

Five Tips for Submitting a Winning Proposal (adapted from WASTECON)

Priority will be given to proposals aligned with the way adults learn best. This is even more important in an online setting.

1. *Link to Real-World Issues.* Adults learn best when they can apply what they're learning to their real-world situations.
2. *Create "Aha!" Moments.* Deliver flashes of inspiration or insights that help participants see or explore things in new ways.
3. *Engage Participants in their Learning.* Create engaging exercises, opportunities for reflection, and problem-solving activities for participants to do together. Keep in mind that adults will remember something they've done before something they've heard.
4. *Tap into Participants' Experiences.* Adults learn through the filter of their experiences. Help them draw connections between their experiences and what they're learning.
5. *Be inspiring.* Show enthusiasm and excitement for the subject matter. Slides should reflect that inspiration.

Best Practices for Presenting an Inspiring Presentation Online

1. *Keep Slides Simple.* Slides with lots of text are confusing and hard to read. Use lists and bullet points to summarize key points that you will use and elaborate on when you are presenting.
2. *Be Organized.* Keep your presentation as short as it needs to be. Each slide should represent about two or four minutes of material. For a 30 minute presentation, try to keep the number of slides between 10-15. If you have more material, consider submitting a second presentation proposal that builds on the topic. Practice before you present. Actually talk out your presentation in advance to check if you can stay timely when presenting.
3. *Be Entertaining.* Even if you deliver a lot of factual information, use stories, humor, and "flair" to make your presentation more exciting and engaging. At the same time, remember to keep humor professional. Overall, just don't be boring!
4. *Be Visual.* Words are fine but graphics are great! It is true that a picture is worth a 1,000 words. Use it to tell your story. Instead of explain the location of a website, taking screen shots of the page you want them to visit. Videos are great if you use them effectively. They should be short. Test the delivery platform to be sure the sound comes through. If you are not confident in using video with an online presentation, skip it and just reference the video you wish to show. People can watch it on their own time.
5. *Be Engaging.* Online delivery software comes with tools like polling features, chat rooms, and virtual breakout rooms. Use them to engage your audience and gain feedback from them. Encourage people to turn on their video when you ask a question or engage the audience in a discussion.
6. *Take Questions.* If the presentation is set for 45 minutes, plan your presentation to be just 30 minutes to allow time at the beginning of the presentation as people come in and for questions at the end of the presentation.
7. *End on Time.* People are busy. Show them respect by finishing on time. If they still have questions or want more information, you can stay online, but tell everyone else they can go. Offer your contact information at the end for further discussion.