

Insights

How to Use In-Person and Remote Learning Resources to Support Collaboration

Bringing stakeholders together frequently helps maintain their engagement in an initiative. For one, it gives everyone great insight into what different teams have been working on recently and lets folks “steal shamelessly” from those who are having success. Especially for in-person meetings, it is an opportunity for participants to get to know and meet one another. Sometimes team members actually meet in person for the first time at these type of events.

NICHQ has led multiple learning sessions with hundreds of attendees, including those on the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Collaborative Improvement and Innovation Network ([ECCS CoIIN](#)) and the Collaborative Improvement and Innovation Network to Reduce Infant Mortality ([Infant Mortality CoIIN](#)). Of course, not every stakeholder in large initiative like these can get together in one place at one time. This is where remote learning techniques and new technology are necessities: Everyone can be involved and engaged no matter their location.

Here are a few techniques NICHQ uses to further learning, participation and collaboration for both in-person and remote participants:

1. **Pework** – Inviting them to prepare in advance of the meeting can help them get the most out of the learning session. Send a list of prework activities, including required or optional readings, Storyboard preparation, and, if appropriate, suggest they invite partners to join in-person or virtually.
2. **Livestreaming** – Expert presentations and panels tend to be fruitful parts of large meetings. By livestreaming sessions, remote participants will be able to learn the same lessons as their in-person peers. Even in cases when they can't ask questions or interact with speakers, remote participants get to listen to whole discussions as they happen. Be sure to have a promotion strategy for the livestreaming so that participants know they're available. Even a reminder in a regular newsletter can help ensure that people access them later.

3. **Adapt activities** – Some activities for in-person attendees might not translate well to remote attendees. Search for ways to adapt presentations and exercises so that they're interesting to everyone regardless of their location. Maintain engagement by coaching presenters to plan interactive sessions; for example, use polling , encourage listeners to chat in questions during the presentation and during a planned Q&A, and consider using breakout rooms to divide up into smaller groups. Storyboard sessions are an exciting opportunity for teams to share their work and progress, but if there are too many presented in a row, participants might lose interest. Test briefer presentation formats, such as the less than seven minute [PechaKucha style](#), to keep things interesting.
4. **Keep Time in Mind** – In-person learning sessions are usually eight hours, which can be a long time for remote participants. Having networking opportunities can break up the day for everyone, giving live attendees a chance to meet each other and remote viewers to step away from their computers. It is important to be aware of the audience's learning needs. Occasionally this requires flexibility and adjustments to the agenda. Be aware that people participating remotely may expect to tune in to a meeting session at a specific time for a specific session, so be mindful of even small shifts of 10 to 15 minutes in a schedule, which have implications for remote attendees. Consider a communication strategy or make a "live" agenda available to share changes.