

July 2025 Edition

RIVA Moderator Maxim

“The most important part of the session is rapport building with an emotional handshake included.”

RIVA Highlights:

- Linda celebrated 11 years at RIVA on July 14th!

Upcoming Classes (Aug – Sept)

RIVA 201/201V Fundamentals of Moderating

August 4-7 (in-person)

August 25-28 (virtual)

September 8-11 (in-person)

RIVA 202 Skill Acceleration

August 18-21 (in-person)

RIVA 207 Fundamentals of IDI Moderating

September 15-18 (in-person)

RIVA 303V: Advanced Moderating

September 22-25 (virtual)

To find other course dates, please visit our [website](#).

Meet the Staff: Jo Ann Hairston, Owner/Master Trainer/Master Moderator

Astrological Sign: Virgo

A Color That Brings You Happiness: Orange

A Go-to Food: Only one?? Bread and butter

Current Read/Hobby/Free-time activity: Currently reading Steamborn Series by Eric Asher

A Quotation You Like: “If you don’t stand up for something, you’ll fall for anything.”

A Cherished RIVA memory: Celebrating RIVA’s 30th anniversary in Paris. Eating delicious crepes from a hole-in-the wall crepe shop in the 16th Arrondissement at midnight!

Someone you admire/are inspired by: Naomi Henderson.

Best piece of professional advice you’ve ever received: Show up and be prepared.

Best piece of “life” advice you have received: “Do what’s right, not what’s easy.”

Scholarship Opportunities

The Naomi Henderson Legacy Awards for Teaching and Learning are currently accepting applications! You can see if you qualify or apply by visiting: <https://www.insightsassociation.org/Education/Naomi-Henderson-Legacy-Award>

RIVA’s Online Moderating Courses – Bundle & Save

A promotional graphic for RIVA's Online Moderating Classes. The background is a light-colored desk with a white coffee cup, a pen, a computer mouse, and some crumpled paper. The RIVA logo is at the top center. The text reads: "RIVA's Online Moderating Classes". Below this, three course options are listed: "610V: Moderating Online Message Boards Oct 27-29", "614V: Moderating Real-Time Text Chats Dec 15-16", and "618V: Moderating Video Chats Nov 12-13". At the bottom, it says "Bundle & Save 10% on your tuition! Contact Linda for details (linda@rivainc.com).".

RIVA's Online Moderating Classes

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RIVA's Recent Blogs

[“One Client, Multiple Projects: What We Learned”](#)

[“Small Business Advice”](#)

[“Creating Connections”](#)

[“Qual Client Boundaries: When to Say ‘No’”](#)

Other Learning Opportunities

This Friday!! Don’t miss the next episode in our [#AskARIVATrainer Facebook Live Series](#). Join Amber Tedesco as she answers questions regarding the benefits of understanding how to use multiple methodologies on July 25th at 1pm ET.

In September, join Jo Ann Hairston as RIVA & QRCA present the next webinar in the [“Mind Your Ps and Qs”](#) series.

The Value of Introducing Yourself in a Qualitative Research Event

Over the last few weeks, RIVA has received many questions from students and former students about whether it's important to introduce themselves during the emotional handshake and how much a student should divulge.

With several decades of experience under our belt and the added benefit of hearing from our Respondents during the students' mocks, we know that it's incredibly important for moderators to "close the circle" in the self-introduction stage.

1. It allows for your Respondents to feel less like they are under a microscope and less like you are a robot just bent on asking questions.
2. It makes your Respondents know you are human.
3. It gives them something of you to build a connection.
4. It makes the space *feel* safe rather than having you state it.
5. It builds rapport – which you can rely on to get deeper below top-of-mind answers.

It's always important to give a little of yourself in the intro stage to help you build a relationship with your respondents which helps you get better insights. That rapport is critical when you try new things or ask your respondents to think outside the box.

How much is too much?

Generally, when safe to do so (aka you won't bias the group), you should answer the same self-introduction questions that you asked the Respondents. If your true answers will unduly bias the group, aim for more neutral responses. If you can't answer as it will affect the Respondents' perception of the product being discussed, you can answer with something like: "My name is Brittany, I live with my husband, daughter, and two cats, and I buy whatever brand is on sale that day." It is critical that you do not lie to your Respondents especially since you have asked them to be truthful with you.

RIVA Recommendation

Always introduce yourself at the end. Respondents don't need an example of how to answer, and the session isn't about you, it's about them so put the spotlight on them right away. Respondents value it and it does affect the level of insights you will receive.

Brittany Mohammed
Qualitative Training & Research Specialist

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"We do what we teach, and we teach what we do."

RIVA Training Institute is now [IACET Accredited](#)

Find out more about Naomi's book at: <https://rivainc.com/our-book/>