NACUFS Speaker Guide

Tips and Techniques for Developing and Delivering a Great Conference Session

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Speaking: A Privilege & a Responsibility

Congratulations...and Thank You!

It’s a privilege and an honor to be selected to speak for NACUFS; thank you for agreeing to join us! We believe your contribution will help create a quality learning event for collegiate food service professionals.

Speaking at the conference is also a responsibility...you play a critical role in the overall success of the educational programming. Everyone – especially those who attend your session – will depend on you to lead the best session possible.

NACUFS wants to support your success! The information in this speaker guide and in the online video micro-lessons, based on years of learning research and experience, is designed to help you offer a great session to your learners. First, view the four videos on the speaker resources page. Then review this guide; focus first on areas that will be of most help. Become familiar with the rest as reference tools for designing and developing your session.

Added bonus: You’ll be able to use the tips and techniques offered here for any learning opportunity or business presentation you lead for NACUFS or elsewhere. These skills are transferable!

Your Audience’s Expectations

When asked what they want and expect from learning opportunities, NACUFS members said they look for high-quality, relevant, effectively delivered content that will help them do their jobs better. You’re part of the team that will help us do that!

Extensive research has identified and clearly shown the impact of key principles in the ways adults learn. Your session will be much stronger if you engage participants in learning the content rather than simply telling them what you know.

We know that adults...

• Are active and self-directed
• Bring their life experiences to learning
• Have a “readiness to learn” based on their personal circumstances
• Need to know the relevancy of learning to their specific challenges
• Want learning that is immediately applicable
• Learn best in an informal atmosphere
• Can learn from each other as well as from the speaker(s)

Neuroscience – the study of our brains – has also given us clues for making learning more effective. Among other things, our brains seek engagement, visual stimulus, and variety.

You’ll find tips and techniques for using these principles and practices in this speaker guide and in the video micro-lessons on the NACUFS website.

Additional resource: How Adults Learn and Why It’s Relevant Visit the speaker resources page at https://nacufs.org/speaker-resources
Speaker Roles & Responsibilities

Introduction

As a speaker for a NACUFS conference learning opportunity, you join an elite group of professionals who share their extensive knowledge with their peers. How you approach designing and delivering your session depends in part on how many people will be delivering it.

Your most important responsibility is to ensure your session enables your audience to learn and apply what you share with them. That’s the case whether you’re leading your session alone or as part of a team.

Certain responsibilities are common to all speakers:
- Keep focused on your learners as you create your session
- Maintain open lines of communication with relevant NACUFS staff
- Meet all relevant deadlines
- Show up at your session room 15 minutes early
- Meet briefly with your room moderator to discuss final details
- Deliver the session promised in conference materials

Solo or Team of Two

As a solo speaker, you’re responsible for everything related to your session. When you have a partner, unless you purposefully divide responsibilities, it can be easy for things to inadvertently be overlooked. And, because there are two of you, it can require more planning and practice.

Work closely with your partner to decide how you will work together on things like:

Before the session
- Communicating with staff and ensuring both of you get all relevant information
- Taking the lead on compiling a single slide file
• Preparing a unified handout
• Delivering session materials to NACUFS as directed by staff
• Handling content delivery – will you bounce off each other, each take on specific content sections, or…?
• Practicing together in advance to ensure balance and smooth transitions – it’s important you each know what the other will be saying and doing

During the session
• Supporting each other
  • How and when to intervene when the other is “on”
  • Assisting each other in engaging the audience
• Taking advantage of there being two of you, e.g. with small-group activities, role-plays, modeling, or point-counterpoint discussions

Team of Three to Four
If you’re part of a panel, great! There are more people contributing to your session’s success. However, you’re more than just one of several speakers...you’re an integral part of the whole. In addition to everything a team of two has to consider, panel members also need to think about:

  • Session format: will it be a conversation among you, or separate short content segments connected by a moderator?
  • Who will serve as moderator?
  • What will the moderator’s role be? At minimum, the moderator typically introduces panel members, facilitates transitions, manages Q&A, and is the link between the audience and the panel.
  • How you’ll transition from one speaker to the next (never just “wing it”).

The bottom line: your goal, regardless of how many speakers are leading your session, is to create seamless, maximum learning value for your participants.
Preparing Your Session for Delivery

*It usually takes me three weeks to prepare a good impromptu speech.*

– Mark Twain

Since conference sessions aren’t impromptu speeches, it’s likely to take a while to prepare them! The more effectively you plan, the more relaxed and engaged you’ll be during the session.

Effective planning and preparation helps ensure you are:

• Polished and relaxed
• Confident
• Comfortable with your content and with engaging the audience

The result? A higher likelihood your session will be rated well and, more importantly, a greater chance your participants will learn from the experience.

**Know Your Audience**

Knowing the target audience most likely to be interested in your topic is critical for developing an effective learning experience. Generally, the sessions that tend to receive the highest participant evaluations are those that clearly target audiences, tightly focus on a topic, are executed well, and actively engage participants.

**The NACUFS Audience**

Session audiences at the NACUFS National Conference range in size from 15-70 people. They represent a wide variety of collegiate food service professionals, including dining service directors, executive chefs, residential dining managers, C-store managers, catering coordinators, dietitians, and campus administrators. In addition to different positions, participants in your session will likely have a range of experience levels in both foodservice and higher education.

Keeping this diversity in mind as you prepare will go a long way towards a successful outcome. As you plan your session, focus on what will be of *value to your audience* rather than on what you want to share – a subtle yet very important distinction.
Writing & Meeting Session Learning Objectives

Learning objectives help you keep your session content focused on learner needs. In their simplest form, learning objectives answer this question:

What should the audience know or be able to do when your session is over?

Additional resource: Writing Good Learning Objectives
Visit the speaker resources page at https://nacufs.org/speaker-resources

Knowing outcomes in advance serves two important roles – one for learners, and one for speakers.

• For learners: Objectives help people decide which conference sessions they want to attend. Objectives also help learners evaluate a session when it’s over based on how well the objectives were accomplished for them.

• For you, the speaker: Objectives help you develop your session plan. Once you’ve written good objectives, use them as a filter to decide what content to include so those objectives are achieved. In other words, give priority to the content learners need to know to meet the learning objectives.

How many objectives?

The number of learning objectives is driven by session length – they need to be realistically achievable within the available time frame. Here’s a generally accepted guideline:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Frame</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 minutes</td>
<td>1 objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 minutes</td>
<td>1-2 objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 minutes</td>
<td>1-3 objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90 minutes to 2 hours</td>
<td>2-3 objectives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Three types of objectives

All effective learning objectives are behavior-based and learner-centered. That is, they’re always written from the learner’s perspective. They’re also active-voiced, describing what results will look like. Words like learn, know, or understand are not observable and therefore should not be used.

The content you will share with your audience falls into one or more of three categories: attitude development, skill development, or knowledge development.

On the next page is a sample list of action verbs to choose from for each type of objective, and a sample objective for each type. This is not a complete list; there are many other similar action verbs! The key is to use verbs that indicate observable behavior.
## Sample Action Verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of learning</th>
<th>Related action verbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attitude development</strong></td>
<td>adjust, analyze, assess, choose, criticize, decide, evaluate, recall, select, support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate when you want to change people’s attitudes or increase their awareness of or sensitivity to certain issues or ideas.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Example:</strong></td>
<td>Following the session, participants will be able to analyze their business strategies for developing partnerships.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Skill development** | compute, design, develop, measure, write, demonstrate, prove, prepare, solve, speak |
| Appropriate when a specific task or procedure needs to be performed. |
| **Example:**          | Following the session, participants will be able to write a plan for low-cost marketing efforts. |

| **Knowledge development** | cite, compare, define, describe, differentiate, identify, contrast, list, recognize, repeat |
| Appropriate when the learner needs to demonstrate acquired knowledge, comprehend information, and/or analyze concepts. |
| **Example:**          | Following the session, participants will be able to recognize trends that will impact their business success. |
Delivering the Promised Content

Credibility – NACUFS’ and yours – is on the line when it comes to meeting learner expectations. It can be fun to surprise and delight participants; however, never let that surprise be something that’s not focused with laser-like precision on the learning objectives.

Use your objectives as a content filter. It’s likely you’ll have more content than can be comfortably covered in the time allotted.

Shift your thinking from...

**What content do I have to cover?**

to

**What content will best contribute to accomplishing the learning objectives?**

Give priority to that *need-to-know* content!

*Your primary goal in developing your session should be participant learning,* not providing a showcase for your own ideas, opinions, experiences, products, or services. Providing great value to participants, including things they can put to use right away, will give you the exposure you’d like to have.

In other words, put yourself in the learner’s place, and create a learning opportunity that would inspire you to attend, participate, and learn!

Questions to Think About

Besides using the learning objectives as a content filter, take time to think about the questions below. As part of a speaker team of two or more, explore the answers together to discover what they mean for each speaker as well as for the session.

- What key points do I want to make for each learning objective? Are these key points the same ones learners need or want to hear?
- How does the content relate to what learners do every day in their jobs?
- What might learners already know about this topic?
- What are the biggest challenges learners face concerning the topic? How can I help them discover solutions to those challenges instead of just telling them what I think they should do?
- How should I budget session time to ensure each learning objective is achieved? How should the content flow? That is, should topics be covered in order of importance, or in a logical sequence of points, or in some other order?
- What brief examples or stories can be used to illustrate the key points?
• If appropriate to the content: What research backs up my assertions? How might I use or convey research results beyond just citing statistics?

• What questions will learners likely ask about the content? Can I successfully anticipate their questions to either incorporate these issues into the session content or have answers ready for when they’re asked?

• What questions should learners ask, and may not because they are either afraid of looking foolish in front of peers, or because they don’t know what to ask? How can I anticipate and incorporate these issues into the session?

• If there is time for just one audience engagement activity besides taking questions from the audience: from the perspective of likely participants, what’s the most important piece of content on which it should focus?

• In what other ways can I aid the audience in directly seeing how the content can help them do their jobs better or more effectively?

Speaker teams of two or more should work closely together to design, develop, and deliver the promised content. Working together on the overall session design and delivery – always keeping learners and the learning objectives in mind – will help to ensure smooth delivery of integrated content. Support and reinforce each other in ways that demonstrate to learners you and your speaker partners are confident and well-organized.

**Additional resource: Developing Your Session Plan**
Visit the speaker resources page at [https://nacufs.org/speaker-resources](https://nacufs.org/speaker-resources)
Planning an Interactive Session

The Active-Training Credo

What I hear, I forget.
What I hear and see, I remember a little.
What I hear, see, and ask questions about or discuss with someone else,
I begin to understand.
What I hear, see, discuss, and do allows me to acquire knowledge and skill.
What I teach to another, I master.

– Mel Silberman, 1998
expanded from an old Chinese proverb

Why interactive?

When learners work together to solve a problem or discuss an issue, the take-away value of the session content is increased. Using interactive techniques like those listed on the next page can help your learners generate more new ideas and solutions, and increase the likelihood they’ll be able to apply what they learn in their own organizations. Even a simple activity like a brief small-group discussion of a key concept can support learning.

There are many excellent resources available for more information about this important element of session development. Here are a few tips to think about and some ideas to consider trying.

• Keep participants involved and active. Plan a change of pace about every 10 minutes.
• Use relevant stories and examples, and provide opportunities for learners to share their stories with each other.
• Give learners opportunities to collaborate and share information related to session content.
• Make activities challenging enough to be engaging and provide just enough support so participants learn without getting frustrated.
• Keep the structure somewhat informal. Encourage participants to ask questions throughout.
• Build flexibility into your agenda; allow for brief tangents according to learner need.
• Avoid teaching in the traditional sense...minimize or eliminate lecturing!
**CAUTION:** If you think you don’t have time for an activity because you have a lot of content to cover, you may have too much content planned. Revisit your learning objectives and focus them and/or the content more tightly.

**REMEMBER:** Ensure the activity:

- Supports the content and gives learners opportunity to think about how what they are learning applies to their situations.
- Focuses on the positive; never ask participants to do anything that may make them feel foolish.

### Activity Ideas

Here are a few activity ideas to consider...though you’re not limited to these! Think about how you might use them with your content.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technique</th>
<th>Used effectively to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brainstorming</td>
<td>Generate ideas and enthusiasm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debate</td>
<td>Explore opposing aspects of an issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue</td>
<td>Explore an issue and develop perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>Reach a conclusion or agree on a solution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(full- or small-group)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game</td>
<td>Demonstrate/experience applications for learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominal group technique</td>
<td>Help participants ask questions anonymously or generate a lot of ideas from a large group quickly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer-assisted learning</td>
<td>Knowledgeable participants help others do an exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question &amp; answer</td>
<td>Learn content by asking and answering questions of either learners or speaker(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td>Enhance personal learning and its application to participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role-playing</td>
<td>Try new skills, stimulate discussion, portray a challenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story-telling</td>
<td>Gain new perspectives on issues, provide examples of experiences that demonstrate the value or importance of material presented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-groups</td>
<td>Many variations depending on need; can react to a topic, generate ideas, problem-solve, discuss an issue, provide opportunity to work in teams, work toward consensus, etc. Requires at least some debriefing afterward for full group to benefit. Create groups by asking them to work with people seated around them; stand up and move to another area of the room; pair up with someone they don’t know, count off by number, etc. It can be as simple as asking two people sitting next to each other to share experiences or opinions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When you’ve finished any activity, help ensure its success for learners:

- Spend at least a few minutes at the end of it discussing its results/outcomes with the full group.
- Ask them what they observed, or learned, or realized, as a result of the activity.
- Have them share and/or write down how they will apply those insights when back on the job.

The “take home” value from any activity occurs during this “debrief” discussion/reflection. Do not skip it!

Establishing Validity

Today’s learners don’t always accept what is said at face value. They will challenge or question anything that doesn’t appear relevant or doesn’t make sense to them.

Be prepared, then, to:

- Use examples from outside your organization, or even from outside the collegiate food service industry
- Share relevant case examples to substantiate the value and application of any model you create
- Include citations from the research or expert resources you used to develop your session
- Follow copyright rules and regulations concerning use of others’ materials

Practice or Perish!

Use the successful speaker’s biggest secret... practice, practice, practice!

Even a couple of practice run-throughs of your session content can strengthen your confidence and your ability to deliver a great conference session. Know your content well so you can be conversational with and inviting to your learners.

When practicing:

- Time your remarks; ensure you’re leaving time for some activity, learner questions, wrap-up, and the occasional unexpected tangent.
- Practice giving instructions for your planned activity to ensure they are clear and easy for learners to follow.
• If you’re part of a team, practice both individually and together to ensure smooth delivery.

One final word on practicing: sometimes your schedule prohibits practicing much, if at all. However, practicing – especially in the last one or two weeks before the conference – will build your confidence and comfort level with your material. And that leads to a great session!

Preparing Your Session Handouts

Handouts are an active learning tool, and require just as much thought and planning as any other part of a successful session. Conference participants generally expect handouts; a good one can provide clarity, additional information, and serve as post-session reminders of what they learned.

During your session, handouts provide a hands-on visual connection with the content, and are a place learners can capture key points they want to remember. A good handout can be vital to the success of the program, and we highly recommend that you create one for your session.

Profile of an Effective Handout

• One of the ways you connect with your participants
• Adds learning value and helps learners stay focused on key concepts
• Supports, not duplicates, what’s on slides and what is said
• Created for the people in the room, not for others who may see it later
• Far more than a paper record of the session – serves as a note-taking guide that highlights key points

Note: If your handout includes exactly what will be said and what will appear in on-screen slides, why should people come to your session?

Characteristics of a great handout

• A title page at the beginning and content-relevant resources at the end
• Any information that is too complex, detailed, or lengthy for projection
• Any or all of the following as pertinent to your content
  - outlines
  - checklists
  - case studies
  - glossary of terms
  - resource list (including websites!)
  - projected materials
  - process steps/procedures
  - articles
  - background information
• Readable typefaces – such as Arial or Times Roman – and type sizes; use bold, italic, and other variances to emphasize key words or phrases

• Avoid all-capital letters; it’s harder to read, and in today’s world it’s considered “shouting”

• Keep things simple – and proofread!

• Plenty of “white space” – empty space on the page – for reading ease and space for note-taking

• Ensure any charts, graphs, and tables are clear and easy to read

• If possible, use color to highlight key text or graphics for visual interest

Can’t I just print out my slides and use that as my handout?

While you certainly could do that, a copy of your slides is not an effective handout. Research shows that learning is less effective when what participants see on the screen is exactly the same as what’s in their hands.

If you must include the slides in your handout, please print a maximum of two slides per page to ensure readability. Also, we strongly suggest that your handout not be limited to slide print-outs. Consider adding something to supplement them, such as checklists, templates, resource lists, etc.

Handout Distribution

Please bring sufficient copies of your handout for your session’s anticipated attendance. Check with NACUFS staff for an estimated count.

Copyright Matters

Obtain permission to use any copyrighted material contained in verbal content, slides, or handout. This includes, but is not limited to:

• Cartoons or drawings
• Photos or illustrations
• Excerpts from or copies of copyrighted materials
• Music
• Anything taken from an online source

Be aware that a “work” doesn’t need to have the copyright symbol ( © ) to be copyrighted. By its very creation, the work is copyrighted by the creator.

For online source material, consider looking for material covered by one of several Creative Commons licenses (see www.creativecommons.org). The creator selects the license s/he wants to use, and you must abide by it. If no Creative Commons license is indicated, assume that regular copyright law applies.

Think about how your handout might be used during and after the program. How will it support what you’re planning to take place in the session/workshop? How might it be created to use as an effective tool for future reference? Participants will appreciate a useful reference tool.
Guidelines for Projected Visuals

Supporting visuals – handouts, slides, posters, flip charts and other tools participants see – supplement and reinforce learning. Content is grasped faster, understood better, and retained longer. However, visuals merely support the session...they are not the session. Your audience will expect to hear much more than they will see on your projected slides.

Here are some tips and techniques for effective slides:

• Please use the NACUFS slide template
• Keep visuals simple! One visual should convey one main idea.
• Ensure visuals support the content and fit with the information flow. Keep the style and look consistent.
• Create slide titles that are in active voice, similar to a newspaper or web page headline.
• Use key words, not complete sentences.
• Use upper- and lower-case letters for easier reading. Titles can be title- or sentence-case; bullet points, if needed, should be sentence-case (only the first word capitalized unless a proper name is included).
• Stay with the template’s typeface throughout the slide file. Achieve emphasis by using a larger size or bold face of the same type.
• Avoid crowding too many words on each slide. When in doubt, split content on to two slides.
• For maximum visibility, the smallest letters on each slide should be at least 28 point.
• Use images whenever possible.
• Keep charts and graphs simple. When using graphs, limit curves and lines to two or three per graph.
• Contrast is critical to legibility. The NACUFS template is perfect for this: dark type on a white background. We suggest no more than one additional type or graphic color; ensure it goes with the template.
• Keep text animations simple and to a minimum! It’s a good idea to click bullets in one at a time if you plan to talk about each one individually; participants can read ahead much faster than you can speak. However, fancy or frequent animation is more distracting than helpful.
• Slide transitions (changing from one slide to the next) should also be simple. Avoid the random-transition option PowerPoint® offers. Choose a transition style that is subtle and unobtrusive, such as “fade,” or use no transition at all.

• When practicing your session, do so with your slides in slideshow mode; it helps you get comfortable with what you’ll be doing during the session.

A note about flip charts: Flip charts are great for capturing audience comments or listing key ideas. However, avoid using them in sessions with more than about 40 people present.

Additional resource: The Power of Visuals: Slides
Visit the speaker resources page at https://nacufs.org/speaker-resources
When You’re at the Front of the Room

The ultimate test of how well you’ve prepared your session takes place in front of your audience. They’ll better appreciate and learn from your session if you focus on being the “guide on the side” rather than the “sage on the stage.”

Before Your Session Starts

- Arrive in the room 15 minutes prior to the start of your session.
- Ensure the equipment you need is set up; test it to ensure everything is in order. Test the microphone to ensure the volume level is appropriate. **Do not** start your session by asking, “Can everyone hear me?”
- Place your silenced mobile phone or watch where you can unobtrusively glance at it to keep track of time. Participants shouldn’t see you obviously checking the time! Better yet, have a small digital clock with large numbers in an easily seen spot.
- If you brought handouts, either place them on seats or ask someone to distribute them as people enter the room.
- Be relaxed and ready to go early so you’re available to greet participants as they arrive and get settled. Making an early connection with as many participants as possible is the first step in setting a collaborative and engaging atmosphere for learning.

Getting Started

- Begin your session promptly at the scheduled time.
- Open by getting your participants’ attention with a content-related story, startling statistic, or provocative question.
- After participants are engaged with you (and if you were not introduced), briefly introduce yourself and any fellow speakers. State **briefly** who you are, where you work, and make a quick statement about what qualifies you to be leading the session. Avoid a long biographical statement; your session is a short 30 or 60 minutes, so get to your content quickly!
- Consider finding out something about your audience through a show-of-hands question or two. Use a topic-related question that is perhaps a little unusual yet informative to help you understand the group’s needs.
- Briefly review the learning objectives and recap what will be covered in the session. That way, anyone expecting something different will realize it early and be able to quickly find another session that better suits their needs.
Effective Techniques for Leading Learning

- Focus on facilitating rather than lecturing or presenting. Engage the audience in a conversation and encourage their active participation as the content is covered.

- Keep your voice conversational; vary it in pitch or pace as appropriate. This is where solid knowledge of the content comes in quite handy! Knowing it well so you can rely less on notes is always best. Confidence also helps relax you.

- Watch your stance; avoid defensive postures like folding your arms across your chest.

- Make eye contact with all participants more than once throughout the session; glance around the room as you speak. Conscientiously focusing your attention on various people and various parts of the room as you move around keeps the entire audience engaged with you.

- Nod your head as appropriate during participant questions or comments to indicate receptiveness and encourage them to continue.

- Move around the room as is possible (although avoid pacing). Your movement helps to keep participants’ eyes and attention focused on you.

- Verbally acknowledge participants’ ideas (even if you disagree with them). Clarify and build on points participants make. Thank them for their contributions.

Engaging Your Audience

- Adults need a change of pace about every 10 minutes, so plan your session accordingly. Shift from the opening to a brief content segment, then perhaps to an activity.

  If you’re part of a speaker team, a change in speaker would be a change of pace. Alternate the format and pace throughout in a way that supports achieving session objectives. This variety helps keep learners engaged in the session.

- When the audience is doing an exercise or activity lasting longer than three or four minutes, wander around the room and pay attention to what they’re doing. This provides opportunity for them to pull you aside and ask questions one-on-one. You can also comment on what you heard as you debrief the activity at its conclusion.
• How can you tell if your learners are keeping up with you? Pay attention to what you see in the room: if the majority is paying attention, participating in discussions, asking questions, etc., they are engaged.

On the other hand, if they’re reading the conference program, or their eyes are starting to glaze over, or a number of people are beginning to get up and leave, you need to quickly switch gears because you no longer have their attention.

How? Ask a question, move up an activity, introduce the next topic...the important thing is to do something different, because what you’re doing isn’t working. This is another reason to practice and know your content well – you can shift gears quickly if you need to.

• If you anticipate participants from other countries in your session, whose first language may not be English, be sure to speak a little slower and more clearly than you typically might. Keep sentences relatively short, and pay attention to your voice to ensure your sentences don’t drop off at the end.

Acronyms and abbreviations can be confusing to anyone, so minimize their use and explain what they are when first used. Colloquial terms, too, can be confusing so avoid them if possible.

Use images frequently to aid understanding and promote inclusiveness, and represent diversity in photos or art depicting people.
Handling and Using Questions

Questions serve two primary roles: participants can ask for clarification, and speakers can use them as learning tools to focus discussion, encourage sharing, and stimulate reflection.

Using questions as learning tools

- To provoke thought and application of learning, ask questions that require reasoning, not rote. A great way to use questions is to divide participants into pairs or small groups, and then pose a question for them to discuss. After as little as two to three minutes, depending on the question, bring the group back together and lead a full-group discussion of what they discovered.

- Ask the question, pause, and listen to participants before offering your own comments or answering the question. A little bit of silence while the room ponders the question is perfectly fine.

Questions asked by learners

- As you’re developing your session, try to anticipate questions learners may ask. Be ready to answer them.

- Consider having a friend in the audience prepared to ask a question in case participants are slow to get started.

- Let the audience know how and when you will accept questions. Telling participants this at the start of the session confirms to them their questions will be addressed. It’s generally best to accept questions throughout the program or at two or three specific times, rather than leave them for the end and risk running out of time to answer them.

- Unless a microphone is used for audience questions, assume there may be some people who will not hear them. Repeat each question before answering to ensure everyone hears what it is you’re responding to.

- As the question is being asked, make eye contact with the person asking; when repeating and/or answering, look around the room to include everyone.

- Choose your words carefully in answering; be aware that what you say and how you say it can have significant impact on perceptions and feelings.
Helping Learners Implement What They Learned

- One of the most powerful ways to use questions is to leave participants with two or three content-related reflection questions. These questions are not discussed as part of the session; they’re provided at the end to help participants begin to apply what they’ve learned.

Allow at least the last five minutes of the session to introduce the questions and give people a little time to individually read them and answer at least one before they leave the room. The power of reflection works best while they’re still in the session. If they start thinking about application then, research shows there’s a greater chance they’ll actually implement what they’ve learned.

Three sample reflection questions

What’s the most important thing you’ve learned in this session that will make a difference in how you do your work?

What else have you learned in this session, and what are the implications of that to your work?

What two or three things will you do in the next two weeks to begin implementing what you learned in this session?

The more you can pave the way for learners to apply what they’ve learned, the more effective the learning experience will be for them.

- Encourage them to use the reflection questions as conversation starters back in their offices.
- Learners always appreciate receiving sources of further information about the topic. As part of your handout, give them ideas for books, articles, blogs, websites, podcasts, etc., that will allow them to learn more if they choose.
How You & Your Session Will Be Evaluated

Based on member feedback, the NACUFS learning committee is working diligently to enhance the quality and consistency of association learning opportunities. To establish and maintain an environment of continuous improvement, from now on every NACUFS learning program will include an evaluation process.

Evaluation Form

To start, we’ve developed an evaluation form that your session participants will be asked to complete about their experiences in your session. The form (see below) really hones in on their perceptions of the learning value they received. As we use it across all NACUFS events, we’ll be able to track learning effectiveness and support continuous improvement over time.

The evaluation form will be provided to your session participants; completed forms will be collected and returned to NACUFS, and then tabulated. Results will be available 4-6 weeks after the conference. If you wish to receive a copy, please email education@nacufs.org and include your session title and speaker names.

![2019 Learning Evaluation Form](image)