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WSIPC Guide for WASWUG Presenters

Contents

Contents

About This Guide

This Guide helps a WASWUG presenter deliver an effective session. It includes information on knowledge and preparation, as well as details about developing and designing a session that accomplishes its intended purpose. This Guide also includes information on managing and working with learners.

How to Use This Guide

This Guide serves as a foundation for how to deliver a successful WASWUG session, especially for someone who doesn't come from a presentation background. It also serves as a resource for developing and growing your presentation skill set, as well as offering tips for specific situations. If you're a new presenter, you will benefit from reading this Guide in its entirety at least once. Throughout your career as a presenter, you may also find it useful to periodically review this Guide.

Key Aspects of a Successful WASWUG Session

As a WASWUG presenter, your goal is to provide an effective session. Many aspects contribute to a successful session, and each aspect is part of one of the following key elements.

Knowledge

What you know about WSIPC and Skyward products and how they work is valuable. Sharing that knowledge educates your peers and improves their job performance. Knowledge about a topic is crucial to creating and delivering an effective session. This Guide offers insight into assessing and gaining product knowledge for the purpose of sharing it with learners.

Preparation

Have you ever attended a session that was ineffective because the instructor hadn't prepared? Maybe he hadn't planned enough time to cover all the material, or a key piece of the product was skipped. Maybe she led the class through a scenario that failed, or had to cancel the whole session because she'd forgotten to configure a demonstration database. Adequate preparation is key to a smooth, effective delivery. This Guide helps ensure that you're prepared.

Style

Knowledge and preparation fall flat without effective execution. Your personal style will be an important part of how your presentation is received. For example, when you monitor your class for cues that show you need to slow down and check for understanding, you build goodwill and increase the chance that your audience will learn the topic. Likewise, when you use the room effectively, you improve the learning environment. This Guide helps you understand the skills needed to deliver an effective presentation.

Assessing Your Product Knowledge

Ideally, you should be a Subject Matter Expert (SME) for the topic you're presenting. If you're not, make this your goal as you prepare for your session. If available, use the WSIPC Guide associated with your topic as a starting point for your learning.

Here are other things you can do to develop into a Subject Matter Expert:

- If you have access to FootPrints, do the following:
    - Research current and past WSIPC FootPrints tickets on the topic.
    - Visit the ISC FootPrints workspace and search current and past tickets that have been submitted by end users to Tier 1 Coordinators. This is helpful because you can learn what issues the end users encounter in the area you're presenting, and address these issues in your instruction.

Tip	If you don't have access to FootPrints, ask your district Coordinator for help.

- Schedule a working session with a SME and have that person thoroughly explain the topic to you, or have the SME present the topic to you as if he or she were instructing. Consider recording the session for review as you continue to prepare. You can do this using an audio recorder from a personal communication device.
- Anticipate questions that could be asked–not just about *how* something works the way it does, but *why*.

Sometimes it's an advantage if you're not a SME on a topic you're presenting. As your knowledge of the topic grows, you gain insight into the best ways to learn the topic and, therefore, the best ways to present the topic to other learners.

Becoming a SME is entirely in your hands. Knowing the product well gains the learners' confidence and respect.

Preparing for Your Session

When you prepare thoroughly and methodically, you increase the likelihood that your session will be organized and well-executed. You also increase the chance that your audience will remember and apply what you've shared, which is the ultimate goal of any presentation.

The following tasks will help you prepare for your session:

- Complete the Session Plan
- Configure the Dataset
- Prepare Supplemental Materials
- Work with Colleagues Who Might Attend Your Session
- Create a Contingency Backup Plan
- Submitting Your Presentation Materials

This section explains each task.

Complete the Session Plan

A Session Plan is the framework that defines the purpose, objectives, and content of a session. When you create a Session Plan, you define *who* needs *what*, *why* they need it, *how* you'll get them what they need, and *when* you'll know they got it.

The Session Plan consists of five primary parts, which are explained in the following sub-sections. You may want to refer to the Session Plan template (located in the Presenters section at www.waswug.wsipc.org) as you read the information below.

Tip	If you are presenting on a topic that was previously presented, contact the WASWUG Project Manager at tcranwell@wsipc.org to find out if a Session Plan exists. You may need to modify the plan to meet the needs of your session, but it could be a helpful starting point.

Purpose Statement

A purpose statement explains the need for the session. It is general and broad. The purpose statement clarifies *who* needs *what*, and *why* they need it. Identifying these three elements helps you complete the rest of your Session Plan because you can hone in on the change you want to see for learners who attend your session. It often helps to phrase the purpose statement as a "who/why/what statement." For example:

- End users (*who*) have never seen (*why*) our new module, New Student Online Enrollment. In this session, I'll explain and demonstrate (*what*) this new module.

- Based on several recent reported issues, Payroll Officers (*who*) continue to struggle (*why*) with the Retirement Calculate process. In this session, I'll demonstrate how this Calculation is derived (*what*).

- End users (*who*) need cyclical training on the Future Scheduling module to prepare for annual processes (*why*). In this session, I'll present the information that comprises Part 1 of the Future Scheduling process (*what*).

Objectives vs. Performance Outcomes

Objectives and performance outcomes are different sides of the same coin. Although many people believe these two concepts are the same, there are definite differences. An *objective* involves an action on your part, whereas a *performance outcome* involves a change on the learner's part. In short, the difference is the subject of the action being taken (instructor versus learner). WASWUG sessions do not allow for the opportunity to assess a change on the learner's part, so your presentation should focus on objectives.

Objectives

Objectives state what you are going to do during the session to help the learners understand the topic. It is a statement of what you will do or show, not a guarantee or a promise of a result or change for the learner. Typically, objectives are used when a session has constraints between the length (time duration) of the event and the amount of material to cover, or is delivered in a way that makes it challenging to verify a learner's understanding, such as a recorded (non-live) or online event.

Lead-in Activity

A lead-in activity sets the tone and lays the groundwork for a successful delivery. It also gets your audience interested in the subject matter, and therefore should be related to the topic, if possible.

Here are a few sample lead-in activities that generate more interest and involvement for the learner:

- Present a Visio poster of the Future Scheduling process and explain the general concept with an emphasis on the five main parts.
- Present the PowerPoint slide that contains definitions of the new terms associated with this topic.
- Engage the learners in a conversation about what they would like to learn in your session.

Best Practice	Avoid simply engaging the learners in a conversation to determine their skill level on the topic (novice, intermediate, experienced) unless their response would change the flow of your session.

Lesson Outline and Delivery Method

Your lesson outline is the content you'll deliver, presented in an outline or table format. It conveys the order of the content (*what*), as well as the method (*how*) you'll use to deliver the content. The outline might include only major components of the content you'll cover, but should also include some details. Regardless, it should be comprehensive enough to keep you on track and prevent you from forgetting important details.

Your outline can include notes that remind you to emphasize, reiterate, or introduce topics and concepts related to what you're doing at a particular moment. It can also list times for breaks (if you will be presenting a pre-conference or a double or triple-session), or associate topics in the outline with page numbers in the related documentation.

When you create your outline, identify an instructional delivery method for each topic or item in the outline. Defining a delivery method, *how* you'll explain something, actively helps you link your content (*what*) to your objectives.

After you create your outline, review the objectives and assign the most effective instructional delivery method to help you achieve each objective. The following sections explain each delivery method.

Tell Method (T)

The Tell method omits demonstration and focuses on verbal explanation. Use this method to explain practices, processes, or other information. For example, if you're listing new features that have been added to a module, you might use the Tell method. The Tell method is best for instilling declarative knowledge (explain, describe).

Show Method (S)

With the Show method, learners watch you illustrate the concept or demonstrate the feature. This method is ideal when, for example, you'll show learners how to add a record to the database or demonstrate which options appear when a specific check box is selected.

The Show method is appropriate for modeling and instilling procedural knowledge. However, it is imperative that this method of delivery is accompanied by some kind of a procedural assessment to verify the learner's knowledge.

Guide Method (G)

With the Guide method, you explain and demonstrate while the learner follows along. You can do this in one of two ways:

- Have learners watch you demonstrate, and then guide them through a practice exercise.
- Have the learners mimic what you're doing while you demonstrate (model). You can follow up with an independent exercise if needed.

The Guide method typically helps the learner acquire procedural knowledge (configure, run, add). However, if you use this method in conjunction with a conditional type of assessment, the learner *might* gain conditional knowledge.

Note	This is a difficult method to use for WASWUG sessions unless you are presenting a pre-conference or a double or triple-session where there would be additional time available to engage the learners.

Configure the Dataset

At least two weeks before your session, prepare the dataset you'll use during the session.

As you prepare and configure the dataset, ask yourself the following questions and prepare accordingly:

- Is my session date near a Skyward software release date? Will this affect the content of my presentation?
- Does my session require that I prepare some data ahead of time? For example, preparing polls or other learner engagement tools (if applicable).
- Do I need two datasets to demonstrate a *before* and *after* example?
- Do I need to create some of my examples before the session?
- If I can't access the training database on the day of the session, what is my backup plan?

Prepare Supplemental Materials

Supplemental materials can be an important element of your session. These materials include the PowerPoint you'll use to open and close your session and any other materials that support, enhance, or contribute to the effectiveness of your presentation.

PowerPoint

Most sessions include PowerPoint slides, or similar tool. PowerPoint slides do not take the place of a document (or Guide) and should not be a word-for-word reproduction of your presentation. The PowerPoint should support your narrative, not replace it. In fact, your PowerPoint slides should contain few sentences, and instead include images and single words or short statements that help invoke the information you're sharing. PowerPoint "best practices" indicate wordy slides are ineffective and overwhelming. Create what you need to facilitate your delivery and no more.

Create your PowerPoint using the Presenter template provided on the WASWUG website. The template comes with several standard slides. Duplicate a slide if you need to add another to your presentation.

Schematics

Schematics (or diagrams) are useful for explaining concepts that follow a specific flow, such as the general flow of the Future Scheduling process, or the processing hierarchy for pay records. If a schematic is part of your sessions, create a poster or PowerPoint slide to display it. Because you may need other people to help you create this material, start the process as early as possible so that resource and time constraints don't force you to abandon a valuable visual aid.

Other Ways to Engage Learners

Your supplemental materials might include a poll you intend to administer during your session. The WASWUG app can be used to create this type of supplemental material. For a classroom setting, you can add an exercise to a PowerPoint slide or put it in your Session Handout. Keep in mind that due to the time constraints at WASWUG, your opportunity to engage learners is limited.

WASWUG Presenter Resources

There are specific guidelines for creating supplemental materials for WASWUG.

First, every WASWUG presentation must have an accompanying PowerPoint. Use the WASWUG PPT Presenter template located on the WASWUG website at (located in the Presenters section at www.waswug.wsipc.org).

Second, use the guidelines below to determine whether you need to create a separate supplemental handout for your session:

1. If the content you're presenting is in an existing Guide, no supplemental documentation is required. Instead, reference the Guide and any specific sections on the appropriate slide in the WASWUG PPT.

2. If you're presenting a difficult concept or a hidden process, such as the payroll calculation process, create PowerPoint slides that explain the information.

3. If neither of the above applies, create a handout using the WASWUG Session Handout template (located in the Presenters section at www.waswug.wsipc.org).

Work with Colleagues Who Might Attend Your Session

Colleagues might attend your session to serve as your Driver, to be a backup Subject Matter Expert, or as a class participant. Regardless of the role the colleague plays, talk to the person ahead of time to discuss his or her role, as cooperation between you should be paramount.

Driver

The Driver is the person who navigates the software for you while you instruct. A Driver can also be a SME. The Driver's focus should be on you and your session. A Driver needs to pay attention to and respond to your cues and needs. His or her presence should be transparent and not distracting. Agree on verbal or non-verbal cues that signal what you want the Driver to do. Schedule some time to practice together before your session.

Subject Matter Expert

If another Subject Matter Expert (SME) will attend your session, decide whether that person should contribute, and if so, how. A SME colleague can be a valuable resource during a session if you and the SME have set clear expectations and guidelines. The following guidelines will help you work with a SME who attends your session:

- Agree on a cue that the SME can use if you've misspoken or provided erroneous information. Ideally, discuss the issue together at an upcoming break if possible. If there won't be a break before the session ends, give the SME an opportunity to speak.

- If you feel it will enhance the session, occasionally ask the SME if he or she has something to contribute. Don't make this a habit. Repeatedly relying on another SME undermines your credibility.

- The SME should not interrupt you to elaborate on a topic. If the SME has used a cue to get your attention, it is your prerogative as the instructor to acknowledge but not act on it.

Attendee

Occasionally, a colleague who is not a SME will attend your session to learn about the topic. This colleague is no different than any other member of the class, and should behave and be treated like other attendees.

Create a Contingency Backup Plan

WASWUG PowerPoint presentation files are uploaded ahead of time to the presenter's laptop for each breakout session. However, other issues could arise. With proper preparation, the possibility of many technical problems can be overcome.

To prepare for potential problems:

- Store materials for your session on a flash drive or external drive that you bring with you to your session. This includes your PowerPoint, a copy of your lesson outline, an electronic copy of any documentation you'll reference, and PDF copies of reports you'll run or will discuss.

- Capture images of the screens you'll use in your session. For example, you might create a Word document that includes screen shots of the areas of the software you'll show. If you'll use a Guide during your session that has figures showing screen shots, you might be able to use those figures as a backup in an extreme case where you can't access the software.

Remember that any technology can fail during your session, and prepare a backup plan.

Submitting Your Presentation Materials

As a WASWUG presenter, you will receive separate instructions by email on how and when to submit your WASWUG presentation materials. The WASWUG curriculum team requires the PowerPoint file in .pptx format for uploading to the presentation laptops. PDF versions of your PowerPoint slides and supplemental handouts are also needed for uploading to the WASWUG app. This provides attendees with electronic access to your materials ahead of time and also during your presentation.

Additional Considerations

Presenting in a classroom setting means that you and the learners are physically in the same place during the session. This section explains how to prepare for and conduct a classroom presentation.

Gather Your Supplemental Materials

Don't wait until the last minute to organize what you'll need to conduct your presentation.

At least one week before your session, list and gather the physical and electronic materials you'll need. At least two days before the start of the conference, you should have everything ready to go.

Write down all items you'll bring to your session in the Resource section of the Session Plan located on the WASWUG website at https://waswug.wsipc.org/service/present/present-fall-2018#booth-templates. The following list contains items you might bring:

- Posters, flip charts, or markers you'll use for lead-in activities or questions.
- Flash drive with a backup of your PowerPoint, all documentation including WSIPC Guide(s), and PDF copies of reports you'll show.
- Your WASWUG name badge.
- Note-taking materials to keep track of items for follow up, or to call out changes you may need to make to your documentation.

Tip	Consider having your Driver (if you have one) or a member of your team who is attending the session, keep track of notes on your behalf.

Set Up Your Room

On the day of your session, arrive early enough to complete your setup so you have at least a few minutes to get settled prior to the start of your session. Never start a session late for stragglers. Starting when the session is scheduled sends the message that you value the time of those individuals who arrived on time, and will ensure that they will get to their next session on time.

Note	If possible, at the beginning of class enlist a colleague to help with attendees who arrive late. Late attendees may need help finding a seat or logging in to Mobile Learning software, and you shouldn't stop your instruction for this.

Sessions at WASWUG do not afford you the same room preparation time that you might have for a presentation at your district or ISC. However, you must still be set up and ready to greet attendees as they arrive, not running around making sure the workstation is set up properly, has the right software, or can access the Internet.

Regardless of your venue, do the following as part of the setup:

- Sign in to the presenter's workstation and verify that you can access all programs and sites you intend to use, such as the Web interface, the PaC interface, Citrix/RDS and corresponding Print Queue(s), Bookmarks page, Firefox, Internet Explorer, Chrome, Word, PowerPoint, and SharePoint.

- If using Mobile Learning Software, write login and password information for attendees where everyone can see it. Refer to this during the opening of your session or while learners are arriving and getting settled.

Second-hand Distractions

Second-hand distractions are like second-hand smoke, distracting to both the person doing it and those around them.

Examples of second-hand distractions that you may encounter include:

- Sidebar conversations
- Reading email
- Playing games
- Checking mobile devices

The sections below provide tips on how to handle these types of distractions.

Set Expectations for Handling Second-hand Distractions

During the opening of your session, bring awareness to learners about the different types of second-hand distractions and address how you'll handle them. Let everyone know that you welcome questions but will address ongoing conversations by pausing to make sure everyone is on the same page. The following statement is a great way to lay this groundwork:

> "If you have questions at any time during today's session, raise your hand and let me know. Also, if I hear any ongoing conversations, don't be surprised if I stop and ask if you have any questions. Since I can't tell if you got lost somewhere, or if you're just chatting, I may check to see if there's something I can help with."

Now you've clearly laid the groundwork for how you'll respond to second-hand distractions and the class is aware of it.

Manage Sidebar Conversations

A sidebar conversation occurs when two or more attendees whisper or talk during your session in an ongoing or disruptive manner. Short, quiet sidebar conversations may not interfere with your instruction, but ongoing or loud conversations can disrupt your flow and disturb other members of the class. To handle these loud or ongoing sidebar conversations, remain calm and focused, and use the tips in this section.

Managing sidebar conversations is an art. Knowing the right thing to say, and saying it in the right way, are things you can practice and learn. The following sections offer practical suggestions to help you manage sidebar conversations.

Ask Whether There's a Question

Sometimes simply asking a question about a sidebar conversation can resolve it. Your tone when posing a question is important. Be genuine and sincere. Demonstrate that you want to address the reason for the conversation. Asking one of the following questions usually addresses the reason behind the conversation and allows you to continue your instruction uninterrupted.

- "Is there a question over here that I can answer?"
- "How are we doing here? Do I need to slow down a bit, or clarify a point?"
- "Did you have an idea (or thought or experience) about something I said that you'd like to share?" (If you ask this question, be prepared to facilitate any conversation that might ensue.)

Use Your Physical Presence

As an alternative to (or in conjunction with) asking if there's a question, use your physical presence to bring awareness to the talkers by employing one or all of these suggestions.

- Make eye contact with the talkers while you're presenting as if you're speaking directly to them.
- Move closer to the talkers, or stand near them. Your physical proximity can help the talkers realize their conversation is disruptive.
- Move towards the talkers while asking one of the suggestions included in "Ask Whether There's a Question" (page 14).

Read the Audience

Virtually all of the best feedback about your instruction occurs while you are presenting and comes directly and indirectly from the learners. You can improve your instruction instantly by observing and interpreting learners' verbal and non-verbal cues and responding accordingly. This section provides some points to help you read the audience.

Look

Facial expressions and body language indicate what people are thinking and feeling. Watch the audience and make eye contact with them. Do you see looks of confusion or puzzlement, crossed arms or headshakes? Are attendees leaning to look at their neighbor's computer screen? Have they disengaged? If you notice things like this, don't be shy about it, let the learners know what you're seeing and that you want to address the cause.

You don't have to call anyone out specifically. You can make a general statement like, "I see some puzzled looks from some of you. Can I clarify anything?" Let them speak up and participate. This promotes an open learning environment, shows that you're a responsive instructor, and encourages them to participate and take responsibility for their own learning.

Listen

Ongoing sidebar conversations and verbal commentary require investigation. Are you going too fast or slow? Are the learners getting lost and asking for help from a colleague, or are they bored? Do you need to initiate more Q & A time? Consider all of these possibilities and adjust your session accordingly. You can also use the suggestions from "Second-hand Distractions" (page 13) to address these issues.

Learn to Pause

Pause for effect. Learn to pause to emphasize a point or to slow the pace of a complex explanation. Pausing at appropriate points of your explanation gives learners time to process and digest your message.

Pause after you ask a question. This gives learners time to process what you asked and compose a response. Sometimes it's a good idea to repeat the question for emphasis. This also lets them know you're not going to answer the question for them.

Pause to process a question the learner has asked you. Take a breath, this gives you time to gather your thoughts and formulate the best response.

Take Breaks

For pre-conference and double or triple-sessions, do not go longer than two hours without a 10 – 15 minute break. Breaks give you time to make sure you're following your outline or adjust it if needed; talk to learners who need one-on-one attention, take care of personal issues, double check your data, respond to any off-topic questions that came from learners, or relax. Breaks also give learners time to take care of personal issues, process the content you've covered, or ask you a question they might not want to ask in front of the group.

Build breaks into your outline. At the beginning of your session, give the learners a general idea of when you're going to take a break. That way, they can plan accordingly for anything they may want to take care of during that time. Plan breaks at natural transition points in your outline.

Practice Etiquette

Your behavior and your interactions with learners affect how you're seen as a person as well as an instructor. Being courteous and respectful is a given, but here are a few other areas to focus on as well.

Food and Drink

Never eat food or chew gum during your session. The one exception to this is if you need a cough drop or something to soothe your throat. If you need to drink water during class, do so discreetly. Avoid standing in front of the room and taking large gulps from a water bottle. Instead step to the side to be less conspicuous.

Humor

Humor is conducive to learning because laughter relaxes us and promotes brain activity. If humor comes naturally to you and you feel comfortable using it during your session, use it. However, exercise good judgment as to how, when, and how often you do.

Some types of humor should be avoided and others approached cautiously. Inside jokes help you connect with others, but confuse and polarize folks who are not part of them. Avoid this attempt at humor if your audience includes people who are unfamiliar with the inside joke. Sarcasm and self-deprecation can be funny, but only in the right hands. Again, exercise caution when using these forms of humor, as they can be off-putting to some.

Always think twice before employing humor, and get feedback from people you trust and respect as to whether you're good at *being* funny, not whether you *are* funny. There is a subtle difference. Avoid using humor during your session unless it comes naturally to you and you use it on a regular basis with positive results.

Mobile Phone Usage

Never bring or use a mobile phone during your session unless you're demonstrating the software on it. Ask attendees to mute their mobile phones during your session. Occasionally an attendee may have to take a call. When your session begins, ask attendees to silence their phones but let them know they can leave the room to take urgent calls.

Engage the Participant

Engaging participants increases the impact of your session because it directly involves them. There are formal and informal ways to engage and involve the learners in your session. The more engaged the learners are, the more they're learning. So strive to make your presentations more learner-focused than teacher-focused. This is a radical change in mindset from what we've been accustomed to our whole lives, but this section provides some simple ways for you to wade into this area.

Pose a Question

The best way to involve learners is to pose a question. There are two basic types of questions: open-ended and closed. An open-ended question calls for a more in-depth response because it engages the learner's thought processes. For example, "Why is it important to verify this information before going to the next step?" is an open-ended question. A closed question requires a simple response, such as, "Which of the two reports we just discussed would you use to obtain detailed information?"

Avoid contrived questions. A contrived question is one where you might ask, "Which option would you choose?" immediately after you explain that it would be in their best interest to select one specific option over another. Questions like this are somewhat trite, and learners sense the insincerity of them.

Verbal Check-in

A verbal check-in is a quick way to see whether learners are grasping the content. You can use a verbal check-in at any time. It also can serve as a transition from one topic to the next. For example, you might say, "That concludes Step 1 of the process. Before I move on to Step 2, what are your questions about what we just covered?" When you ask a verbal check-in question, make eye contact with learners so they know your inquiry is sincere and you will respond to their questions.

The "Because" Statement

You can encourage and allow the learner to finish your statement by using the word "because." Doing this is a way for you to involve the learner and to test for understanding. Here are some examples of "because" statements.

- "You wouldn't want to give this user full security access because…"
- "It's important to know the exact date of the invoice because…"

The "because" statement can help learners make connections between what they already know and new concepts or ideas.

Group Involvement

Another way to engage learners is through group or volunteer response. When one attendee poses a question, see if another attendee knows the answer. For example, you might say, “That’s a great question. Who can answer that?” You then play the role of facilitator by allowing the participants to engage and help one another.

Repeat Questions and Responses

Repeat questions that learners pose during your session, and repeat their responses to your questions. The techniques you use to do this vary based on your venue and circumstances. Here are some general guidelines.

- If it’s possible that not everyone heard the question, repeat the question or incorporate it into your response. If the question is long, you may have to paraphrase it.

- If it’s likely that everyone *did* hear the question, do not repeat the question. Instead, incorporate the question into your response.

- If you pose a question and an attendee responds, acknowledge his or her response with more than a “yes” or “correct.” Repeat the attendee’s answer incorporated with your question for all to hear, and then thank the person for replying.

Using Your Style

Style, such as your personality traits, your appearance, your voice, your mannerisms, and whether you convey confidence, influence your success as a presenter. Style is unique and makes you who you are. Being aware of your style, modifying certain aspects of your style, and practicing your style, improves your chances of success as during your session. This section discusses some of these aspects of style.

Appearance

What we wear and how we look affects how we see ourselves and how others see us. More importantly, because it affects how we feel, it influences how we project ourselves to others. If you dress professionally, you feel confident. If you feel confident, you project confidence.

Personality and Energy

Your personality and energy impact your connection with learners and affect the success of your session. When you are positive and enjoy helping others learn, you bring an infectious energy to your delivery. This enhances your impact as a presenter. If you have pessimistic traits, don't accept that this is something you can't overcome. Strive to bring a pleasant demeanor and positive attitude to your session.

Because our energy is affected by how we feel physically as well as emotionally, set yourself up for a great session by doing the following:

- Being well-rested
- Eating well
- Staying hydrated

When you can, avoid situations that bring additional stress to you on the day of your session. If this isn't possible, learn to focus on the present moment and leave other distracting matters for later. If you'd like further guidance on this topic, see the "Nervousness" section on page 22 of this Guide.

Physical Cues

Physical cues play a very important role in classroom settings. Facial expressions, tone, voice inflection, gestures, and movement indicate what you are thinking and feeling. Watch for the cues you project while instructing and use them appropriately.

Facial Expressions

Facial expressions such as raised eyebrows, a smile, or a frown, show learners how you feel about them or the topic. Be aware of what you project to learners through your facial cues.

Learn to use your expressions to convey what you're thinking, emphasize a point, pose a question, ponder a thought, or give positive feedback to the learners in your session.

Voice: Tone, Inflection, and Rate

The tone of your voice can indicate such things as surprise, interest, certainty, concern, friendliness, disappointment, or sarcasm. Inflection adds personality to your voice and makes you interesting to listen to. It also helps engage a learner's attention. Rate is the pace at which you speak. It can determine whether you overwhelm the learners' cognitive processes or bore them to tears.

Pay attention to your voice in your everyday encounters, but also consider recording yourself while delivering a presentation. Gathering feedback in both situations is a good idea because for most of us, our presentation voice is different than our daily speaking voice. Listen to your tone, inflection, and rate. Do you use tone and inflection effectively to convey your message? Do you speak at a rate that is slow enough to understand (you don't run out of breath at the end of sentences), but fast enough to keep it interesting? With awareness and practice, you can develop an engaging voice.

Gestures and Movement

Be mindful of your gestures and how you move during your session. For example, fidgeting, rocking, and pacing distract the learner. Sometimes, nervousness is the reason for distracting movement. Other times, we're simply acting out our speech cadence. Address the cause of any distracting gestures or movements. Seeing this movement draws the learners' attention away from the message and inadvertently focuses them on the distracting behavior.

Eye Contact

Eye contact builds trust, confidence, and interest. Looking someone in the eye creates a connection between you and that person. Personalizing the atmosphere this way helps you gauge learners' involvement and their understanding of the topic, which helps you adjust your instructional delivery, if needed. Eye contact also reminds you that you're not teaching a topic—you're teaching people.

Attempt to make eye contact with every person in your session at least once. For some WASWUG sessions, this will be a challenge but do your best. Make it a goal to end your day knowing you made eye contact at some point with each person in your session. Never ask a check-in question without looking at the attendees. Even this little bit of eye contact is a reminder that you're presenting to someone, not just talking.

Verbal Detractors

A verbal detractor is an overused word, phrase, or vocal occurrence. Verbal detractors distract learners and draw their attention *away* from what you're saying and *towards* how you're saying it. There are several types of verbal detractors. One type involves the overuse of fillers such as "um," "uh," "ok," and "so." Another type of verbal detractor is the repetition of go-to statements or questions such as "does that make sense?" and "for the purposes of this training." A third type of verbal detractor is mumbling under your breath or trailing thoughts that end in incomplete sentences.

The best way to eliminate verbal detractors is through awareness. Ask someone to listen to you and tell you what and how many detractors you use. You can also record yourself and listen back. Hearing it often helps break the habit. Don't go overboard on eradicating your use of fillers. The occasional "um," or "uh," is fine. You simply want to avoid overuse.

Nervousness

It's natural to be nervous or anxious when presenting, especially if you don't often do presentations, or have little experience. But over time and with practice, you will grow more comfortable speaking in front of others. You can re-wire your brain for success and eliminate debilitating thoughts.

Table 1 provides some tips to help you deal with nerves.

Tip	Why
Prepare	Follow all of the preparatory directions given in this Guide. Thorough and proper preparation can help mitigate your anxiety.
Rehearse	Practice several times for a single event, especially if you're new to presenting. Practice out loud and with movement, exactly as you would present during the session. Practice helps build muscle and cognitive memory. You train your brain and body to automatically perform a task for you, just like learning to play a sport, or perform a skill like knitting. With practice, your brain responds automatically which helps calm your nerves. To learn more about rehearsing what you plan to say during your session, see the "Scripting" section on page 24.
Don't memorize	If you write a script to practice from, don't memorize it. When you attempt to recall something you've memorized, you're leaving yourself open to stumbling and forgetting. When you speak, you want your words to flow, not sound mechanical.
Distract your brain	Anxiety tends to be highest right before the start of the event. Your brain is working you up. To distract it, give it something menial or calming to do. For example, say the alphabet backwards or try to recall and recite your favorite poem. Listen to music that calms you or hum your favorite tune. The key is to do something that preoccupies your mind and distracts it from what you're about to do.
Breathe	Full, deep breaths can be calming. Inhale and exhale completely. You may find it helpful to put a vocal sigh in as you exhale.
Start small, start slow	All of our WASWUG events begin with a PowerPoint of some kind. The format of each PowerPoint is similar. Pace yourself and start slowly. Focus on one slide at a time. Address each slide deliberately. Begin by introducing yourself and the topic. Proceed to the next slide, and then the next. Let the presentation unfold, and before you know it, you've started and are on your way.
Look for a friendly face	Find someone in the group that you know and like. Smile at that person. This can help relax you and remind you that everyone attending your session wants you to succeed.

Tip	Why
Eat well, hydrate	Avoid food and drinks that dehydrate you or make your heart race. High energy drinks, coffee, sweets, and salty foods all tax the body. Some even increase anxiety—something you don't want to encourage.
Empower yourself	Stand in a power position for a few minutes before your session is set to begin.
Connect with your audience	Meet and greet folks as they arrive to your session. If you don't already know attendees, make the time to introduce yourself and get to know them.
Make it more about them	When appropriate, design your presentation so the instruction involves less talking by you and more interaction and discussion from the learners.

Table 1 - Tips for dealing with nervousness

Scripting

Scripting is when you write down, nearly verbatim, exactly what you'd like to say during your session. If you're new to presenting, struggling with the flow of your delivery or want to make sure you say something exactly right, scripting is a good start. Use your script as you practice, each time relying less and less on referencing the written material. Practice until you reach the point where the script is no longer needed.

Once you reach this point, you can convert your script to a high-level list of bullet points to keep you on track. Unless you've been asked to read something on someone's behalf, avoid reading from a script or from your documentation for anything other than to emphasize a note or warning. Reading from a script leaves learners with the impression that you don't really know the topic and haven't thoroughly prepared for your session.

Don't confuse scripting with memorization. Memorizing can be problematic because your memory can fail, leaving you stumbling to recall what you've memorized. It also doesn't sound natural. If you opt to memorize and your memory fails, you could freeze and be left with nothing to say. Scripting is designed to help you develop your delivery and flow. You practice enough to give yourself a general idea of what you need to say and convey, not an exact dialogue which can sound mechanical and memorized.

Instead of This, Say This

Ever hear yourself making a statement from the "Instead of this" column in Table 2 below? You might think these statements justify the circumstance you're in, but they don't. These statements are excuses, and make you sound incompetent and unprepared. If you ever hear yourself making these statements, stop. Then use the phrase, or a version of it, from the "Say this" column instead.

Instead of this…	Say this	Reason
I'm not the expert on that.	You know, Steve probably has the best answer to that question. Let me check with him and get back to you.	It doesn't end the conversation. It shows your willingness to get the answer for the user even if you don't possess the knowledge.
I didn't have time to test that.	That's a good question. Let's take a look at that.	As you prepare for your session, it's good to anticipate what others might ask or need to know. Being able to do this for every scenario isn't realistic. That's why it's better to use the suggestion in the "say this" column.
This is training data.	*Nothing*.	It's okay to tell the attendees that you're using training data if they notice something odd about the data itself. However, *never* blame your lack of preparation on the data. All data should be prepared for demonstrations you intend to show during your session. For example, if you intend to run a report, ensure that data appears on the report.

Instead of this...	Say this	Reason
I don't know.	1. Hmm, that's a good question. Let's see if we can figure that out. 2. Good question. How about if we take a look at that on our next break? 3. Good question. Do you have some ideas about that? 4. I hadn't thought of that. Let me test that and I'll add a slide to the PowerPoint that addresses your question and the solution I find, then post it for you.	It's always better to at least try to answer the question than to flat out say you don't know and move on. This is an opportunity for you to model how you'd go about finding an answer.

Table 2 - Phrases to avoid

Appendix A – Preparation Checklist

Task	Due by date	Completed
Configure the dataset for all processes, procedures, scenarios, reports and utilities that you'll demonstrate.		☐
Prepare Supplemental Materials: PPT Diagram/Schematic Session Handout		☐
Speak with colleagues who will attend your session.		☐
Prepare a backup plan.		☐
Submit PowerPoint presentation file and supplemental handouts to WASWUG Curriculum Team per email instructions.		☐
Practice your style (list areas you're working on):		☐
Gather supplemental materials (list here):		☐
Prepare polls or other learner engagement tools (if applicable).		☐
Locate the rooms(s) assigned for your breakout session(s).		☐
Set up your classroom prior to the start of your session.		☐

Appendix B – Session Plan Template

Session Plan - WASWUG

Session title as posted on the WASWUG app:
Presenter:
Length of training: ☐ Single Session ☐ Double Session ☐ Pre-conference

The purpose of this Session Plan is to help you prepare for your session at WASWUG and to ensure that your presentation achieves your objectives. To learn more about creating a Session Plan, see the *WSIPC Guide for WASWUG Presenters*.

Objectives

For WASWUG it might be helpful to think of these as your Agenda – a list of what *you* intend to do or demonstrate during your session.

Example:
[Choose one –
In this session you'll see…
In this session I'll show you…
In this session I'll demonstrate…]:

- How to …
- When to …
- Whether…
- A scenario of…
- An example of…]

Resources

1. Flash drive backup that contains:
   - Copy of your WASWUG PPT
   - Copy of all supplemental handouts for your session
   - Copy of any Guide your presentation may reference
   - PDF copies of any reports you want to show
   - Copy of this Session Plan
2. Database with prepared dataset for use during your session (demonstration)
   - Any reports that you intend to show (already generated, so you're not waiting in your session while they run)

3. Props to help you demonstrate concepts during your session
4. Etc.

Lesson Plan and Instructional Delivery Method

The lesson plan organizes the major and minor components of your presentation. Use the plan to avoid missing any points or check-in question opportunities, and as a map for how you intend to deliver the content.

Because the majority of WASWUG sessions are presentations and do not involve more than verbal check-in opportunities, the delivery method is typically (S) for Show. For more about delivery methods see the WSIPC Guide for WASWUG Presenters.

1. **Opening**
    a. **Title Slide <PPT> - Introduce yourself and your position at WSIPC**
    b. **Objectives Slide <PPT> – This is what they'll get by attending**

Sample:

2. Explain Terminology <PPT>

3. Present schematic of process flow <PPT>

4. Start the Live Demo

5. PaC Add a Credit Card [S]
    a. District Card Name
    b. Card Number
    c. Expiration Month
    d. Expiration Year
    e. Vendor
    f. Location
    g. Card Limit
    h. Active and Restricted flags

6. PaC Check In/Check Out [S]
    a. Credit Cards List
    b. Check In a Credit Card
    c. Check Out a Credit Card

7. WEB Credit Card Note Category Setup [S]
    a. Description
    b. Source

8. WEB Credit Card Group Setup [S]
    a. Credit Cards List
    b. Credit Card Group Information
    c. Approvers
    d. Credit Cards
    e. Assign Groups utility

9. WEB Account Groups for Credit Cards Setup [S]
    a. Brief Overview

10. WEB Credit Card Setup Options [S]
    a. Credit Card Setup Options Area
    b. Credit Card Approval Options Area
    c. Batch Activity Options Area

11. WEB Access by Person Setup [S]
    a. Access to All Credit Card Transactions
    b. Allow Selection of All Open Purchase Orders

12. WEB Generic Import Setup [S]
    a. List of Existing File Formats
    b. Add File Format
        i. Code
        ii. Description
        iii. File Type
        iv. Fields
    c. Defaults

13. PaC Reports [S]
    a. Credit Card Report
    b. Credit Card Check Out History Report

14. Note the Export Process Occurs [T]

15. WEB Import Credit Card Transactions [S]
    a. File Layout
    b. Browse Selection
    c. Automatically Approve the Imported Transactions Option
    d. Run the Credit Card Import Utility
        i. Preview Data to Process
        ii. Run Update
    e. Verify Transactions Were Imported

16. WEB Mass Delete Credit Card Transactions [S]
    a. Select Import File
    b. Preview Data to Process
        i. Remove Transactions From the Mass Delete process
        ii. Print the Verification Report
    c. Run the Update

End of Sample

17. Closing
    a. Final Questions/ Thank You slide <PPT> - ask if there are any final questions and thank attendees for coming

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