

How to Create, Present, and Promote a Webinar Successfully for a ‘Wow’ Experience



Carla Cross, CRB, MA

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Is a webinar in your future? Everybody and their brother are doing webinars. However, too many times, they're either boring or not engaging (or both....). I had to learn to do engaging webinars when I was chosen as a presenter for the National Association of Realtors' webinar series. So, here are tips I've learned from studying webinars and doing them.



Should you become a webinar ‘maven’ (or whatever the male equivalent is...)? If you're a

- Trainer
- Coach
- Manager
- Team leader
- Salesperson
- Affiliate who wants more business (mortgage, title inspector, attorney, etc.)
- Meeting planner (so you can coach those doing webinars for you)

You may want to consider the ‘delivery method’ of a webinar. What can a webinar do for you? It can

- Inform
- Introduce
- Sell
- Increase your image
- Stretch your reach
- Reinforce your brand
- Promote your ‘next thing’ (a course, a product, a series, a book)

In this eBook, I'll take you through

- The basics of webinars
- The most common webinar mistakes
- Some technical aspects of webinars—software, etc.
- How to create your webinar
- How to promote your webinar

Meeting planners: Use this eBook to educate those who are going to do webinars for you.



When you see this arrow, it's an important point for you to note!

What *can't* a webinar do? It can't

Change people's behavior (it's not training. It's education).

Webinars are not the magic training bullet we've wished for. There are limited objectives you can accomplish by doing a webinar. (We'll investigate this more later).

Of course, the upside of a webinar is that

- People don't have to travel to get to the 'event'
- It's very cost-effective
- It puts you in front of new audiences
- You can make it 'evergreen' (record it and share it)

Some Basic Choices to Make Before You Start

1. Your vehicle

Which screen sharing company will you use to deliver your webinar? There are over 100 companies today offering some type of 'screen sharing'. They range from free to \$100+ a month. The free versions companies tout are for a limited number of viewers (usually 5-10). After that, figure on paying for the services.

Among the most popular services are GoTo Meeting, Go to Webinar, WebEx, Zoom, and BrightTalk. Whatever you choose, pick a service that will be easy for you! Getting caught in



the technicalities while you are trying to be a sparkling presenter is death by webinar.



Note: Be careful, too, not to use too many sounds, tricks, and wonderful things that particular webinar platform can provide. You can get overwhelmed—and confuse your audience.

2. What's your message?

You must first decide on

- a. Your topic
- b. Your learning objectives

a. Decide on your topic. Is it something that would lend itself to a webinar? To find out, study webinars you've attended. Do some seem too wishy-washy to have been worth your time? Are some so full of facts and figures you snooze off? Is it too much of an infomercial?

Your Topic: Overview or Detailed?

Is your topic an overview, or is it more detailed? Decide on the scope of your topic before going further.

Common webinar mistake: Either being so 'global' there is little information, or being so detailed you lose the audience in facts and figures (everything you ever wanted to know about listing presentations....sure, in 45 minutes.....)



Warning: Please don't make your webinar just an 'infomercial'. You'll get people to watch for part of the time—the first time—but you won't get referrals or repeat business! Put some 'meat' in the webinar, even if you are using it to sell the next service!

Learning Objectives

- b. Now, decide on your learning objectives. Those are what the student will know, do, and feel as a result of your webinar. In other words, start with the end in mind. What will the student get from your webinar? What does the student want?



To write your objectives, start with this sentence,

As a result of this webinar, attendees will _____ . Examples of objectives for a business planning webinar could be:

- Understand the ‘flow’ of the strategic business planning process
- Be able to differentiate between a vision and a mission statement
- Be able to pinpoint 3 areas of concern about their businesses from the previous year

After I’ve written my objectives, I know the basic structure of my webinar. I can prioritize those objectives and start arranging my webinar in the right presentation order.



Keys to Create that ‘Professional’ Webinar

You’ve got your topic and your learning objectives. Now, it’s time to give your webinar a provocative, interesting, informative name. You’ll also need to decide on your time frame. Finally, you’ll build your webinar, using the ABA formula I’ll describe below.

1. **Name your webinar.** The name of your webinar is extremely important, for it will draw people toward the webinar—or away from it. For example: Your topic is business planning. Are you going to name your webinar “The Basics of Business Planning”? Only if you want to repel people and/or put them to sleep.... I provide business planning webinars as a complimentary way to urge real estate pros to write their business plans. [Click here](#) to see one.

For years, I did webinars for the National Association of Realtors Learning Library. I was asked to do one on business planning. Knowing that can be a deadly subject, I named the webinar “Not Your Grammy’s Business Plan”. This is the topic slide.



The provocative name and picture got their attention, and was fun to do. It set the stage that we were going to have a good time at business planning.

Don't just jump into a name for your webinar. Think of several names. Run them past several people and get their feedback. Sometimes your friends can come up with much better names than you!



2. Decide the time frame of your webinar.

Webinars work best if they're no longer than 45 minutes, with about 15 minutes for questions at the end. (You can also do questions during the webinar. More about interaction and timing later). It's very challenging to hold someone's attention more than 45 minutes. So, be sure you can deliver your webinar easily in that time frame. How to find out? Practice!

3. **Sketch your webinar content and 'progress'**. When you're doing a webinar, you can't just think in terms of content. You must also think, "What visual would best represent the content?" So, as you are creating your webinar, get those 'pictures' in your head that represent your content.



Those 'Keys' Again: Construct your Webinar like a Pop Tune

To create your webinar structure, use the ABA persuasive presentation formula (those who have taken my instructor development courses ([Instructor Development Workshop](#) or my online version, [Train the Trainer](#)), or have gotten [The Ultimate Real Estate Trainer's Guide](#) knows exactly what I'm talking about).

Think of your favorite pop song. You can hum the beginning and the end, right? In fact, they are similar (the A). But, the middle is different—the B). That's how a pop song—and a presentation—should be constructed. Here's the explanation:

A—the opening—should be provocative; should lay out the problem and the solution; should have a strong 'theme'

B—the development of your theme; should support your opening. Here's where your stories, analogies, etc. come in.

A—the closing—back to the beginning; should support the theme; should paint a rosy picture and be motivating to attendees

To get a copy of the persuasive presentation (ABA) structure detail, [click here](#).

Study those Webinars

Your 'homework' assignment: Now you have some 'rules' from which to evaluate webinars. So, join 2-3 webinars in the next week and see if the presenters included these 7 webinar attributes:



1. Named their webinar to capture people's attention and interest
2. Told the attendees what would happen during the webinar (time frame, questions, polls, etc.)
3. Use learning objectives to think in terms of the end in mind
4. Timed their webinar correctly (no more than 45 minutes)
5. Used the ABA structure to create their webinar
6. Provided a summary at the end
7. Created 'action steps' so attendees get ideas on how to implement the strategies from the webinar



Tip: Use these 7 points to evaluate the webinar you're creating.

The Importance of the 'Visual' in a Webinar



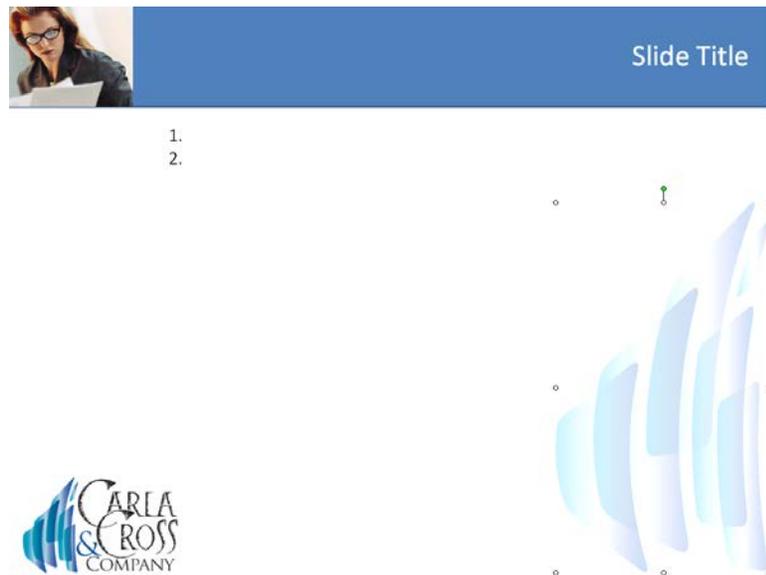
It's amazing to me that many people doing webinars don't take advantage of the visual. For most of my webinars, I have graphic artist [Pia Larson](#), of Fingerprint Marketing, do the graphics for the webinars. She injects some humor and finds some great,

engaging visuals. I sketch my webinar, and provide it to her with notes. Find someone like Pia to make your webinars 'sing' visually.

You could try [Elance](#), for example, for people who create webinars at very competitive prices. Plan on paying \$100-\$300 dollars for about 20-25 slides (can go much higher, too). Another great professional webinar designer I've worked with is Kevin Lerner, president of [The Presentation Team](#).

Creating a 'Template' for your Webinars

To simplify creating webinars, and to get a consistent 'look', I asked Pia to create a template I could use to tie together all my slides.



How to Avoid 'Death by Webinar'



We've all been there as attendees. There may be great content, but the delivery is so boring you do something else, while the webinar drones on in the background!

Don't let that presenter be you! Here are nine methods to engage your viewers, so you don't lose them. You can become a very skilled webinar 'artist' just by integrating some of these methods into your 'repertoire'.

1. *Engage them early and often.* One way is to use polls. (most webinar companies allow polls, or you can link to a poll/survey software like [SurveyMonkey](#). Not only will polls engage your viewers, the answers will give lots of information for articles and blogs. Be sure to tell your audience at the beginning that you're going to use polls—and why.



How to insert a poll: As you schedule your webinar in the webinar software you've chosen, you can create poll questions and save them in your webinar set-up. Or, you can go back later and create the polls. You can even create them while you're doing the webinar, if you can think of a few things at a time.....

I print my polls and number them, so I know when I am going to refer to them during my webinar (I put a number of the poll next to the slide where it belongs in my print-out of the slides. I use this print-out to write presentation notes and reminders for when I do the webinar).



An example of a poll:

When I'm doing business planning webinars, I ask managers at the beginning of the webinar:

"What percent of managers do you believe have a business plan?"

Then, I have multiple possible answers. After I've polled, I share with everyone, and I 'translate' or interpret the answers. I use this pool at the beginning of the webinar to draw people into the subject

without being too personal. Then, I can make the point on why planning is important. I may ask, "Why don't managers plan?"



Point: Be sure your polls have a rhyme and reason, and that they form a bridge from where you are to where you want to go. Doing a poll just to do a poll does not engage. Be careful your first poll is not confrontational.

How many polls?

In 45 minutes, use 3-5 polls. That's plenty. Any more, and you'll be too busy polling to get much more done. I am careful to space my polls. For example, if I have a poll after slide 3, and I have a total of 30 slides, I'll try to have another poll at about slide 7-9.

How long should you hold your polls open? Make your audience do the poll fast. (You can set the timeframe as you create the polls). Otherwise, you'll have lots of dead air. You can see the percent of people who have completed the poll. When you get to about 80%, tell people you are closing the poll. Then, publish the results and comment.

2. Allow and encourage **participants to ask questions in writing**. When I'm doing a webinar for the National Association of Realtors, I hold questions until the end. I end at 45 minutes after the hour, and take questions. At the beginning of the webinar, I explain how questions will be handled (at the end of the presentation). I ask participants to write their questions as they think of them. As I can, I look at questions during the presentation. If there's one that can/should be answered during the presentation, I handle it them. Otherwise, I handle them all at the end.

3. Allow audience to **raise hands**. You'll see the indicator that a hand is raised. You can allow or not allow this feature.

4. Allow audience to **ask questions verbally**. You can also mute or unmute audience's phones—or allow them to do so. Warning about unmuting: Some people have music on 'hold' on their phones. If they are unmuted, and they put you on hold, all of your audience will hear the music—and you can't stop it! So, I don't allow unmuting with audiences of any size.



5. Allow the **'chat'** feature. You can set this feature so the audience can chat with each other, or with you. I find it very difficult to carry on a chat when I'm doing the webinar! But, if you have a moderator, that moderator can field the 'private chat' and/or questions.

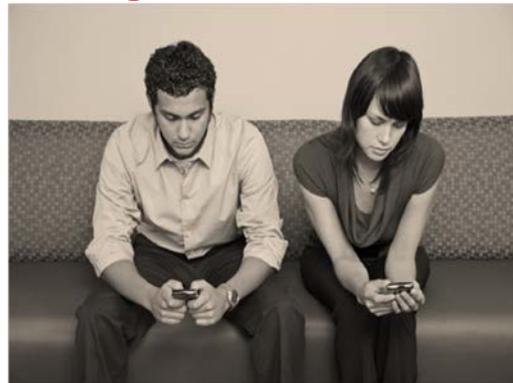
6. **Use the whiteboard** that is included with some applications (see [WebEx](#), for instance). With some programs, you can actually have the participants take over the whiteboard. I haven't done that, but it's possible. Studies show that creating something in front of your viewer is more attention-catching than showing the completed picture.

7. Use your computer's **webcam** for your introduction and to personalize your presentation. You can also use it at the end to summarize.

8. **Share your desktop** with more than your PowerPoint presentation, You can include something from the Internet, a document, or a video.

9. Ask audiences to **tweet or IM their messages** to a central location.

My friend Jonathan Nicholas, recommends [paratweet.com](#). You can put the tweets on your screen, too.



Wow! Sounds like you'll be really busy. But, don't get overwhelmed. Just start with one or two of these things in a 45 minute webinar and you'll become one of the top webinar presenters.



Big point: People have very limited attention spans! Use various methods often to keep their attention.

Tips to Make your Best Webinar Ever

Is there a webinar in your future? Webinars aren't just for trainers, or even managers. They're for agents to use, too. You can educate your potential clients, help first-time home buyers, record webinars for your website—the list is almost endless. They are an additional marketing tool for you.

Boring....or even Painful?

I'm sure you've attended webinars that were boring—even painful. Here are ten tips to assure your webinars are 'executed' like the pros.

1. **Practice.** It is amazing how many real estate professionals never practice any type of presentation. That would be like me, a musician, trying to play a recital without practicing! You can put your webinar software in 'practice' mode. Then, run through your webinar as though you had an audience.



2. **Time your slides and polls.** Time your webinar to assure you don't go over 45 minutes. Be sure to take into account the amount of time your polls will take.

3. Have the **right number of slides** for your time frame. You should introduce a new slide at least every 1-2 minutes. So, for a 45-minute 'show', you should have about 20-30 slides. When you're practicing, be sure to move through those slides fast enough. You'll see that you don't want to put many words on a slide, either. Put your time frame at certain points in your presentation. For instance, if you have 20 slides and 40 minutes, at the 10 minute marks in your slides write the time you should be hitting. If you get behind, catch up before you get to the last 10 slides, or your ending will be haphazard.

Keep the slides simple. Are you familiar with the 6 x 6 rule? That means 6 words horizontally and 6 lines. Also, make your font easy to read and large (at least 18-20 point). And, one of my pet peeves: Please don't do a lot of 'flying letters' and 'clever' (not...) sounds. It's just distracting. You'll see the bio below has more words, but it's used as a branding strategy before the presentation starts.

4. **Print** your webinar slides 2 on a page. You can save them in a PDF format. Why? Because it's difficult to see part of your slides with some webinar software. You'll want to know what's coming next, too. Also, you'll want to have a method of capturing your 'dialogue' with the slides. Make notes on your printed slide pages so you remember any stories, additions, polls, etc. you want to make verbally to each slide. Remember, you must be entertaining!

5. **Let them know who you are and why you're an expert.** Why should people listen to you? Why are you the expert? Put your bio right after your topic page and rotate between the topic page and the bio for 5 minutes prior to the webinar. You want your attendees to eagerly pay attention to what you have to say, for you are the expert!

 About your Presenter, Carla Cross, CRB, MA

Wrote the only internationally published book for real estate agents on business planning

Her business start-up plan / book, *Up and Running in 30 Days*, used internationally by thousands to start their businesses— now also online as an interactive business start-up plan— training / coaching 8 week program (www.upandrunninginrealestate.com)

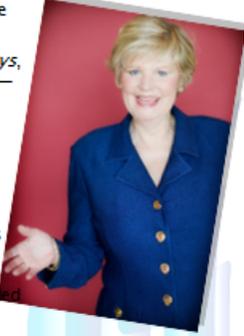
Writer and trainer for CRB business planning course
National and Washington Realtor Educator of the Year
Performance coach for the dozens of real estate companies
Former master level CRB instructor

More of her published resources endorsed and recommended by CRB and CRS than any other trainer / coach

7 internationally published books and productivity / training 20 programs

Author, online business planning resource, Beyond the Basics of Business Planning (<http://beyondthebasicsonline.com>)

www.carlacross.com



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During the time prior to the webinar, tell your attendees the timeframe for starting the webinar: “Hi, everyone. It will be 5 minutes until we start the webinar. Welcome!” Then, keep announcing your time frame to count down until 1 minute prior to the webinar.

6. **Introduction.** When you start your webinar, tell webinar attendees how you'll proceed. How will you:

- Handle questions?
- Do polls?
- Provide handouts?
- Provide contact information after the webinar?
- Manage time frames

7. **Pay attention to your verbal dynamics.** Because people can't see you, you need to use lots of 'verbal dynamics' when you present. What do I



mean? You'll want to use abundant voice inflections. Lower your voice when it's appropriate. Raise it to make a certain point. Pause for effect. Listen to webinar presenters to see what's most effective. The webinar attendees can't see you, so you need to use your voice to transmit emotion.



How to figure out if you're using enough dynamics: Record your voice only and listen to yourself. How fast are you talking? How much inflection are you using? Are you accenting certain words? Are you softening your voice at certain points? Are you keeping the energy high, though, at all times?



Tip: Listen to music and study the dynamics so you can 'contour' your presentation with this powerful tool.

8. Use a remote **wireless slide advancer** to change your slides. You've seen presenters use those 'live'. You can get one at any office supply company. Generally, I use one that attaches to my computer via a USB device. Also, you can then easily go back a slide or even 'blank' the screen.

9. **Engage a moderator.** Having someone moderate or control your webinar is a great idea, especially if you're newer at webinars. Things can go wrong! Your moderator can handle any technical issues, introduce you, if you wish, and 'chat' with attendees. Your moderator can capture questions and give them to you during the webinar, or at the end, too.

10. Use a **telephone connection**, not your computer microphone. Generally, you'll get better sound. I use a headset when I'm doing webinars.

Armed with those 10 tips, you'll execute like a pro!



How to Optimize the Impact of your Webinar

Here are three tips that will greatly increase the memo ability of your webinar.

1. **Make the slides as PDF available prior to the webinar**

Attendees love to have the PDF of the webinar prior to the event. To do this, you must have some type of PDF maker on your computer. You can get one at www.adobe.com. Or, google PDF and you'll get several programs to make PDFs—and many of them are free.

How to make the PDF. After you've installed the program on your computer, have your PowerPoint presentation open. Now, go to file/print. (I know it's weird, but, although you're making a different form of your slides, you must tell your computer to 'print'). Choose your PDF maker. In PowerPoint, choose Handouts (or handout master) and the number per page you want (your version of PowerPoint may be a bit different). I make them in color, 2 to a page. That way, it's easy for attendees to see what's on that particular slide, and to make notes. Preview what you're going to print, to assure it's what you want to print and share.

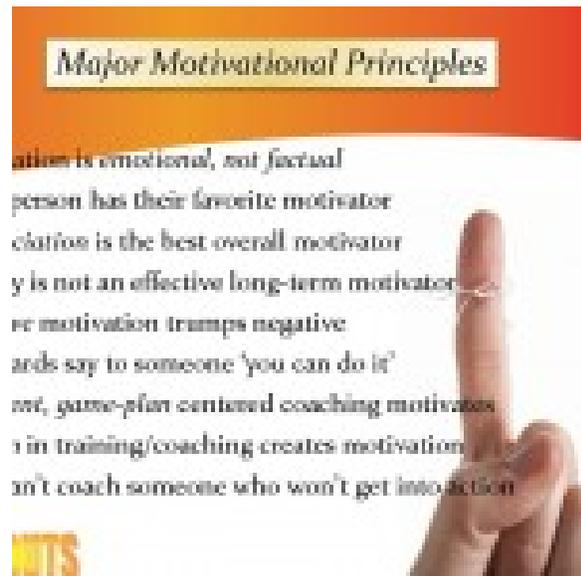
How to make the slides available. If you can, link them on your website or blog, and make the link available (I do this either on my first or last slide, depending on when I want to introduce the PDF). Or, you can use one of the Cloud storage services available today, like [Air Set](#), [DropBox](#), or Google Drive.

You can either email your attendees prior to the event with the link to your slides, or you can tell them the link early in your presentation. Be sure to print the link on your slide.

New with Go to Webinar: You can add several handouts to the webinar (including the slides). Viewers can download them prior to watching the webinar. Prior to and at the beginning of the webinar, be sure to announce that these are available, since most viewers won't be familiar with this feature.

2. Create handouts to distribute before or after the webinar.

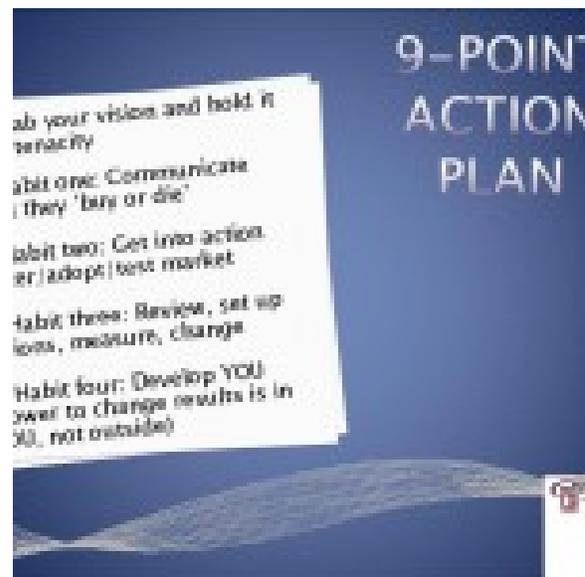
I like to refer to detailed handouts during my webinar, and show an example, if it's a document. As you can see, at the bottom of each page that refers to a handout, I put Handout. Then, at the end of the webinar, I refer again to the handouts I'll make available, and how.



3. Provide an action plan at the end of your webinar.

Darlene Lyons, longtime owner a real estate specialty speakers' bureau, of gave me this tip when I started doing webinars for the National Association of Realtors. At the end of each webinar, I provide a 8-10 point action plan. I also make this action plan part of my handouts.

2. Create assignments at the end of your webinar (and insert them as they appear in the presentation. Here are my assignments at the end of the business planning webinar I just did.





'Assignments' To Jump-Start your Business Plan

'Assignment' #1: Jot down one BHAG (big hairy audacious goal) and include it in your business plan

'Assignment' #2: Write down one trend that you believe will impact how you do business in 2017—how will you adjust your plan?

'Assignment' #3: Choose one internal review area you think will impact your business in 2017 to research. How will this change your business for 2017?

'Assignment' #4: Review your database/contact management. Be sure it's up to date so you have a foundation to keep telling those clients you love them! What's your marketing plan for this best source?



You're more apt to act yourself into feeling than feel yourself into action.

Jerome Brenner, psychologist

Promote your Webinar to Get the Greatest Impact

You're worked hard to present that webinar. Now, how can you optimize it? How can you give it staying power? Here are 11 ways.

1. Record it. Many webinar platforms today allow you to record your webinar. Then, you can put it on your website, distribute it through email, or even post it to UTube! Why? Because it's now a video. (By the way, be sure to check your recording format, to assure it is easily playable). Now, Go to Webinar even lets you attach the recorded webinar to your after-webinar emails.
2. Post it on your website. To post it to my website, I use www.Cincopa.com. I can save it in Cincopa, and post any audios or videos to my website.
3. Post it to www.SlideShare.com or www.SlideRocket.com, and edit it, then distribute it to many or few.
4. Do a promotion using your webinar recording service (less than 1 minute) or SlideShare or SlideRocket. Now, you can promote your webinar with a very short webinar.

5. Make a PDF of your slides (I save them 2 to a page, in color), add links, and distribute, either on your website, blog, or via email.

6. Create handouts, and provide a form so your audience can request the handouts. I use www.gravityforms.com to capture all those who request a handout.

7. Promote your next webinar during your present webinar. Be sure, at the end of your webinar, to promote what comes next.

8. Create a slide at the beginning of your webinar that explains who you are and what you do, and where the attendee can go to get more information. 'Play' this slide while the audience is logging in to the webinar. I alternate between my 'home page' slide and my bio slide. Then, when it's time to start my webinar, I just place the 'home' page there again and start.

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your Presenter, Carla Cross, CRB, MA

9. Afterwards, contact each attendee to get feedback.

GotoWebinar provides me lists: All those who signed up, and all those who attended (and those who didn't attend). It also lets me create specific follow-up messages to both groups—and now, attach the recording. In those messages, I include links to the recorded webinars, products, courses—anything I want to promote.



Be sure to customize your messages! (Your software allows you to do that).

10. Have a great offer to attendees to buy a resource, get coaching—whatever you think that next step will be.

11. Export your webinar attendees from your webinar platform. Put your attendees in your contact management, and send them follow-up messages with more information and specials. These people are your goldmine. Don't neglect them!

Tell Me How You're Putting these Tips to Work

We've talked about why webinars are a great alternative delivery idea; how to create a webinar; how to make your webinar interesting; how to deliver your webinar; tips to avoid mistakes during your webinar, and how to follow-up with your webinar to get more 'bang for your buck'.

Let me know how these tips work for you! Let's all make engaging, interactive, challenging webinars to help our attendees move their careers ahead.

Want to see some of my webinars? Check out www.carlacross.com and go to the [Free Webinars and more](#) button.

Resources for You



Want some guidance in how to make and give effective presentations like the pros? Check out [Knock Their Socks Off: Tips to Make your Best Presentation Ever.](#)

To get more information on creating courses with objectives, see my comprehensive online program [The Ultimate Real Estate Trainer's Guide](#). Not only for real estate presenters, this guide provides a step-by-step process for putting together a presentation (not just webinars), and dozens of presentation tips—plus tips to create exceptional full training programs.

Also, see the book *6 Weeks to a Great Webinar*, by Wayne Turmel and the Greatwebmeetings Team, Achis Marketing Services



How Can I Help You?

My specialty is real estate management, with an emphasis on training and coaching to increase

productivity and profits. I train trainers, and speak internationally on presentation techniques that work specifically for real estate professionals (we're kind of a unique breed).

I help companies get more 'bang for their buck' through helping them build, analyze, and refine their training programs—too see actual measureable increase in production and profits.

Having been a real estate salesperson, manager, trainer and coach for three decades, I know the unique challenges real estate trainers face! I have written training programs for most of the major franchises, so I have a unique perspective for recruiting, selecting, training, and coaching associates to high production.

Would you like to know more or whether I would be a good fit with your company or association? [Contact me](#) here and we'll talk! I'd love to help you create more effective training and coaching, more effective trainers, and more effective programs.

Thanks for working on your webinars. Let me know how these tips have helped you—and tips you have for others!

