Follow These Tips for a Successful Virtual Training Experience

If you have applied to take an NIA course, you are invested in growing professionally and gaining valuable industry knowledge. The tips in this document are meant to assist you with that goal. Think about why you signed up for the course and how the curriculum will increase your knowledge of the industry, benefit your own company, and strengthen your professional skills. The more engaged you are, the more you'll get out of the course.

1. **Find Your Ideal Training Space**
   Even though you are not physically in the same room as your instructor and fellow students, consider where you will physically take the virtual class. Will you be in the office? Working from home? Pick a place where you can concentrate and are free from interruptions.

2. **Limit Distractions**
   Turn on your out-of-office notification so that you are free from distractions. NIA has built in plenty of breaks, including an extended one for lunch (for longer courses), which allows you to catch up on emails, calls, etc. Training is an investment in yourself, and it's up to you to ensure that it's a high priority!

3. **Use Your Video**
   We encourage you to have your video turned on throughout the duration of the course. Similar to an in-person class, the instructors want to see you! Using your video allows for increased conversations between students and gives instructors the opportunity to ensure you are understanding the content. Your instructor has built in breaks for you to be away from the camera, handle emails, calls, and personal down time.

4. **Actively Participate**
   While participating in online classes is different than in-person, it's still important for effective learning. If you're nervous about speaking up in class, you can always comment in the chat or message the instructor or NIA staff member directly.

5. **Take Notes**
   NIA's student manuals are designed for you to follow along with the instructor, take notes, and highlight important information. Taking notes will make it easier to study for the course exam (if required) at the end of the training.

6. **Internet Connection**
   Being in a virtual classroom may require more Internet bandwidth than a typical working day, especially with using your video! You'll want to ensure your bandwidth can support the virtual training class, whether that's your wireless Internet or connecting to a dedicated, wired high-speed Internet connection.

7. **Stay Focused by Staying Hydrated**
   Grab your favorite beverage—coffee, tea, water, or soda and ensure you have this easily accessible during the training. Snacks are welcome too! Remember, each course has built-in breaks, so we encourage you to review the course agenda, and plan for your breaks prior to logging in.

8. **Ensure You Are Familiar with the Virtual Platform**
   Even if you are familiar with the Zoom platform, click here for a brief tutorial to make sure you are maximizing the features that are available. Make sure to test your video and audio speakers prior to joining the online course. If you need help from your IT team, please reach out to them in advance.

9. **Ask Questions**
   Instructors want to help, and they want students to be successful and are ready to answer your questions. If you aren't comfortable asking a question verbally, feel free to send it through the chat to be discussed with the group or you can directly send your question to the instructor or NIA staff member.

10. **Get to Know Your Fellow Classmates**
    Your fellow classmates can be a source of information for you. Take notes on who is in the class with you. Maybe there is someone that you can learn from and share experiences with during or after the course is over. These are individuals who are learning the same information at the same time, so you already have something in common. Networking with them can add to your personal resource library.