

## Registration

### Audio Descriptive Text

Title: Professional Development 201: From Basic to Dynamic. Before the Webinar - Preparations; Registration. Image of PD practices: Sustain, Design, Promote, Deliver, Follow Up, and Evaluate. CDC logo. Icon for Market.

### Video Summary

The registration process should include periodic invitations and reminders. These can be generated as simply as using email communications or can be as complex as developing customized event pages.

### Audio Script

So, how do you get participants “in the room”?

Great design for professional development events is not a guarantee of success. Participants are needed to attend and learn!

Ensuring good attendance requires a balance of gently reminding participants about an upcoming event without being intrusive or bothersome.

It also requires selecting an appropriate time for the event. This includes everything from time of year, to the day of the week, to the time of day. Usually Mondays and Fridays are inconvenient, and early mornings and late afternoons are also poor choices.

This aspect of design goes back to the marketing practice of professional development.

The first step for communication is setting up a process for registering participants for the event. The registration process should be in place before contacting participants.

Registration can be as simple as having an inbox set up to receive email replies indicating that a person wants to attend, or more advanced using platforms such as Eventbrite®, which allows users to create customized event pages. These tools are usually free for free events.

Most webinar platforms will automatically generate emails to use as invitations once the event is designed and set up in the “room.” The same is true for registration. Most registration platforms will automatically generate follow-up emails with the details of the event conveniently coded into an “add to calendar” Microsoft® Outlook® or Apple® iCal® event that is attached, much like any other meeting request.

If not using one of these platforms, draft follow-up emails with pertinent information prior to sending out invitations to be prepared to respond quickly. Quick response to registration is important for improving attendance.

Once the registration system is established, it is time to contact the potential participants about the event. Maintaining lists and other databases of contact information for participants is a critical part of the Sustain and Market practices discussed in PD101.

Invitations to the event can be sent six months to six weeks before the event. Again, this is a balancing act. The earlier you send invitations, the more likely participants will forget about the event. Conversely, if invitations are sent closer to the event date, the more likely it is that participants will have conflicts at the time selected.

Send reminder emails about the event—best practices indicate that four reminder emails be sent.

1. Two weeks prior to the event,
2. One week prior to the event,
3. A day prior to the event, and
4. The day of the event.

Depending on the size and make-up of your audience, this may be overkill. Know your audience and judge how much encouragement is needed to ensure participation.