

Facilitation Skills

This two-day workshop will help you teach participants how to:

- Distinguish facilitation from instruction and training
- Identify the competencies linked to effective small group facilitation
- Understand the difference between content and process
- Identify the four stages of team development and ways to help teams through each stage
- Use common process tools to make meetings easier and more productive

Introduction and Course Overview

You will spend the first part of the day getting to know participants and discussing what will take place during the workshop. Students will also have an opportunity to identify their personal learning objectives.

Definitions

Participants will explore the differences between instruction, facilitation, and management in small and large groups.

What is a Facilitator?

Through a lecture, participants will learn about the history of facilitation, some key skills, the levels of facilitation, and the facilitation process.

Types of Groups

Facilitators must work with all types of groups. In this session, participants will discuss two common types (participatory and conventional) groups in a small group setting.

Content and Process

It is very important for facilitators to understand the differences between content and process, as they have a different role in each element. These concepts will be explored in a large group discussion.

Group Norms

During this session, participants will learn about team norms and set some for themselves to guide the rest of the workshop.

Types of Thinking

This session will explore divergent thinking, convergent thinking, the groan zone, and multi-voting tools through a lecture and a large group exercise.

Controversial Issues

Facilitators are often asked for their help when a group has a controversial issue to deal with. In this session we will learn about a tool that can help participants facilitate these types of issues: the gradient of agreement.

Communication Skills

A key part of the facilitator's toolbox is communication skills. We will discuss how to ask good questions, how to actively listen, how to use non-verbal messages, and how to listen for common ground.

Common Facilitation Techniques

We will spend several hours looking at twenty techniques that facilitators often use. First we will explore these techniques through lecture, and then participants will role play the techniques in front of the large group.

Effective Feedback

Giving and receiving feedback is an important part of facilitation. We will look at both elements during this session.

Facilitating an Open Discussion

During this session, we will look at some facilitation techniques that the facilitator can use to ensure everyone in the group gets a chance to speak.

Managing Divergent Perspectives

Usually, if a lot of people are taking part in a discussion, there are a lot of differing perspectives on the issues. The facilitator's challenge is to help people value one another's contributions. Through a lecture and a case study, this session will look at some ways that the facilitator can do this.

The Language of Facilitation

This session will look at four language techniques that facilitators commonly use.

City Council

Participants will apply the knowledge learned so far to a case study.

Agendas

Agendas can be a great tool for facilitating meetings. We will look at how to develop an agenda and we will develop a sample agenda.

Dealing with Difficult Dynamics

Participants will work in small groups to complete a mix-and-match exercise on difficult people and how to manage them.

Interventions

This session will look at some techniques facilitators can use to intervene. Participants will have an opportunity to practice these interventions in a role play.

Sustainable Agreements

As a facilitator, you want to make sure that all points of view have been considered, so that when an agreement is reached, it is one that everyone is happy with. During this session we will look at the components of a sustainable agreement.

Stages of Team Development

This session will explore Tuckman and Jensen's four stage model of team development: forming, storming, norming, and performing. We will also look at some ways that a facilitator can help groups move through these stages.

Analysis Tools

SWOT analysis and force field analysis can help the group analyze internal or external problems. We will take a brief look at how to use both tools.

Workshop Wrap-Up

At the end of the day, students will have an opportunity to ask questions and fill out an action plan.