Top tips for delivering digital skills sessions remotely

Now, more than ever, it's vital that people have digital skills to stay connected. Network Partners might not be able to deliver sessions physically, but many are still wanting to help keep their community upskilled and connected. Below are some useful tips to help you deliver digital skills sessions via webinar or videoconferencing software.

Hold a practice session first

For many learners, logging onto a webinar to communicate with others can be daunting at first, especially if they are new to using technology and the internet. By holding a practice session first, learners can familiarise themselves with the videoconferencing platform you're using and this, in turn, will minimise distractions from the lesson you're teaching. The practice session can be a quick 15-minute session the day before. Alternatively, for learners new to the platform you can open up the webinar early for them to join and familiarise themselves with the software.

Set yourself up correctly

You wouldn't turn up to a face-to-face digital skills session unprepared and without having checked everything's working properly - it's the same for an online digital skills session. Prior to your session, log into the webinar/videoconferencing software a few minutes early to make sure everything's working as it should and you like the way you are presenting yourself. It's important to check your lighting and your background to ensure learners aren't distracted or struggling to see you on the screen. Also during the meeting try to look into the camera lens, this gives the impression that you're looking at your learners.

Take more breaks than usual

Delivering a digital skills session over the internet can be particularly draining for both you and your learners. Allowing more time for breaks can help with everyone's focus and your learners will appreciate the extra time to get up and stretch their legs or make a cup of tea. We recommend a short 5-10 minute break every half an hour. Remember to get learners to put themselves on mute during the break.

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Encourage the use of webcams

At first, your learners might be a little reluctant to turn on their webcam and see themselves on the screen. Encouraging them to give it a go allows for more social interaction in your sessions. It might also build their confidence enough to video chat with friends or loved ones after your session! Also, the ability to see your learner's faces is important as some people won't always tell you when they're confused or lost in the material but their facial expressions often do.

If in doubt, ask for help

Delivering digital skills sessions remotely can not only be challenging for your learners but also for you as a digital mentor. At Good Things Foundation, we have a wealth of experience in delivering training sessions, webinars and meetings remotely. Please give us a call or send us an email if you'd like any support with getting started or if you find yourself stuck on a problem. Alternatively, the Network Partner Facebook group is a great resource to ask questions and stay in touch with your fellow Network Partners.