topic. For webinars with instant feedback features, pay attention to audience response.
- **Speak slowly and clearly** – Because you are not face to face with the people you are speaking with, speak loudly and enunciate, maintaining a proper distance from the microphone. Remember, people will not be able to see body language.
- **Provide support contacts** – During the webinar you will not be able to troubleshoot technical problems. Provide your webinar vendor's support number where participants can receive help.
- **Take advantage of the webinar environment** – Webinars have an audio *and* visual component. Prepare a presentation that has something your participants can look at or interact with. If applicable, make use of desktop control.
- **Mute phones** – Muting participants' phones (except at certain times) will eliminate background noise for better audio. This also allows for specific question and answer periods.
- **Co-presenter** – Having a co-presenter allows one person to talk and the other to operate the webinar application or “drive.” This enables your webinars to run more efficiently.

After the Webinar

- **Follow-up emails** – Many webinar applications will allow you to send a follow-up email to participants. Make yourself available for questions so that you can gauge effectiveness.
- **Summary and webcasts** – Provide notes, outlines, and PowerPoint's to aid participants. If you recorded the webinar, you can make the presentation available online for review at a later time.
- **Polls and feedback** – Feedback is important for your future webinars. If your webinar application has a poll, survey, or similar feature, you can use it to gain feedback on both the content and style of your meeting. Follow up with participants to remind them to provide their perspective.