

Interactive Session Formats

The intention of an interactive session is to engage dynamically with the audience. There should be limited lecture time. After a very short lecture, each speaker should engage with the audience to allow for audience participation. The interactive sessions involve a variety of educational formats that help to engage the audience in the content presented. These formats include:

Roving Microphone/Speaker Format

- This format allows the Speaker to briefly introduce the topic, present a case or problem, and then pose a question to the audience. Using a roving microphone, audience members can voice their opinion and/or provide insight based on their experience and expertise. The Speaker then closes the discussion by summarizing the points discussed and the known literature. The goal of this session is to cover at least 3 topics, allowing for maximum input from the audience.

Case Presentation/Expert Discussion

- With this interactive format, the moderator (who also serves as one of the speakers) introduces the topic of the session. Two to three additional speakers participate by presenting cases/scenarios from their specific experiences and expertise. Participants will be encouraged to engage in the discussion by bringing their own experiences to the conversation. Polling, roving microphone, and/or ARS could be used for this session type.

Audience Response System (ARS)/Polling/Word Clouds

- This format enables a speaker to interact with the audience by collecting and analyzing responses to questions. Questions are then shared in real-time allowing for expanded discussion, better audience participation, and engagement in the topics discussed. Each speaker presents their topic followed by 1 – 2 multiple choice questions posed to the audience, who respond using the audience response system (ARS). Participants are then given the opportunity to discuss why they chose the answer they chose, stimulating further discussion. Word Clouds are also a great way to utilize the ARS system and allow your audience to give opinions and ideas, especially when creative thinking is desired.

Debate/Point-Counterpoint

- This dynamic session format allows for a controversial topic related to clinical or laboratory practice, including but not limited to different techniques or treatment options, to be discussed from opposing viewpoints in a professional forum. This format employs a neutral moderator and two (pro, con) debaters who genuinely disagree about the proposed question. This format allows alternative opinions in practice to be heard and considered, further allowing for professional practice growth and potential practice changes that impact patient outcomes.

Team-based Learning

- With this interactive session, audience participants are broken up into small groups of 4-7 individuals. The moderator/speaker introduces the topic and poses a question around that topic for the groups to discuss. The evidence around the question posed is deliberated, and each group develops an evidence-based consensus answer. The groups then come back together to examine and debate the different group answers conceived.

If you have ideas or suggestions for other interactive session formats or if you have questions about how to incorporate interactivity into your session, please get in touch with Callie Armstead at carmstead@asrm.org, or Dr. Chevis Shannon at cshannon@asrm.org.