

# TEACHING TIPS

## For an Engaging Class

Thank you for taking time to prepare and present at LOAFA! The audience you are presenting to will be attending four 90-minute presentations all on the same day. That is a lot of time for people to be taking in information, and keep in mind that a lot of the information will be new for the class attendees. In order for attendees to get the most out of your workshop/class, please consider these suggested guidelines.

### Connect with your audience

**Warm up the Group.** Starting your class with a short exercise or warm up will get your participants focused on the topic you are about to cover. For example, ask a few questions that participants can discuss with a partner.

*“How do you know how much herbicide you need to apply on your site?”*

*“What is the hardest part of growing trees?”*

*“If you had a magic wand, what would your property look like? What would it produce?”*

Telling **stories**, sharing case studies/lessons learned, and incorporating hand-on activities helps make concepts real for our participants. Avoid the use of **jargon** as much as possible and be sure to explain **acronyms**!

### Keep your presentation to 3 main concepts

If each presentation focuses on 3 main points, then LOAFA attendees will come away from the conference with 12 main points they have learned – that’s a lot! Sometimes we try to cover too much information, and participants end up feeling overwhelmed.

Adult education research shows that adult learners stop retaining information after about 20 minutes. So it can be beneficial to break up a lecture into 20-minute segments with activities in between.

### Think of 1 skill you would like your audience to come away with, and let them try it!

There is a difference between learning information about a subject, and learning a skill to make use of that information. Skills practice is a great way to introduce participation or an activity in your presentation. For example, you may have props you can use to teach people how to un-clog an irrigation nozzle, or you can have participants explain to their neighbor how they would use a concept you taught.



In addition to learning from experts, many participants are excited to share what they have accomplished on their own properties, as well as to hear what others are doing. Allow time for sharing and interaction during a skill-teaching time.

### **Provide a list of resources for people to follow up with**

As we know, we cannot teach everything about a topic in 90 minutes. Provide your audience with a solid list of resources; whether websites, books, technical assistance, or organizations.

One of the most empowering resources you can give a new landowner is a list of who to contact for specific questions, concerns, or assistance. A resource list will help curious learners dig deeper into a subject or review what they learned from you.

### **Preparing an Engaging Power Point**

Slides are visual notecards, but you deliver the content.

- Aim for 1 slide per 2 minutes (a maximum of 35 slides would be a good goal)
- Keep slides to a maximum of 6 bullet points
- Keep font size larger than 28 point font
- Your colors and fonts should be simple and easy to read (avoid red or light colors)
- Tables/graphics should be simple and clear, photos should be high quality
- Information should flow top to bottom and left to right
- Avoid too much information on one slide. White space is your friend
- Find the story behind your presentation, make it relatable and have fun!

### **Resources:**

#### **On Presentations:**

10 Tips on how to make slides that communicate your idea, from TED's in-house expert.

<https://blog.ted.com/10-tips-for-better-slide-decks/>

Top Tips for Effective Presentations. Skills you Need.

<https://www.skillsyouneed.com/present/presentation-tips.html>

#### **On Teaching Adults:**

Story Telling Tips. Nuts and Bolts Speed Training.

<https://nutsandboltsspeedtraining.com/storytelling-tips/>

Facilitating Adult Learning: How to Teach so People Learn. Vandenberg, L. Michigan State University.

[http://www.canr.msu.edu/od/uploads/files/PD/Facilitating\\_Adult\\_Learning.pdf](http://www.canr.msu.edu/od/uploads/files/PD/Facilitating_Adult_Learning.pdf)

