

# Transcript for Key Takeaways from Class #1

## *Designing Engaging and Inclusive Content*

Hi everyone. This is Dr. Kristie Pretti-Frontczak and this is a summary of the big ideas from our *Designing and Delivering Inclusive Virtual Professional Development series*. This is going to be a quick overview of the key takeaways from session number one, which is about designing, engaging, and inclusive content. So I'm going to try to take our agenda and highlight a big idea in about a minute or less for each of the key concepts.

### **1: OPENINGS**

So we first started off talking a little bit about openings. And so the key takeaways for an opening is that you want it to be something that gains folks' attention, and we'll come back to attention grabbers here in a minute. This is also something that gets the learner prepared for the day, prepared for the topic, prepared for what's about to happen. So you want to be able to capture their interest, trigger that positive emotional attractor where they're open to learning. There should be excitement, but you don't want so much excitement that it makes folks overwhelmed or makes folks feel unsure or uncertain or outside of their comfort zone.

So there's always a dance going on between trying to get this level of excitement, as well as keeping folks from getting hyper or hypo aroused, and a good opener lasts less than five minutes. What we want to do is play around with those that are exciting in terms of movement and noise and interaction, but also excitement in terms of just neurons firing. Can you put an inspiring quote, a beautiful picture, a short video clip of something that's inspirational, and then have folks do a quiet reflection for three minutes, a poem that might be read by someone like [inaudible 00:01:47]? So there's excitement that doesn't have to be like, "I'm getting on a roller coaster ride." It could be like, "I'm ready for this. I'm interested in this and I've got all of my attention tuned in."

So those are some ideas of always starting with an opening versus starting with introductions or logistics or any other of the things we might do to think about this is the way we start things.

### **2: LEARN ABOUT YOUR LEARNERS**

The second big idea, or topic, was this idea of learning about your learners. And so, yeah, we might do a poll. We might do a needs assessment, or what I call an asset and opportunities assessment. We might do something where we put them in small groups, so they can do some job alike shares. We want to really think about learning about our learners in the way that we are approaching them. So if we think about our learners as being really capable and confident and really doing their best, we talked about presuming competence, then we can really look at them through a strength based approach.

We also want to think about not just a strength-based approach, but where are the barriers that I'm creating for this learner or the platform that I'm using or the time of day or the content that I must cover? Is that creating a barrier to this person's learning versus this person has something wrong that's inside of them? I also have to remember these are incredibly different humans. So just like I might think, "This is how I like to do it. This is what's comfortable for me." I have to recognize and really plan for that it's not going to be comfortable for everyone. So where are the choices within choices? And then always

thinking about how can I support and adapt versus oops, it all went to you know, where...I have to fix it and remediate it. So we really want to think about support, adapt, plan ahead for diversity and remove the barriers by implementing choice, which of course is the friend of inclusion.

We also want to think about all humans come with many different intersecting identities. So we can't label folks as one thing. Even if we read about gender diversity or age diversity or socioeconomic or racial ethnicity differences, we have to remember the inside the same individual, including ourselves, we have multiple identities. And so we have to be thinking and thoughtful and planning for the intersect not only between humans, but within humans. All right, the third big idea. We often talk about what before how. We also talk a little bit about why before what and what before how. The why is also part of that attention grabber. Remember I said, we would come back to the intention grabber idea? When I can connect to the why, personally, why this is important to me, why this matters for me, why I should care, why I should be paying attention, that is an attention grabber.

### **3: DETERMINE YOUR OUTCOMES**

Then we're ready to move into what is it that you want the learner to get? What are they going to get after all of this? So we might talk about Bloom's Revised Taxonomy about, are we thinking about recalling facts, do we want them to explain things or all the way up into producing new original work? For me, I like to think of this much more as a synergetic look versus a hierarchy. We want to be able to mix and match. So we want to use our mix of six, where we are putting different types of outcomes paired with each other so that you always have a pair that is on the diagonal. So if I'm going to do something that's highly information-based and recall, I also want to think about how do I promote something that is part of emotional intelligence, that self-awareness, or self-regulation, or social awareness.

If I'm going to do something about how to learn, and I'm even going to teach you how to fill out a form or how to log in or how to change and rename yourself in a Zoom screen, how do I do that in a way that also promotes a connection outcome? So when we think about determining your outcomes, we want to do always a mixture and we like to do the mix of six, which is based upon Fink's work, where we can do things that are this trivial pursuit pie image, where we had this really eclectic mixture of outcomes. And they're not the traditional participants will, participants have, or that the objective is to, but we're really thinking much deeper about is this about information, application, connection, emotional intelligence, caring, or even learning how to learn?

### **4: SET THE SCHEDULE**

Next big idea...set the schedule. We really want to think about the flow, whether it's 20 minutes or two days. We need to think about the flow of learning for humans, meaning when do I space off? So I've been recording now for about six and a half minutes. Have you already spaced off? Have you already thought about, "Oh wait, what am I doing?" So note taking can come sometimes help, dropping something in the chat, doing something that's with movement, taking a break. Sure, all of those can sort of disrupt or create another little start and stop and every little start and stop helps the brain start and stop. However, we need to think about it more broadly and go, okay, when does it make sense to be in a small group? When does it make sense for there to be a choice about the group that you're in? When does it make sense to take a longer break? Not just five minutes, five minutes go so fast. You might need a half an hour. You might need an hour.

Even if you're doing a three-hour session, you might need a third of that to be some form of screen break, bio break, processing break. So we need to value the breaks as much as we value the content. Humans need to have sensory input, high cognitive demand opportunities, and then they always need an opportunity to restore. If we're not allowing folks to restore, it's hard to keep filling and filling and filling. So when we talk about a schedule, we encourage folks to think about the time of day and if you're across time zones, recognize that not everyone will be hungry at the same time that you're breaking, so you're going to need to factor in time zones. When you think about your what of your schedule, think about what is this? Is this a large group? Is this a live session? Is this an on-demand choose your own adventure? Is this a break? So it's that kind of what type of event is it.

Then you want to think about what is the description, so folks can know what is it that we're covering, and this might connect to your mix of six, it might connect to the big ideas that you've outlined, it might connect to the themes or the through-line, which we'll come back to as well. You want to let folks know where you'll be located. So are you in Zoom? Are you on a back channel? Are you on your own? Are you in a physical location? So you want to be clear where the learning is going to take place so that they can make sure that that spot is something they can access and that they feel comfortable in. And then you, as the PD provider, need to think about what links do I need for technology?

Is there a Padlet I need to link to? Do I need to make sure my Google Drive settings are set correctly so that I can share documents and people aren't going, "I can't access it."? Do you have a backup plan so that if technology goes down or if something happens, what is your backup plan? Do you have human support notes? So do you need a co-teacher? Do you need someone to watch the chat for you? Do you need someone to troubleshoot on a back channel? And then do those co-teachers and co-facilitators need some sort of directions as well?

## **5: GET THE BRAIN READY TO LEARN**

Okay, next one. That one was a little bit longer than a minute. Get your brain ready. This is the one where we're thinking really about how to get prepared. That means how is your learning space, whether that is your bed, your chair, your car, your office, is that space ready?

If you're going to do something virtually, whether it's through Microsoft Teams or Google Hangouts or Zoom, if you're using some sort of platform, Moodle, Padlet, it doesn't matter. If there's something that's on a screen, how do they need to, as a learner, rearrange their screen so that visually and auditorily, they are able to access everything that is being shared as well as if there are shared documents, do they need multiple devices? Are they on a phone? Are they on an iPad? And so be thinking about the different size of devices. Are they sharing devices throughout the day and may have times where they're going to call on the phone and other times when they're in front of a screen? So when do you need to describe what's on the screen for folks who are just listening, when do you need to have closed captioning?

When do you need to have a transcript? When do you need to have something that's playback? And so we really want to think about not only those physical and social spaces, but how do we trigger the positive emotional attractor? The positive emotional attractor is what helps our brains really be ready for learning and really stay in a place where we are open, receptive, and hopeful. So there's five ways. We can think about the ideal or what's possible. Two, we can do something that expresses compassion by recognizing the values, needs, and desires of others. Three, we can build upon their strengths. Four,

we can express or have them express gratitude. And five, we can generate a sense of hope. Any of those will trigger the positive emotional attractor (PEA).

## 6: BE CLEAR

All right. Two more big ideas. We really want to be clear. So when we think about clear, we want to think about how many big ideas, what is our through-line and again, what before how.

So big ideas are different from what are the times I'm going to do this activity? And when am I going to be having a guest speaker? And when am I going to do a lecture? And when am I going to do a choose your own adventure? Those are the house. The big ideas or big concepts or big themes that you want to notice that you are focusing on. We like to think of no more than three big ideas. So even though in our agenda, we may have six or seven things, the big ideas were really for us about connecting in three ways, connecting to you, connecting to the content and connecting to one another. So anything that we share during the session focuses on that one big idea. So we had seventy-five minutes. **Our big idea was this idea of connecting and then we had activities and things in our agenda.**

If you have a through-line, you might want to draw it so that you can see, how am I connecting to my big idea of connecting, which is my through-line here and here and here. And if I go over here and I talk about schedules, how is that about connecting? And if I go back to the positive emotional chapter, how is that about connecting? And if I go back to my opener, how is that about connecting? So you're always drawing your through-line and then making sure you're staying true to your what, before your how. So for any virtual offering, you want to start with that attention grabber. Remember, we're putting a pin in that, we come back to it three times. So is that a statistic? A story? A reflection? Does it include movement? Just avoid starting with introductions, glossary, definitions, or even your objectives.

If you do your objectives, make sure that it ties to their why, which is the second thing. So from the attention grabber, we want to move to the purpose of the day. But it's about why it matters to them versus these are my objectives that I've set for you. Then you want to move into what will they get from it? What are the benefits? What will they get? What will they have? What will they become? And then why should they listen to you? Now you can introduce yourself more formally. Talk about your credibility, talk about your passion, talk about your shared interest.

## 7: LEVERAGE FUN

And then you can go to do all that beautiful content you laid out on your schedule and then we want to close with a real impact. When we think about another big idea is fun. And so when we talk about gaining attention, when we talk about choices, the friend of inclusion, when we talk about the through-line, the big ideas, all of this is really coming down to, is the learner experiencing joy? Is the learner having fun? Fun is what really increases engagement. This is where we get that dopamine in our system. This is where we feel like, "Oh, I can do it. I'm motivated. I can stay with it longer." So there's tons of research that says when we are in the flow, when we are joyful, when we are enjoying it, that is when it becomes meaningful for me. It's really connection over compliance. However, what's interesting is what is fun for one isn't fun for others. So that's why we come back to choice is the friend of inclusion.

We need multiple ways to ensure that folks are having fun. So it doesn't have to be crazy. It can be and especially if that's your style and we'll talk more about how we've used different props and how we've made things fun, but always be thinking about who is that pushing over the edge, the wrong way.

## **8: CLOSE IT UP**

And then our last big idea is how do you close it up? How do you reach closure? How do you wrap that staff meeting up? How do you wrap up that part of the day? How do you wrap up even just your session? So just like our openers, we need to close the container and let the learner know this part is done.

Maybe we're done with this big idea, maybe we're done with this activity, maybe we're done with this session. Again, a good closure should last no more than five minutes. It can again be that stuff that's highly engaging with another person. It could be highly introspective. One time when I was taking a class at Harvard in Cambridge, we spent 15 minutes right at the end of a day-long session in self-reflection and getting all of our notes ready and getting all of our things packed up in silence so that we really grounded ourselves in, what did I learn here today? What am I taking back with me? What am I still wondering about? And then I could really get closure and feel prepared to go, so that when they had their closing remarks, I wasn't still trying to pack my bag and check my flight and order my Uber, back in the day when we traveled, but I was all ready and then I could listen to the final remarks.

So those were the big ideas that we covered in this first session about connecting to the content. We had openers, learn about your learners, determine your outcome, set your schedule, get the brain ready to learn, be clear, leverage fun, and close it up.