Taking ToP Methods Virtual:
▪ **How long doing virtual facilitation? 7 years, 2 active attendee in virtual meetings, 5 designer, presenter, facilitator, instructor.**

1. **How do you elicit and sustain productive engagement in a virtual meeting?**
   First set up to set the container by planning it. In a vm can't get people standing up, see eyes, need to prepare process to include sets of engaging activities, or check in every 3-5 minutes. Check in's – check for agreement using green check or red x so you can poll audience quickly – who agrees with this statement, etc. Verbal check in's ask what do you think about that and use the participant panel to your advantage – to know who is talking – list of participants tells you who is talking – so you know who is talking and contributing. To obtain order you have to be more formalized can't just ask a virtual group how does everyone feel about that, everyone good – you get silence, due to the fear of speaking over each other.

   Set the norms if you want to talk raise your hands and I'll call on you. To find out from the whole audience use the check marks.   What else sustains the energy – annotation – if I'm having a discussion about instructional design I structure meeting with a PPT slide that is mostly blank that I can get participation from everyone. Say 9 participants have ppt with 9 open slots build a target questions and they claim their space go in fill in the answer for them (webex). Why is this important to you? Use a blank ppt straight line on left with slots they fill in at the same time, gets robust responses in a short amt. of time. Can take out some of the points and dig deeper. Visual engagement then verbal engagement (gives you the depth).

   Maintaining focus – not paying attention – reading chats etc., ok if it's about the topic can create some depth and interaction – if off topic and out of scope can say this is out of scope bring back or turn off chat. Set expectations upfront. Allowing private chats allows participants to have more control and depends on your fac. style. Multitaking may not be fully controllable don't think you can stop all of it – again a control and style issue.

   To check for understanding can do a poll or other check in – preferably individually or in a chat – I want you to give me feedback and send it to me personally so they're not picking up what someone else says. Brainstorming – create your answer in chat box but do not hit send until I tell you so they aren't influence by each other too much.

   What do you do with the technology challenged – teach how to use the tools in the meeting. Know what tools you are going to use in advance and have people practice the tools in the first few minutes – can have directions on ppt slides. Helps you see who cannot do it - those who cannot find you can use your pointer to show

where the tools are you are using . Level the playing field in the first 3 minutes of the meeting.

2. **How do you design a virtual meeting?**
    Structure and repetition – structure everything informal – including icebreakers, etc. not much flexibility plan everything. Criteria – has a template she uses – have a visual report on PPT for each breakout session or each agenda topic – every activity whether content or activity – same slide look for content same slide look for an activity – help shorten learning curve. Give a cadence and structure so they get accustomed. Agenda may see four time – four bullets – first bullet colored in blue, second bullet in blue else in black – gives visual clue to where we are at in meeting. Time of preparation 8 hours for every 1 hour is best practices, actual 4-6 if done before shorter.

3. **What resources have you found to be most helpful? (Books, Articles, leading edge thinkers, research, technologies, leaders in the field, case studies, etc.)**

4. **How do you accommodate a variety of learning styles in virtual facilitation? (fast thinkers vs. slower, how people learn online, learning and processing styles, youth vs. adult, adult learning theory, brain research applicable to virtual, etc.)**
    How you structure. Example - In 30 sec or less I'd like to hear your thoughts on this. Do you do a break in 1 ½ hours – depends can use time trackers – type in time and want you back by … or count down timer. Break for 2 hours sessions – yes.
    Virtual oppty can engage visual and kinesthetic learners – providing handouts helps. Use good ppt bests practices. Do you summarize points - chunk in groups of 5 – give handout with all but ppt in chuck of 5. Manage to the rule not the exception.

5. **What criteria do you use in choosing tools and technologies for virtual facilitation? (costs, effectiveness, most collaborative, web-based games, ToP friendly, vendors, etc.)**
    Lots of people want to use the bells and whistles which are not always effective – what is the objective and engaging point? What tool will help us meet the objective. Use a front end activity or icebreaker – puzzle, build your Kaleidoscope, build games to be related to your topic to keep people engage at the front end until your meeting starts.

    Virtual meetings and technologies are a privilege not a right not everyone has – cost from facilitator and attendees perspective also tech capability of audience.
    Use work arounds for ToP virtually when the technology doesn't really accommodate it – FC can put a word or two on ppt. CW doesn't really work in Webex can give everyone the rights to annotate – in mindmap or in ppt. you can give everyone rights to brainstorm at the same time can even make it anonymous (change color of text).

    Submitting ideas put on Visio or Mindmap chat to facilitator, ask personally their top 5 or 3. Chat window is open but they can't see it.

    Other technologies – Mindjet they can see it and can check for consensus.

How do you manage the timing – quickest most effective thing is priority. Which set of tools will get me where I want to go. 90-120 minutes maximum for a virtual meeting.

If you structure a vm appropriately you should be able to cut out ¼ of the time you would normally spend in a f2f mtg. Less social interaction and noise but you can't sit for the same time together so you have to do more than one session and get people up to speed.

6. **What else do we need to know about virtual facilitation, not already covered?**
   virtual fac is fun and can be more effective depending on how you structure it.