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## Leadership Academy: Virtual Meetings

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### Transcript

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>>Andrea Falzarano: Welcome to the ASHA Leadership Academy webinar, "Running a Successful Virtual Meeting". This webinar content is appropriate for entry in emerging leaders. I am Andrea Falzarano, Director of Association Governance Operations at the ASHA national office. We planned today's webinar because of the increasing frequency that audiologists and speech language pathologists have to participate in or lead a virtual meeting particularly in their work as volunteer leaders. Each of you should have a copy of the handout which includes speaker information and slides. If you do not have the handout please pause the webinar now and access a copy from our website. You will need a copy for interactive sections of this presentation. At this time I would like to welcome our presenters, Kevin Nourse and Alice Waagen. Dr. Kevin Nourse is an executive coach organization development consultant and facilitator with nearly 20 years of progressive experience in both for-profit and non-profit organizations. He is a professional certified coach through the International Coach Federation and has extensive experience coaching leaders in the areas of emotional intelligence, career planning and transition, influence, risk-taking and strategic thinking. Dr. Alice Waagen is a business consultant who teaches management skills to business leaders. Alice has conducted hundreds of workshops and training classes at many of the country's top Fortune 500 companies, non-profit organizations and government agencies in the Washington, D.C. area. In just the last 5 years more than 132 leaders from 26 regional organizations have graduated from her unique leadership development workshop series. Now let's begin. Over to you Kevin.

>>Kevin Nourse: Thanks very much Andrea. We are excited to have everybody join us for this leadership academy webinar on virtual meetings. Today we're going to be talking about how to run a successful virtual meeting and provide some tips and insights in the content of the program. First I wanted to review the ASHA disclosure statement more specifically. I am Kevin Nourse, Principal of Nourse Leadership Strategies and I'm an independent consultant. I'm being financially compensated by ASHA for the leadership academy webinars and I do not have any financial -- excuse me, non-financial interests with ASHA. My colleague, Alice Waggen is a subcontractor to Nourse Leadership Strategies. She is also an independent contractor financially compensated by ASHA for the Leadership Academy webinars and without any non-financial interests with ASHA. So at this point I think Alice why don't you set us up in terms of an introduction.

>>Alice Waagen: Yes, thank you Kevin. Well welcome again everyone. It's so good to have everybody on this webinar today. Why are we here; what are we hoping to cover? We are hoping to cover the fundamentals of running an effective virtual meeting. And I underline the word "fundamentals" and I would enjoin you to look at our graphic below. In an hour we're going to cover the basics; how to get started, how to be effective. It's really as I put in our graphic a view from 10,000 feet. There's much more you can learn about this and we've got an appendix in the back with resources that you can use to dive further in it. So how are we going to do this? We're going to start by defining some key concepts. We're then going to talk about how do you select from the different media choices for virtual meetings. Then we're going to get into the real nuts and bolts; what are the roles and responsibilities of both the participants as well as the team leader and lastly some additional tips and techniques. Our goal in this webinar and all of the webinars is to leave you with some really good, practical information on the subject to hopefully build your confidence and your leadership skills in running virtual meetings. Kevin, I think you're going to talk next with us about these key concepts.

>>Kevin Nourse: That's right. Before we do that I wanted to just acknowledge that we've got a live audience with us now but we also have the recorded audience. For those of you that are listening on the recording at various intervals we'll be posing some reflective questions and we invite you at those points to hit the pause button on your replay. Our experience has been that they'll help you deepen your learning and we'll give you a cue when that actually happens. Okay, well let's talk a little bit about some of the key concepts associated with our topic today. First of all, what is a virtual meeting? And as you see it's a meeting event but we've got the advantage of using technology to deliver the meeting with participants who are distributed across time and space. And so that presents both some really great advantages and we're going to explore those as well as some pretty significant challenges that can be mitigated. It's important to think why is this topic so important for communications and speech disorder professionals for CSD professionals? Well I think by far you know the idea of being able to run a virtual meeting is really critical. Particularly many organizations are becoming more and more dispersed and so the need to do that exists. But also for those of you that are interested in volunteer roles particularly with ASHA at a national or state or even a local level the ability to guide and facilitate a meeting is pretty critical in terms of both getting things done as well as ultimately your reputation as a leader. So from that perspective we've got some key concepts defined. I also wanted to speak a bit about what are some of the emerging themes. And so from the perspective of research around virtual meetings a few things do emerge. We start to think about more and more in the literature about some of the latest trends in terms of virtual workers and the implications for organizations, use of different media such as cell phones or mobile phones for virtual meetings. Again, you can imagine the challenges that could present as well as the opportunities. And then looking more in educational settings in terms of working with students in terms of virtual meetings and technology choice. So there is just a wealth of new knowledge coming out about virtual meetings which up to this point there really has

been relatively little. So Alice, I think you're going to toss, explore a little question for us today?

>>Alice Waagen: Absolutely. But you know before we exit this concept of why it is so important I have to admit that over the years it's become more and more almost ubiquitous. I can remember back in the dark ages some of us go back that far where everything was done in offices, in clinics, in hospitals, in classrooms face-to-face. Now though with flexible work teams, flexible time, it is definitely the possibility that your team may be fragmented from working in other locations. So what used to be kind of a nice to have I think now is becoming even more critical. So here is how our first reflective question and let me describe for you how this is going to work. As Kevin mentioned periodically we're going to ask you if you're listening to this recording to go ahead and push pause, reflect on the question, make some notes and then join us back again. So, our question: What are your biggest challenges in running a virtual meeting? What really is your biggest issues and concerns? So we're going to just go ahead and pause a second for you to pause this and then we're going to start right back up again. Alright, well Kevin you know we've been instructing on this topic a number of years to put it mildly and some of the things that I know people have said back to me I'd just like to share here. Things about their fear of not being able to see people, losing all that visual feedback is their biggest concern. It's literally like going into a meeting and actually I've had people do this interactively and putting blindfolds on and not being able to see people and missing all that information. Anything that comes to your mind that you've heard over the years?

>>Kevin Nourse: Yeah, I think what I've seen and heard certainly among audiologists, speech pathologists and LDP program is the whole issue of the technology. You know while technology enables the use of virtual meetings it presents a whole slew of challenges in terms of both learning the technology and what do you do when things start to break down. So that often I hear that we've heard that so many times on the webinars that we've done for ASHA.

>>Alice Waagen: Oh and that is so true. And you know I think you never lose your fear of the technology but you do get better skilled at handling it I think is what happens. And we'll have some tips later on about that. You know I think the other item that I hear oftentimes and again we're going to be addressing this with some tips is what do you do with the non-participants? I mean in a face-to-face meeting you can stare them down or you could you know pointedly point at them but when it's virtual and you know somebody's gone silent you don't know what -- did they leave the room or are they multitasking or maybe they're just thinking. You don't really know and how to deal with

that gap you know of participation is a concern. Mandy you know points out how to get participants to speak up. You know that's a little bit like our technology thing depending on how people are situated. Some of them might be using a cell phone which has spotty connection yeah, all those things are definite challenges. So Kevin I think you're going to get us started on what we can do about being more effective with virtual meetings.

>>Kevin Nourse: That sounds good. So I'd like to start off with just how do we select virtual meeting media, in other words what's the channel that we use? Well, one way to think about that in terms of you know there's a plethora of new technology out. Alice I remember when you and I started not too long ago pretty limited in terms of the technology available but things have vastly changed. Really what's really I think key here is to think about what's the level of interaction and really type of productivity that you need from a meeting to help determine what medium do you choose. So we can think about this along a continuum of interaction and productivity you can see that in your handout. At the most basic level it would be something like an audio only conference call. Again, the advantage of that is that it's very simple, very easy to use. However, the lack of non-verbals and the fact that people can be easily distracted even for really complex topics you don't have the visual component to it. So if it's for example a meeting where you're doing really information dissemination sometimes that's an appropriate way to use it. It's just a very, very basic setup. And particularly if your participants aren't technologically you know very sophisticated this might be the perfect way to deliver a meeting or engage people. Let's go to the other extreme. Really the perfect you think about the perfect medium which is really not a virtual meeting but it's an in-person meeting because of course in in-person meetings not only do we have the visual but we've got the spoken word. We can see each other. We can present information readily and spontaneously. But within that continuum you can see various other options. So for example, the second level up the level of interaction and productivity I'm labeling an LIP4 of audio and video. Now with audio we can bring in non-verbal behavior. In a lot of cases audio channels are actually lower or no cost. We see that a lot in the ASHA Leadership Development program with learning teams that many are using Google Hangouts or Skype or other tools. The challenge of that is that the quality may vary. Again, that really speaks to that whole area of testing technology first. And that in some cases the technology requirements, in other words what you need on your laptop or your computer is significant. Lastly we think about the integration of audio video and in this case sharing your desktop. So a lot of multiple features highly engaging. And so in an instance where you need people to be highly engaged let's say for example you're running a committee meeting and you want to get people's consensus around say a shared vision for your committee it suggests you know the need for a lot of interaction and it's a fairly complex approach or objective. It may be that using media where we can get audio, video and desktop is really a great way to do that. The price that we pay though is the complexity. Again, the more features that you get, the more complexity both for you as the facilitator but it's certainly for the participants too. We see that for example using Adobe Meeting to run webinars. Great technology,

there's some challenges associated with it. So Alice I'm wondering if you have any reflections on selecting virtual media and what your experience has been.

>>Alice Waagen: Absolutely. I have to go back to your opening statement what are your objectives, what are you really trying to achieve? You really need to think about that before you get to the selection process. If as Kevin said, it's a decision needs to be made there's a lot of contention, there's a lot of frustration a conference call is probably not going to be as effective because you're going to be missing a lot of information. On the other hand if it's a quick check in status the phone lines are probably perfectly fine. But where I see people get into problems and challenges is they jump to the technology first and then back the meeting into a second. Gee I love Skype, let's use Skype. Well why? I was actually on a Skype meeting call the other day. We spent -- it wasn't my meeting by the way I want to put that out there. We spent 10 minutes working on getting people's cameras to work and at the end it really wasn't relevant to the meeting. That's where I say you're putting the cart before the horse. You're getting the technology love going before you get the solution. There's one other point I'd like to make on this selection page and that's getting up into the higher end stuff. And there is a need for recording. Here for instance what we're doing today is we're able to record this to use it multiple times afterward. Some of the different features have recordings some don't. Some conference calls have a recording feature built in, some don't. But that would be another kind of subtext to ask is are there people missing who might want to access this later or are we going to be challenged a few months down the road with the question how did you get to that decision and we want to have some way to document it. That would be another thought I would have on this page.

>>Kevin Nourse: Well, great. I would invite our live participants if there's any observations or questions you have feel free to type them in at any point in our chat box. So Alice, I think you were going to take it from here in terms of our next module.

>>Alice Waagen: Absolutely. Well, we're going to talk about roles and responsibilities and then do it in two parts. I'm going to start by talking about the facilitator, the meeting team leader because this is where we generally think of starting with the planning process. But what I'm going to also talk about what are the responsibilities of the participants cause this is something sometimes overlooked that is just as important. So you can see on this page we've kind of divided it into three sections, before, during and after. And that's something I want to pause on before we go into it. Just like a physical face-to-face meeting success rides on planning. The corollary to that is failure usually is because there isn't any planning. So we don't start thinking about the meeting once everyone's dialed in, that's not an idea. We start with before it starts. You know again, we mentioned selecting the technology, et cetera. But let me start by talking about the first bullet on there, sending the agenda in advance. This is a meeting best practice that really applies to any meeting. Once people know what the agenda is, what the goal of

the meeting or the objective of the meeting they can get themselves prepared; there may be information they may need to bring with it. Or they might be even be something like okay, you just sent me this agenda, I don't see why I'm attending this meeting. Getting these things out beforehand is really, really important. You want to have people be prepared. You want as in my example before you don't want to waste the first 10 minutes on ancillary issues. You want to be able to jump right in. So Kevin do you have anything in the before session box you want to talk about?

>>Kevin Nourse: Yeah, I think near and dear to my heart based on my own pain is the practice with technology. You know I think and really practice comes from two perspectives. It's all well and good to be comfortable with the technology and how to run the meeting but I think the other part of that is what if something goes wrong and what do you do? That's why you know quite honestly Alice you and I often typically co-facilitate, co-deliver webinars because someone can keep the instruction going while someone troubleshoots so we've got redundancy. But I think to me that's the most important part is to know how to use the features but also how to troubleshoot if something does go wrong so you can basically salvage the meeting if in fact there's problems. That includes having kind of an agreed upon protocol say between the facilitators. So everybody knows what's going to happen if suddenly we lose audio, how we're going to handle that. And I know you and I Alice, have had to navigate that because as much as we work with the technology there's still surprises that happen with telecommunications lines and participants whose systems don't work and all those delightful, unpredictable that you know stress us out as facilitators. So that stands out to me. [Laughter].

>>Alice Waagen: You know I will say though especially if there's people on the call here on the webinar who had that early concern about fear of the technology. Believe it or not it's a heck of a lot more stable today than it has been in the past. Mostly because and I don't want to get into tech talk here too much; mostly because though a lot of this stuff has moved to the Cloud. And so you're accessing things that are very well maintained, professionally maintained and updated. In the early days of a lot of this technology you were downloading things to desktops and that's where I think things got a little bit crazy. So don't want to -- we want to encourage you to practice and test but I don't want to get everybody fearful of that things are going to blow up. It's really a lot more stable today than I've ever seen it. Alright, let's talk about during the sessions. So now your meeting is started and everybody is up and running. So let me share some tips that I have found over the years to really help. The first one right on there, list attendees. When I am on a virtual meeting I like to keep a list, a physical list on a pad of who is on the call or who is on the interaction. And as people interject or ask questions or participate I kind of put a little mark next to their name. I mean this sounds a little bit -- we're talking automation before now we're talking manual. What that tells me at a glance is anybody out there not participating. Now if you have three people on the call that's probably not that that big an issue. But if you have 8 or 10 I guarantee if you're focusing on that agenda and

running the meeting there easily can be people who slip through the cracks. And assumingly if you've done your planning right and you know you need everyone on that call, everyone in that meeting to participate you don't want to risk them not being able to participate. I will share with you another tidbit and then get my colleague to join in. I'll tell you where this list is also critical. I have done mixed meetings where I'm in a conference room with four or five people and there are four or five people dialing into the meeting; I'm sure some of you have experienced that. It's very easy to forget those people speaking out of the magic box in the middle of the table I like calling it that, sort of goofy. But anyway I've actually taken Post-it notes and taped their names on that box so that I have a visual in mind that they're out there. Because it's a very much a human nature you're drawn to the people which you can see. So you're avidly chatting with everybody around the table and those four or five people who are dialed in get totally ignored. So that's a long way of saying list who's on there, monitor their involvement so that you can occasionally pause and say you know Joe, I know you're out there -- well, I wouldn't put it that way that's rather rude; but Joe do you have something you'd like to contribute. So Kevin what's one that jumps out at you?

>>Kevin Nourse: Well I'm mindful of our participants that have shared some thoughts. Bob, you point out on larger calls the need to announce who is speaking. To me that's really critical and certainly as a facilitator hopefully people will get to know you. And in a moment we'll talk about for the participants what's really important. But exactly until the group gets to know each other it's really difficult because we don't have the visual component of that. So announcing that I think is really critical. And then Michele you point out really speaking to the larger concern about people not adhering to ground rules which of course is not just virtual meetings but any meeting. The challenge is of course you don't have the visual. So a lot of times I can reinforce ground rules when I'm in a real-time meeting because I can make eye contact and use that to manage behavior. So it becomes really critical in terms of making sure that those things are clear to the group or formulated with the group's input to try to identify those. So I just wanted to acknowledge those. But really the last thought I have is during the session about keeping the pace lively. It's interesting when I facilitate a live meeting I love to have access to see people's feet below their tables. Because many times if I'm not going fast enough I see a wiggling foot it's almost like people are trying to press on the gas. So to me that's really critical. We don't have that visual in this medium. And so keeping the pace lively which you know the idea of keeping it lively but not so fast that we lose people. So sometimes stopping policy and then polling the group to find out are we on track, faster, slower or okay I think is a really important one. So back to you Alice.

>>Alice Waagen: Yes. I want to talk just briefly about create supporting roles because this is something that I have learned myself over the years. Again, sort of the school of life when things don't work out. There's a lot of roles that need to happen in any meeting for it to be successful. Obviously, you need a facilitator leader, somebody with one eye on the agenda to guide the conversations. You might need a note taker or a minutes

taker, might need a timekeeper, might need and I'm just going to leave a blank there. I know in my past when I have been less than successful I had the belief that as a facilitator I could do all of those things. And so while I'm typing notes, I'm not facilitating. I'm not watching the time. When I'm facilitating I'm forgetting to take notes. So this is something again to think about in the pre-planning or even just do it off the cuff to say could somebody just volunteer to take notes and then you've got a recording of what's going on especially if it's a type of meeting where minutes are to be generated. Truly what I have found in the many times I've facilitated both face-to-face and virtual meetings is facilitation is a 100% role. If you try to do facilitation and other things something suffers. So think about that if this is your meeting, you're calling it and you want to be focused on that agenda and total facilitation think of ways to outsource so to speak those additional tasks. Alright, so let's talk about after the session. Obviously we've got two items here that are important and pretty self-explanatory but I just want to pause a minute on follow up on commitments. This is again a very classic way that I see things not working out. The meeting is running and maybe there's a note taker hopefully at the end you're summarizing and saying here are the takeaways, here are the assignments whatever. What I like to do with a standard facilitation -- there's a couple of business teams that I facilitate monthly meetings is an e-mail the next day these are the commitments and the follow-ups, halfway through a reminder and then 2 days before the next meeting these are the issues. I mean it sounds a bit like overkill but the truth of the matter is there's nothing more frustrating a month later everybody comes back and "the homework assignments aren't done" because people let the rest of their life get in the way. So by being a little bit rigorous on that follow-up it avoids again that sense of this meeting isn't organized. You know so and so was going to do research and bring it back and then did not. And then also especially that 2 day before meeting allow somebody to reply and say oops, I just didn't get this done. So you might be able to just take it off the agenda or suggest it get slipped rather than having that you know sort of blow up in your face the next day in the meeting itself. Alright, so we're talking about the facilitator. And this again, lots of good planning things going on but the thing that I like to emphasize is not to let the participant off the hook. They're not just supposed to show up and sit back and let everybody else do the work. We've got a number of items here and again, let me give some examples of where I think this is important. You know be focused and fully present. One of the challenges again with virtual is you can't see them. Now I used to say in a face-to-face meeting you can see when somebody isn't focused and they're looking at their mobile device and you can interject. I swear nowadays I go to face-to-face meetings and it's almost accepted for people to do that which is a whole nother subject for another webinar. But you can't see it. So I think we're going to get to ground rules in a few minutes but even in terms of basic facilitation to let folks know the expectation is that they are fully present. And of course we've got here you know don't multitask. Really that is just the worst thing you can do. You just need to be focused on what's going on. Kevin do you have any favorites on this list yourself?



>>Kevin Nourse: Yeah, I think what stands out for me is be aware of airtime. And the way I've coached individuals in terms of meeting effectiveness it's the idea of speaking in sound bites. So rather than get into long rambling conversations or pontification usually there's limited time. And I think to be effective get your message across otherwise people tend to tune you out speak in short sound bites you know kind of a topic, a little bit of content, I'll summarize and then kind of pass back to the facilitator. I think not only does it help you get your ideas communicated more effectively you know it ensures the efficiency of the meeting. And also again, we've all been on those calls with you know people that go on and on and on maybe they don't realize how that's perhaps damaging their reputation among the group. So I think that's really an important part of it which is self-awareness so that you're speaking in sound bites. Get in and then get out succinctly.

>>Alice Waagen: That's a great tip Kevin and I almost would want to put that also on the facilitation page too because everyone needs to be aware of airtime. And I like that issue of you know one idea at a time cause when you string together three or four by the time you get to the fourth no one remembers what's at the beginning and so you get this muddled up conversation that really isn't doing anybody any good. Alright, well let's take a moment and do another reflection question. We've mentioned the word ground rules and we've cited a few as we went through our tips. Some of our live folks have even put some ideas in the chat box. So let's stop and do a reflection on what are some good ground rules to use in a virtual meeting having thought about roles and responsibilities, et cetera. So those of you on the recording go ahead and pause, take a few minutes to get your thoughts together and then you can start up again. And those of us who are live if you want to go ahead and share some that you've had. So Kevin, can you think of you know the teams you've worked with, the virtual meetings, what's a ground rule that kind of jumps out at you that you'd want people to think about?

>>Kevin Nourse: You know a really innovative one came up with one client which is before they move on from topic to topic they summarize and capture kind of a summary for the minutes, what did we just decide. So rather than you're usually at the end of the meeting typically especially leadership teams run out of time and they just kind of slap it together and get out. And to me it becomes very fuzzy, people don't follow up. But you know if we've got three in a major components to the meeting and this is particularly important in virtual meetings before we move on let's summarize what we just agreed or the key outcome. Cause again I think the virtual medium is such that it becomes more challenging to do the follow-up. So I find that breaking it in chunks we discuss, we explore, we agree, summarize, everybody's in agreement and we move forward. And that take self-discipline to do but I find that that can be a really great ground rule in the way that meetings are run. What do you think?

>>Alice Waagen: That's a great one. And I see some good ones coming up in our chat box. I like what Nad says, being in a quiet place, consider it a face-to-face meeting in

terms of avoiding distractions. Yeah, that is a great tip Nad and definitely something to talk about early on as a ground rule is eliminate as many distractions as possible so that you can truly focus. You know one that a team shared with me which I thought was good, it was a fairly large team it was 8 or 10 people and it gets back to that whole participation thing. One of the interesting things about a virtual meeting is especially people who are a little bit more reserved they feel uncomfortable cutting in or interrupting and especially when there's other folks in the room. So what I suggest for them is to have a turn taking system. So make a list of 1 to 10 and everybody has this list. It could be alphabetical or whatever. And so when there is an issue for discussion the first person starts off. When they're done the second person is kind of like a little roster to go through. And that way everybody has an opportunity. They know their "turn" will come up without having to interrupt each other. The other thing that they can do then also is if it gets to person number 8 and everything has been said, they can just say nothing dead, pass and it moves on. But it gives people the opportunity to know that their turn is kind of mechanically put in there which I think can be of use. Kevin are there ones that come to mind for you?

>>Kevin Nourse: Yeah, I really like some of the sharing of the group. Erika speaks to treat it like a face-to-face meeting. Log on early. Clear desk of distracting materials which it really is kind of psychologically creating space and ready to be present. Tune in completely and turn off technology-based distractions. Again, you know it's the blessing and the curse of you know that blasted iPhone and our eyes. Immediately it's like addiction to it. So be mindful of that. Mandy speaks about using a private room which I think is a great way to do it to really focus. If it's really important close the door. Create some space. Covering all the agenda items. That's a great observation and I think well especially if you're facilitating that to me is such a -- it's such a boost in terms of your perceptions of your own effectiveness certainly as a leader to the extent that you run a really efficient meeting and actually achieve what you set out to -- intentions. So those really stand out in terms of just building upon what was shared. I think again that either rotating roles and agreeing how you're going to rotate them. And especially the note taking part because so many times people hate doing that. And it's really important to agree on that up front because otherwise no one's going to know to take notes and to summarize kind of the meeting proceedings associated with it. Getting back to testing of the technology I think just what we talked about before making sure that everybody is ready to go. And that everybody's actually tried logging on to the system depending on the technology that you're using to me is really critical. Well perhaps for example, if you're using a pretty basic conference call system sometimes dialing in via conference call -- excuse me, via cell phone can be challenging because the hotspots and the dead zones that we experience on our cell phones can make it really difficult in any kind of a conference call format to be heard. So that may be a ground rule. I've seen some groups use a landline versus a cell phone, yeah. But back to you Al, anything you want to add?

>>Alice Waagen: Great. Yes, there's one last thought on ground rules and it's a pretty significant one I think and that is accountability. So what do I mean by that? Early on when your team is setting up these ground rules you really need to put on the table how are we going to hold each other accountable? So for instance if your ground rule is start on time and the next meeting somebody is 10 minutes late what's going to happen? Or if your ground rule is to speak in short bytes and somebody rambles on, what's going to happen? The challenge with ground rules is if you don't build in some method of accountability early on and they start to get violated the whole thing is not going to work out. So what can you do? Now this gets a little bit fuzzy because it depends on the group, on the relationship of the group, on their level of trust and a whole lot of other things. But I think it's good to just have a discussion and come up with some simple things. So for instance, if somebody is late we will not back up and go over it again. That person's going to be responsible for figuring out how they're going to catch up with the material. If they're more than three times late then the team leader's going to question their participation. You know again, these have to be customized. So I'm not going to really be directive here but it's something to think about. If somebody is a rambler is there a phrase that somebody, the facilitator can use like well thank you for that thought. That was kind of code like that's enough, you know you're getting the hook. Again, you have to work these things out uniquely with the group. But if you don't at least have that conversation on accountability and people start violating these things then they're pretty much useless. The first person who shows up late everybody stops and oh, let's go back and let you know so and so know what's been covered. Okay, you've just penalized the 5 or 6 people who showed up on time and guess what's going to happen at the next meeting? They're not going to be there on time and the whole thing degenerates from there. Have you ever heard of any good accountability things Kevin in your walks of life?

>>Kevin Nourse: Yeah, you know one way to do realtime is at the end of a virtual meeting is just do a real quick 2 to 3 minute debrief how did we do according to the ground rules that we set for this meeting and just do a once around, a quick poll. Any violations, how did we do, that kind of thing. And you know I think especially with if it's going to be an ongoing group that meets regularly to me that's such a great way to kind of build it in early on which means that we're going to be looking for it and we're going to talk about it. And so by having that you know instituted at the end of a meeting it really does reinforce the sense of well we're not going to step over the mess-ups. We're going to talk about you know what happened and how well we did adhere to our ground rules.

>>Alice Waagen: That is a great tip. I love that because you're right you know it's like holding people accountable. It's just like any other relationship. If you say this is how I want us to work together and the person doesn't do it, you've got to have some

corrective action and the earlier on the easier. If you go five meetings with people showing up late and then say well we're going to change now it becomes much more difficult. Alright, I think Kevin you are going to talk to us next about some additional helpful tips and techniques.

>>Kevin Nourse: Yeah, absolutely. And so it really gets back to what we all identified to be some of the challenges of the medium in virtual meetings. So it's really to think about the challenges and maybe some ways to mitigate or solve the challenge. So I'm going to start a conversation and then we'll engage our live participants as well as Alice to get your input too. So really the first law if we think about the biggest one and this comes out in the research too that we can't see non-verbal behavior. And that as we know I mean seeing estimates anywhere from 50 to 80% of communication is non-verbal. So what do you do? Well I think the first one is not assume. So we may hear it in people's voices and we can make assumptions about are they in agreement, are they not. But I think moving beyond assumptions to use questions and engaging people or polling people periodically to find out are we on target, are we reaching consensus, are there concerns. So don't ask you know check it out. Because again, very easy with especially if we don't people's language in terms of the way they speak and the emotions in their voice we can easily go down the wrong path as a facilitator. So I think that to me is really a huge one. And it's a significant challenge that I think anybody that runs a virtual meeting faces. The lack of non-verbal behavior stands out. How about you Alice anything that stands out on the list?

>>Alice Waagen: Well, let me pause on the last thing you had there periodically poll and it kind of goes back to our opening talk about choosing the media. Many of these electronic virtual meeting rooms whether it's Go ToMeeting or Adobe or some of the others have additional features like to be able to poll and it's a great way to get a quick check-in with people. So you can set up some preliminary polls that say you know, I'm okay with where the meeting's going you know yes or no and just kick them off and get some instant feedback. So if you have already an idea that some of the non-verbals that you're missing are going to really leave you in a blind spot is there ways you can use the technology to get that. I was even seeing the other day and this is pretty much brand new but there's ways that you can have people in your virtual meeting if they're not on their cell phone actually use their cell phone with a polling feature that's where I lost it. I'm like that's way too much to manage. But hey, there's another supporting role for somebody to kick off some electronic polls. Let's talk about tone of voice for a minute because this is again, a very challenging area. You might be on the call and listening and it sounds like somebody out there is just not happy. They're speaking tersely; they're cutting each other off. You know maybe you're hearing some anger or the way that they're speaking. You notice we have that don't assume come up there again.

Don't start reacting to that until you validate what you're hearing. You can even ask directly am I hearing you correctly? I'm sensing that you're not happy with what's going on. Really kind of get the feedback directly. Don't act until you validate it. If these are people you know and you've got prior knowledge of how they let's say normally sound then you could be a little bit more probing. But if these are new people you really can't tell. I mean some people their natural tone of voice is rather monotone and it sounds like a downer but that's just the way they talk. So knowing that you're not getting the whole package with all the information definitely take a minute to validate to ask outright in a very respectful way you know, I'm hearing something in your tone that might not sound positive about this idea; is there something you'd like to share? You know the other thing I'm going to invert this a second and say be aware of your tone of voice. You know by the way if you're going to do a lot of virtual work there's plenty of things out on the Internet, YouTubes and the like about vocal quality. And understand how your emotions can creep into your voice if you're not careful. You can be frowning and upset and thinking well they can't see me do that but they can hear you, they can hear that in your voice. So just a little additional thing to think about is possibly even yourself if you're needing to work a lot virtually is to think about maybe recording a call and then playing it back and hearing yourself and say gee, I had no idea I talk that fast or I talk really slow and that probably was driving people crazy. Kevin what's another one for you on this list?

>>Kevin Nourse: Well you know it's by virtue of making a big fat mistake difficult to bond. So probably about 10 years ago I was an online instructor with the University of Phoenix and I taught classes, undergraduate classes and I did about eight different classes. And at that institution again the expectation for instructors was that we sent very pointed feedback to students every week about how they did on their assignments. And what I did was you know I did that; I took them at face value and sent after the first week very pointed feedback to the 10 students in my class. And I just about had a mutiny on the Bounty because what happened was that I had not done a very good job about building relationships with the participants in the class. And so you can imagine you get feedback from someone you barely know and how sharp it came across. And so that really reinforced for me both the challenge of virtual medium in terms of building relationships and also its importance. So therefore when we think about ways to build relationships beyond just the task at hand; using ice breakers. I've often used those certainly in webinars and other context, conference calls before the meeting's getting started cause usually everybody arrives early, what did we do on a vacation, what is coming up for everybody. I have asked individuals in meetings what do you need to let go of to be present today, what's going on for you? So 1-minute blurb and then we move on. So it allows people to start building relationships with each other beyond just the task at hand. Or you know success stories. So before we get the meeting going today while we're waiting for everybody to show up who has a success story since the

last time we came together and what was that for you? So again, we start to piece together these relationships. You know the reality is long before we meet face-to-face in many cases we form virtual identities and relationships. And I think for a lot of the participants in the ASHA LDP program you know of course many of them are interested and have gotten involved at a state or national level in terms of volunteer roles. And so again, that's a particularly compelling instance of the need to build relationships with colleagues in a virtual format because you know you may be in the field for the next 50 years and starting the relationship off right is really, really critical. So those are a couple of strategies for mitigating that inherent challenge of how do I form relationships with these folks when in fact I can't see them. What would you add AI?

>>Alice Waagen: Well, let me jump into the potentially boring. In my line of work I do a lot of virtual learning events similar to this where people are dialed in you know webinars, et cetera. And one of the number one rules to avoid boredom and disengagement is interaction. You know we have here keep pace lively, distribute handouts but anything you can do to keep people interactively connected. We mentioned before using a polling methodology or even virtually polling get people to speak up on a regular basis and they will stay engaged and involved. On the other hand if you've organized the meeting in a way that a person doesn't have any opportunity to interject, add an opinion or be involved, the noise in their environment whether it's their phones or other things is going to start pulling their attention away. So ask yourself the question how can I keep people involved cause that's really a critical issue. Kevin back to you for more tips.

>>Kevin Nourse: Okay, I have one last thought and that's around the monotone speakers. And while I'm speaking I'd love to hear from participants who are live in our studio audience here in terms of other thoughts they have especially around navigating the non-verbal, the fact you can't see non-verbal behavior. But let me speak to this idea of monotone. So it's really interesting because the quality of one's voice can determine so much particularly as it relates to getting your ideas accepted and moving forward with them. If you lack enthusiasm in your voice you pretty much are setting that tone for others. If you aren't excited about your ideas why on earth should anybody else be excited? So it really becomes a matter of first of all knowing if you have monotone, typically a monotone voice you know the idea is finding and avidly inviting people to listen to you speak and how you speak in virtual formats so that you know how you come across. Secondly, I think the idea of how to mitigate that. For example, I'm doing this webinar standing at my desk. I have a headset on so my hands are free. And there really is -- I don't know the science of it but I do know that through my lived experience when I move my hands it tends to automate my voice -- animate my voice, excuse me in terms of bringing more inflection and tone you know more excitement to it. So I find that to the extent that you can do that. Again, many of you may have speaker headsets that you can wear so that when you're engaged you're really engaged in terms of your voice and that becomes a part of bringing energy to it. And that can go a long way toward

eliminating or reducing the likelihood of being monotone. Alice have you -- what techniques do you use cause you've got really good range in your voice when you do webinars?

>>Alice Waagen: Oh, well thank you. Well I second your issue of standing up. Years ago I knew a person who did call center customer service training I think probably the most difficult thing to do but she talked to consular people. And she said whenever you get somebody, a customer who is very angry stand up because it changes your tone and your inflection to being more authoritative. You know there's this whole area which we're not covering in here about how our non-verbal behavior really changes how we act and behave and I think that's really what we're talking about here. If I'm sitting kind of hunched up over my desk with my phone crammed in my ear it's not going to sound the same as if I have on a headset and I'm standing up and I'm gesturing and I'm moving around a little bit. Of course you know my problem is I have converted from a wireless to a wired headset. So I can't move too much or I'll yank the thing off my head which is not going to help in the delivery of this webinar. I see some other tips coming in. Mandy says you know tendency to use gestures even on a conference call. Absolutely. Just hope there's no cameras in the room to see you waving around [Laughter] but it does. It really -- you know I think this is something as I've moved more and more in the virtual world in my work I've just really been spending some time thinking about is vocal quality and how it is tied to what we're doing. It's a little bit kind of going down to advanced virtual meeting things now. But certainly if you find yourself needing to do more and more work virtually it's really important to think about these things. So Kevin, I think you've got us doing a final reflection now; do you not?

>>Kevin Nourse: I sure do, yeah. And so what we'd like you to do again if you're listening to the recording we'll invite you in just a moment to stop, pause and do some reflection. And then for folks who are live with us to feel free to type in the chat box. But at this point we'd like you to reflect on a recent virtual meeting you attended or one that maybe you facilitated and think about what was one challenge you faced in terms of the process of the meeting. So not really the content but how the meeting ran. Is there a thought based on the concepts we've shared with you today and the tips and experiences even we heard from each other what is one potential solution you think you might use if you played it all over again. Again, so think again experiences, recent experiences in terms of challenge and what is one potential solution that today's webinar suggested for you. So if you're listening to the recording now would be a good time to hit the pause button. So those in the classroom if you'd like to share your thoughts we've got a couple and then Alice I would love to hear what your thoughts are. Michele, you point out it's ironic that you know exactly some cases the conventionalism the virtual meetings are easy but really they aren't. There's so much more that goes into this idea of preparation. And so what looks -- if you think about people that run virtual meetings really well make it look so easy like anybody can do it. But the fact is like in a lot of fields there's a lot of preparation that went into that in terms of the planning, the technology, all

the things that we talked about which are really, really critical. And we've got some other folks that are typing in their thoughts. Alice what is you think about a client that you're working with that one challenge they faced and kind of solutions that you're thinking of?

>>Alice Waagen: Oh yeah. Well you know one thing I like to do is even jump back to the things in a face-to-face meeting to see if I can't incorporate them to help run a virtual meeting and one is the infamous parking lot. You know if people are pulling the discussions off of the agenda, bringing up additional items or issues that are not part of it you know you can create a virtual parking lot. Say hey, that's a great idea let's put it on the agenda for the next meeting or let's meet offline and talk about that but keeping just a razor eye on that agenda and purpose of the meeting and make sure things don't get pulled away.

>>Kevin Nourse: Terrific. Well it looks like we've got about 3 minutes left before we need to wrap up. We've got some really good suggestions in terms of our participants in the live classroom, some of the ideas. Bob talks about using a mixed meeting. On some of the ground rules especially in terms of being on time Mandy you point out. And Jayanti let's see, ways to control pouring in of ideas. Everybody you know expresses them all at once and how to give the moderator the power and the control to be able to navigate that. So some really great suggestions in terms of next steps. So Alice do you want to tie us together with some wrap-up points?

>>Alice Waagen: Absolutely. You know as somebody pointed out earlier and I just want to reinforce it here plan, plan, plan. Virtual meetings need as equal amount of planning if not more especially when you're starting out to make sure that everything goes as smoothly as possible. Test out technology. Figure out how to keep people involved. We've given you a lot of different tips and tools today. My hope is that you can pick the ones that make sense for you and utilize them to run your virtual meetings more effectively. Well, what's next, what do you do with this? Some other suggestions we have today is share what you've learned today with some of your co-workers or even friends or colleagues. You know we learn every time we teach. So what did you pick up today that you can share with others? Think about ground rules. You know maybe create a list of the ones that you want to use in your next virtual meeting or just to have in a hip pocket when you need them coming up. And lastly we have additional readings and resources in the back for you to use to continue your learning on running virtual meetings. So at this point I would like to pass the mic back to Andrea who's got some closing comments for us on our webinar today. Andrea?

>>Andrea Falzarano: Thank you Kevin and Alice and thank you everyone for joining us. This webinar is part of a series in ASHA's Leadership Academy. For more information including information on continuing education credits visit [www.asha.org](http://www.asha.org) and search leadership academy. We also encourage you to join the ASHA community focused on leadership topics. Go to [asha.org](http://asha.org) and search leadership academy. You will find a link to the online community on this page. This concludes the ASHA Leadership Academy



webinar, "Running a Successful Virtual Meeting". Goodbye from the ASHA national office.