

Why use technology for facilitation or collaboration?

Technology, when used well, can enrich learning and engagement. For facilitation and collaboration work, technology can be used before, during and after the meeting or event.

Considerations

The appropriate technology depends on

- **Event objectives** – e.g., how will the technology actually improve the efficiency of information collection, sharing or learning?
- **Participants** – e.g., do they have reliable access to the technology? Are people comfortable and able to use the technology?
- **Management** - Who will manage the technology? How will the technology be incorporated into group processes? What happens when the technology doesn't work?



The right technology
can enhance
information collection
and sharing

Best uses for technology

- **Information collection**- e.g., anonymous voting by using 'clickers'; **Online surveys** to gather basic information (using Likert scales (i.e., a range of options e.g., Excellent, good, poor), yes/no selections or short answers)
- **Information sharing** – e.g., To distribute information, to schedule meetings/events and to send out reminders
- **Remote access** – e.g., allow remote participation in meetings and/or document editing
- To enable the use of recording to capture live action
- As a repository for all related information

Some pitfalls

Watch out for:

- Survey questions that do not allow for reflective or multiple answer
- Documents which are not delivered in a format that is useable or accessible
- Changes in participant contact information
- Time zone differences
- Multiple revisions of documents being shared at the same time
- Disruptive online participants
- Technology that requires additional accounts, memberships or fees

Best Practices

- Test & retest
- Consider any 'work arounds' that may be needed
- Establish effective lines of communication. Ask, "What is your preferred method of contact?"
- Assess the technological capacity of participants
- Establish rapport, check in with participants periodically. Ask, "Is everyone still connected?"
- Consider potential conductivity and sound quality issues
- Use polls to engage participants
- Let participants know if you will be recording