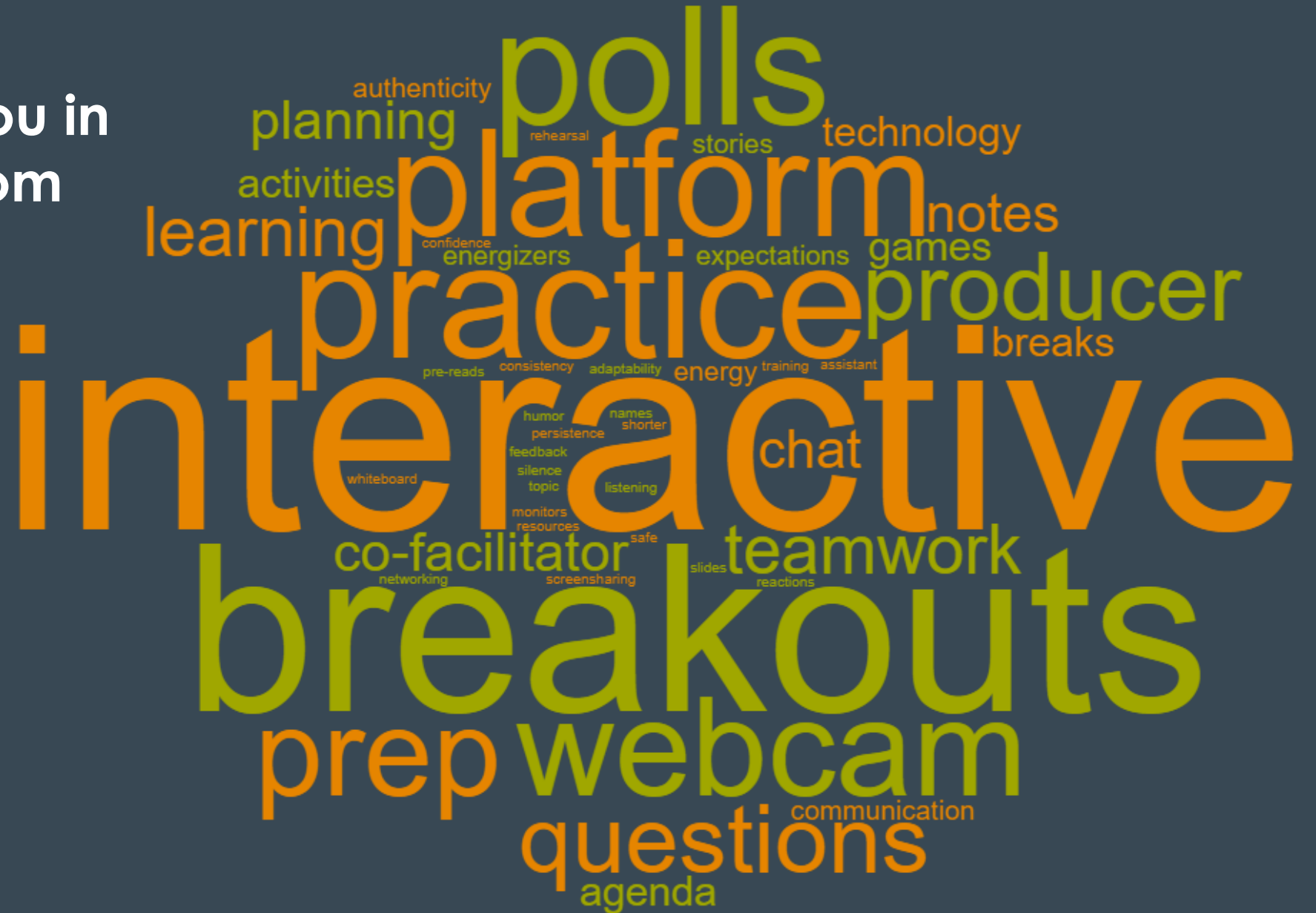# 10 Best Practices to Become An Exceptional Virtual Facilitator

Biggest Challenges as a Virtual Facilitator

silence
troubleshooting
focus attention
inexperience
interaction rapport
participation
language multitasking measurement expectations
nerves
engagement
activities time materials distractions hybrid
technology
presenters energy
attendance coaching
logistics access
disconnected
juggling

DDI

What's Helped You in a Virtual Classroom

What is.
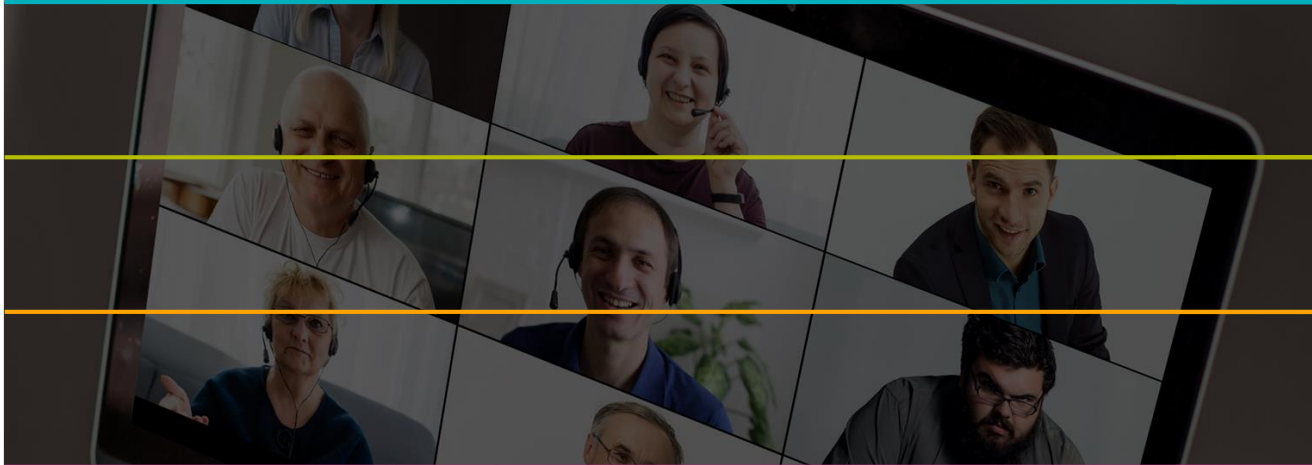
What was.

DDI

Virtual Classroom is NOT A WEBINAR or a Zoom Meeting

DDI

Mindset Shift
It starts with you!

DDI

4 Competencies for Exceptional Facilitation

- Facilitation of Learning
- Engaging Communication
- Guiding Learners
- Facilitator EQ

10 Best Practices

1. Plan and Prepare

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2. Get Ready with Your Producer
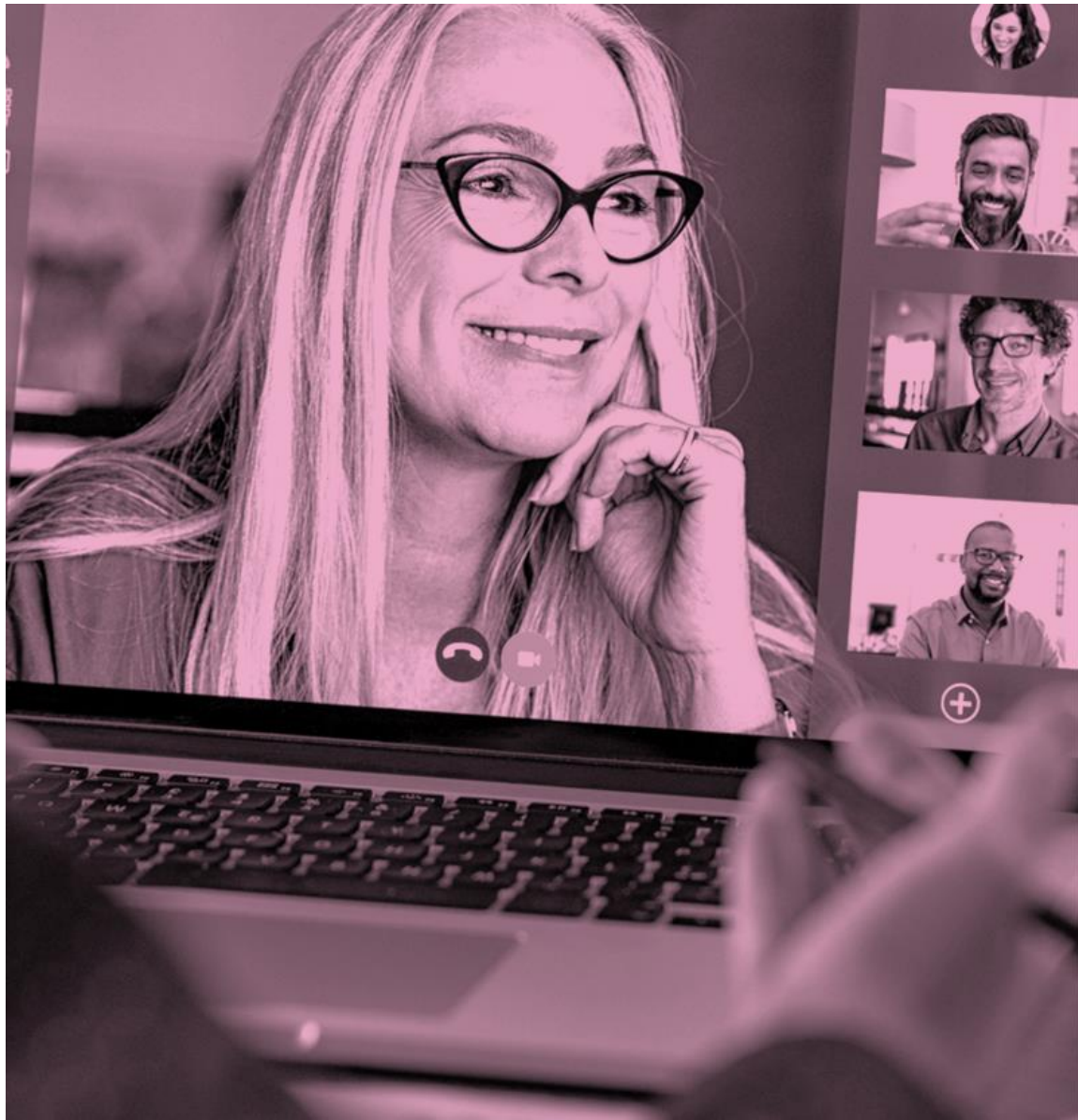
DDI

3. Set the Stage for Safe Learning

4. Put Learners' Needs First

5. Leverage Platform Features

POLL: What do you do to help learners use the platform's features?

1. Overview platform features at beginning of session.
2. Short platform overview prior to session.
3. Nothing. We use the platform for meetings.
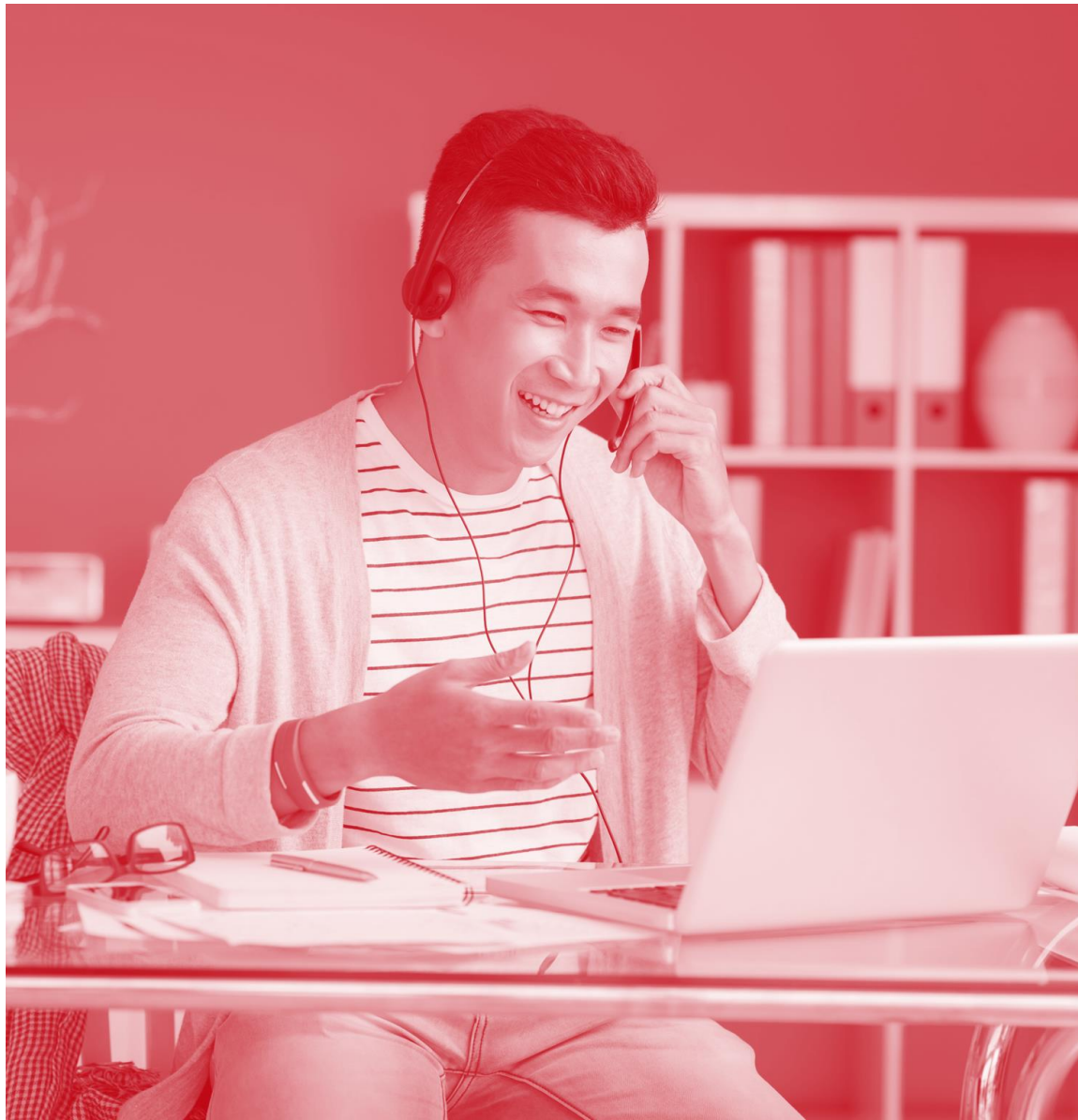4. Nothing. Hope they figure it out real-time.

DDI

6. Manage Size and Breakout Sessions

DDI

7. Empathize and Build Self-Esteem

8. Engage, Read, and Adjust

DDI

9. Have Fun and Be Energetic

10. Build Connections

POLL: Which of the 10 practices will you focus on? Select all.

1. Plan and Prepare
2. Get Ready with Your Producer
3. Set the Stage for Safe Learning
4. Put Learners' Needs First
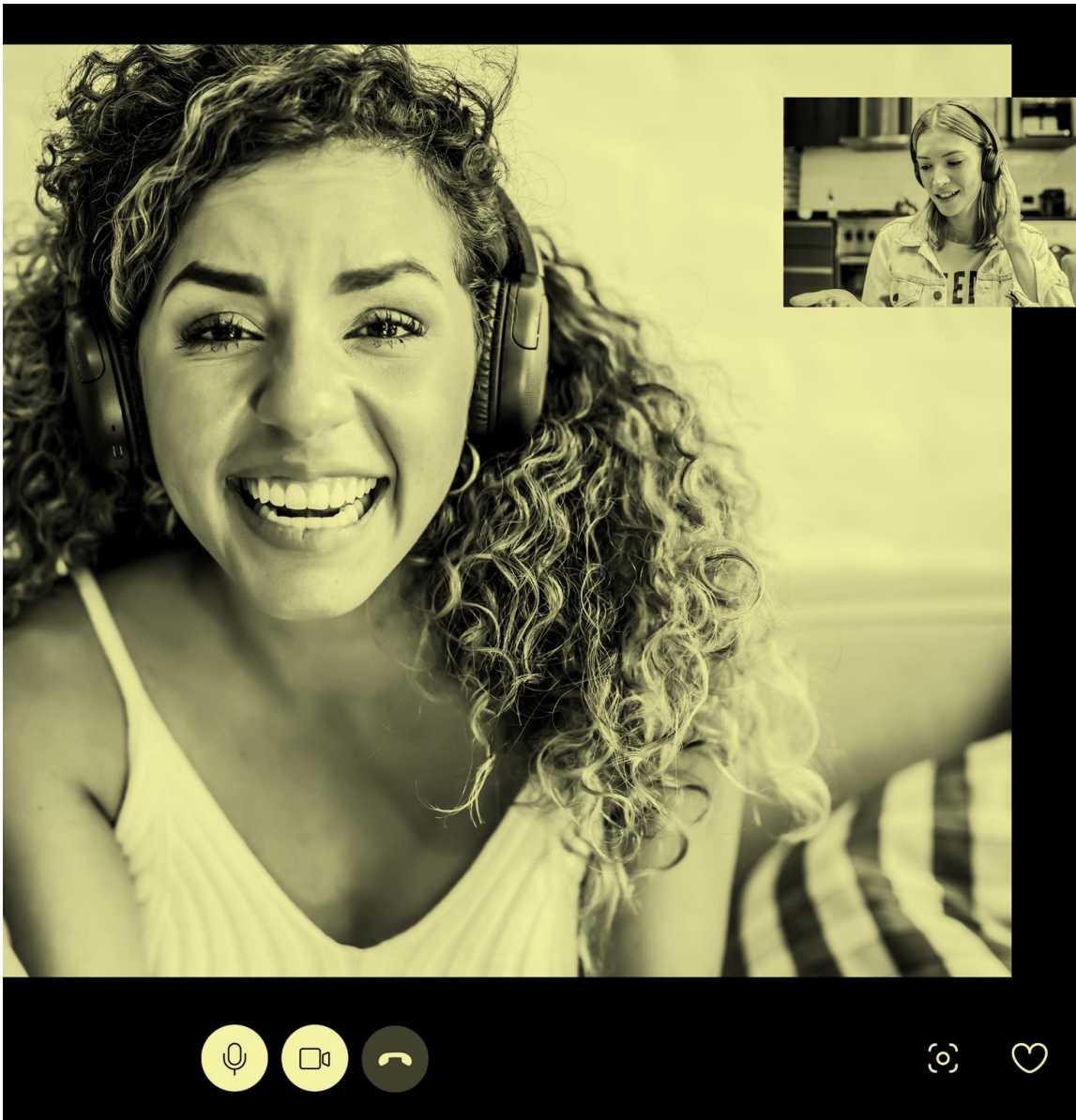5. Leverage Platform Features
6. Manage Size and Breakout Sessions
7. Empathize and Build Self-Esteem
8. Engage, Read, and Adjust
9. Have Fun and Be Energetic
10. Build Connections

DDI
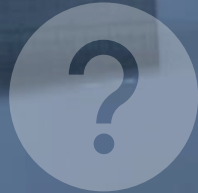
But wait.
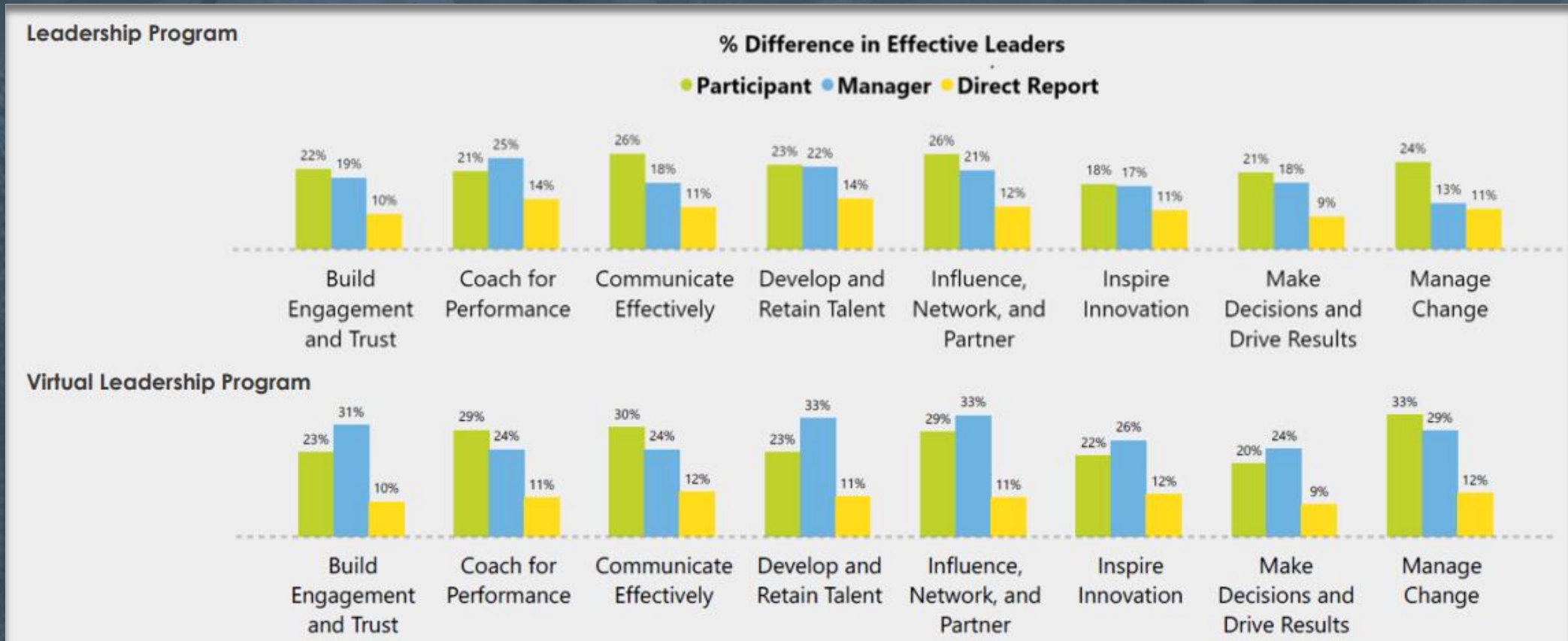## Is Virtual Classroom really as effective as a live classroom?

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Consistent Behavior Change

Leadership Program

% Difference in Effective Leaders
● Participant ● Manager ● Direct Report

	Participant	Manager	Direct Report
Build Engagement and Trust	22%	19%	10%
Coach for Performance	21%	25%	14%
Communicate Effectively	26%	18%	11%
Develop and Retain Talent	23%	22%	14%
Influence, Network, and Partner	26%	21%	12%
Inspire Innovation	18%	17%	11%
Make Decisions and Drive Results	21%	18%	9%
Manage Change	24%	13%	11%

Virtual Leadership Program

	Participant	Manager	Direct Report
Build Engagement and Trust	23%	31%	10%
Coach for Performance	29%	24%	11%
Communicate Effectively	30%	24%	12%
Develop and Retain Talent	23%	33%	11%
Influence, Network, and Partner	29%	33%	11%
Inspire Innovation	22%	26%	12%
Make Decisions and Drive Results	20%	24%	9%
Manage Change	33%	29%	12%

DDI

Consistent Behavior Change

Leadership Program

% Difference in Effective Leaders
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- Manager
- Direct Report

	Build Engagement and Trust	Coach for Performance	Communicate Effectively	Develop and Retain Talent	Influence, Network, and Partner	Inspire Innovation	Make Decisions and Drive Results	Manage Change
Participant	22%	21%	26%	23%	26%	18%	21%	24%
Manager	19%	25%	18%	22%	21%	17%	18%	13%
Direct Report	10%	14%	11%	14%	12%	11%	9%	11%

Virtual Leadership Program

	Build Engagement and Trust	Coach for Performance	Communicate Effectively	Develop and Retain Talent	Influence, Network, and Partner	Inspire Innovation	Make Decisions and Drive Results	Manage Change
Participant	23%	29%	30%	23%	29%	22%	20%	33%
Manager	31%	24%	24%	33%	33%	26%	24%	29%
Direct Report	10%	11%	12%	11%	11%	12%	9%	12%

DDI

Already DDI Certified? Boost Your Skills!

FACILITATOR BOOSTER: VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

FACILITATOR BOOSTER: FOSTER INCLUSION AND COURAGE

10 Best Practices
to Become an Exceptional Virtual Facilitator

What makes you a great facilitator in the classroom may not easily translate to the virtual environment. Here are 10 practices to becoming a great virtual facilitator.

1. **Plan and Prepare.**
   Yes, this sounds like a no-brainer but it's easy to take planning for granted, especially when you're delivering content that you've done countless times. Make sure you're not simply trying to replicate classroom content into a virtual format. Take the time to check if the content and structure have been adapted and ensure the flow and timing are appropriate for the virtual experience. Also, it's best to have a contingency plan in place—just in case of glitches with your Wi-Fi, audio or video, or links to download materials—that you can execute quickly to minimize impact to the learners.

2. **Get Ready with Your Producer.**
   While you focus on transferring knowledge and skills, your producer manages the technology and supports the user experience during the delivery of a virtual session. This powerful partnership creates a smooth and engaging experience for learners with collaborative whiteboards, breakout rooms for activities and small group discussions, and quick resolution of technical issues. Take time to meet with your producer for a detailed walk-through so you can anticipate each other's needs along with the needs of your learners. Know how you will contact each other if one of you lose your connection.

3. **Set the Stage for Safe Learning.**
   Creating a safe and inviting learning environment is an important responsibility of a facilitator. In the virtual world, you can welcome participants as they log in and engage them in some type of chat or activity. Connect with learners as early and often as possible. Pay attention to their names and use them throughout the session. These moments provide an overall first impression of the session and of you as a facilitator, particularly for some learners who may be a little less comfortable with technology.

4. **Put Learners' Needs First.**
   Before and throughout the session, uncover any challenges learners are facing and make sure the learning is relevant to address or overcome them. Allow learners to share their unique experiences and examples throughout the session whether through chat, verbally, or in a breakout room activity. Also, a key advantage of the virtual classroom is the ability to bring geographically dispersed learners together. So, make sure you give learners plenty of opportunity to learn from each other.

5. **Leverage Platform Features.**
   You have to know your technology inside and out before your session. As a facilitator, you should not rely exclusively on your producer to enable the use of your platform's features. Common features include annotation tools, whiteboards, polling questions, chat, emoticons, and breakout rooms. Encourage the use of cameras to foster connections and have your camera on as the positive model. Look for opportunities to declare mute-free zones.

6. **Manage S...** ... out Sessions.
   ... limitless number ... classroom with more ... hes the learning ... ult for you to ... e right number ... oportunities to ... n each other. ... nvolve learners ... reakout rooms; ... h room to ... ussions or ...

   ... m.
   ... classroom ... w and ... to play ... an't find ... t the ... that ... he ... eir ... t and ... you

9. **Have Fun and Be Energetic.**
   Whether or not you use webcams, your voice is a key tool for engaging participants and clearly conveying information. Use your voice, personality, and energy to engage participants and clearly communicate. Pace yourself, speak clearly, and make sure you're using a warm, conversational tone to engage learners. Ensure you have succinct examples and analogies ready to use that help bring the content to life. Remember that learning should be fun for you and the learners.

   dipping, take a short, unexpected break. And set the expectation that this is an "energy booster break" and you're expecting a boost when they return. Plus, remember that silence is okay. Give learners time to think before they respond—even if 15 seconds of silence in a virtual session can seem like 15 minutes!

10. **Build Connections.**
    Find ways to enable connectivity before, during, and after the session. Most learners enjoy the organic networking opportunities in a traditional classroom. You can still create networking opportunities in a virtual environment through breakout rooms for partner or group exercises. Do a 3-minute "Mix and Mingle" at the beginning of a session and allow participants to do quick intros in small groups in the breakout rooms. You can also proactively plan to bring your learners together after the session through formal and informal virtual touch points like peer learning groups, check-ins, happy hours, and others.

Check Your Inbox!
- Handout
- Slides

Yes.
Virtual Classroom works and it's here to stay!

Questions?

info@ddiworld.com

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Thank you.

info@ddiworld.com

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