Think of a time when...
FACILITATION: “How do you think the company can solve this problem? Does anyone have any ideas?”

PRESENTATION: “This is how we’ll solve the problem...”
Facilitation is appropriate when...

- You want to encourage motivation, commitment, and confidence.
- You want to make the most of group knowledge, experience, and diversity.
- There’s more than one answer to a question or side to a story.
- A person in power wants to be a participant.
- You want to learn about your group’s process or challenge an inefficient process.
What is a Facilitator?

• An individual or individuals that help manage the process for group centered meetings.

• A facilitator helps groups arrive at their objective by ensuring everyone’s contribution is heard and that the processes used are productive and empowering to all.

• Facilitation can involve managing emotions, defusing tensions and encouraging cohesiveness.

• Facilitators attend to process first, then content.
Process Elements

- Meeting Flow
- Communication
- Power/Influence
- Problem-Solving Process

- Participation
- Roles
- Decision-Making Process
- Group Atmosphere
The subject matter of a discussion.

The literal meaning of words.

**ALL** content in a facilitated discussion should come from the group, *not* the facilitator.
A Facilitator’s Focus

• Content-neutral process experts.

• When a facilitator adds content, their role is confused from neutral guide to biased participant or trainer/coach.
Facilitation Tasks

• Collect data
• Gather, then present/clarify information
• Synthesize and summarize
• Encourage participation
• Conflict Management
Top Things to Remember

• Effective facilitation makes things easier.

• Facilitators must be content-neutral process experts.

• Positions generally mask underlying interests.

• Facilitation begins before a meeting and ends after.
QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS?
INCREASING ENGAGEMENT
Engagement – What is it?

• Emotional involvement or commitment
• Meaningful and mutually beneficial collaboration
• A promise, obligation, or other condition that binds
Engagement – Your Group

How would you describe your Group’s current level of engagement?

1. During meetings
2. Between meetings

What drives their engagement?
Engagement – Getting the most from meetings

Pre meeting
– Advance communication before agenda and background materials
– Encourage participation; have 1:1 discussions
– Agenda design

Room set up
– Conducive to group discussion
– Members in center “U”
– Appropriate audio system

Virtual
– Net conference/webex
– Frequent checks
Engagement – Getting the most from meetings

Presenters
– Front of the room
– Standardize presentation outline
– Focus on C.L.E.A.R. content

Breaks
– Improves mental and physical focus
– Enables informal dialogue
Engagement – C.L.E.A.R information

**Context**
Give information and context up front—don’t just jump into the topic

**Logical structure**
Give information a logical structure; don’t ramble

**Essential elements**
Cut out unnecessary elements, stay on main message, and keep sentences short and simple

**Ambiguity reduction**
Choose specific, clearly-defined and familiar words, and avoid vague terms

**Resonance**
Provide elements that resonate with the audience
Top Things to Remember

1. Attendance does not equal engagement.
2. Extroverts and introverts engage differently.
3. Make sure new members are “installed.”
4. Create an environment conducive for engagement.
5. Check for understanding to get a real time assessment.
6. Make your content C.L.E.A.R.
7. Call on members to bring them into the conversation.
QUESTIONS?
MANAGING CONFLICT
Facilitating Through Conflict

- Address disruptions.
- Help the group resolve issues on their own.
- Establish rules for preventing/addressing dysfunction.
- Restate and reframe.
- Get/keep people on track.
INTERESTS

POSITIONS
There are no problem people, only problem facilitators, who can’t cope with energy and creativity.

*Trevor Bentley, UK facilitator and author*
# Difficult People and How to Handle Them

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Person</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Typical Behavior</th>
<th>Ways to Deal with Them</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dominating</td>
<td>Members who monopolize conversation and overtly block others from contributing.</td>
<td>“I’m the only one with experience in this matter. Let me tell you what to do.”</td>
<td>• Solicit others’ opinions. “We appreciate your experience and will take it into account. Let’s see what others think now.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressive</td>
<td>Members who resort to personal attacks.</td>
<td>“You don’t know what you’re doing!”</td>
<td>• Reiterate ground rules. “We agreed there will be no personal attacks.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Get back on topic. “All comments are useful as long as they relate to the topic.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Re-state their position objectively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet or Non-Participative</td>
<td>Members who are quiet because they are shy, intimidated, or uncomfortable joining in the topic.</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>• Establish eye contact and invite them to join. “We’d like to hear from people we haven’t heard from yet. What’s your take on the issue?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overly Talkative</td>
<td>Members talk too much.</td>
<td>blahblahblah blahblah blahblah</td>
<td>• Remind them of the time limit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Tell them you can only discuss one point at a time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Ask them for summary points.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Virtual Facilitation: Think PULL, not PUSH

- Set participation expectations.
- Recognize benefits and limitations of technology.
- Get comfortable with silence.
- Use pre- and post-meeting time effectively.
QUESTIONS?
BUILDING CONSENSUS
Building Consensus

Goal:

• Cooperative rather than competitive decision-making.

• All members should have equal input in the process, and equal opportunity to voice opposition to an idea or conclusion.
Building Consensus

1. Focus on interests rather than positions.
2. Surface the underlying value that makes people take the position they do.
3. Involve all parties in the solution-making process.
4. Increase sameness and reduce differentiation.
5. An increased empathy can make finding common interests easier.
Building Consensus

- Collect data
- Gather information
- Present information
- Synthesize and summarize
- Reach a decision point
- Choose a solution
Collecting Data

• Understand what is expected from the meeting and what is expected from you as a facilitator.

• Talk to or survey participants ahead of time. This can give you time to understand the dynamics of the issue.

• Review documentation about the group’s previous meetings e.g. minutes or progress reports.

• If there’s a sensitive issue involved, know as much as you can about it— and even the personalities involved.
Encouraging Participation

- Provide guidelines in the meeting agenda.
- Check everyone’s comfort level.
- Set participation expectation.
- Acknowledge all responses.
- Avoid discounting or judging responses.
- Solicit group members’ responses.
- Build on responses.
- Intentionally keep silent.
- Thank the group.
Gathering Information

- Go-round
- Break out groups
- Brainstorming
Presenting Information

- Separate presentation from discussion time.
- Assign equal time for more than one:
  - Side of the issue
  - Option in consideration
- Use multi-media.
Synthesizing and Summarizing

From the group:

• Ask a group member/group members to provide a synthesis or summary.
  – Example: “What have we discussed so far?”, “What did you learn from this discussion?” or “What have we decided about this situation?”
Synthesizing and Summarizing

From the Facilitator:

• Offer your tentative synthesis/summary and seek for clarification.
  
  Example: “This is what we have discussed so far….Did I miss anything out?”

• Refer to the agenda, documentation or flip chart paper.
  
  – “So far, we have discussed Topic A and B. These are our resolutions...”
Reaching a Decision Point

- Identify options
- Create a short list
- Choose a short list option
- Multi-option technique
Identifying the Options

• Brainstorm
• Pro’s and Con’s
• Round Robin
• Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis
Brainstorming Rules...

• Some of the ideas will not be good.
• If you start analyzing the ideas while you are generating them, you may miss out on some great ideas.
• Allow creativity and imagination to take over in this phase of the process.
• Finally, use early ideas as springboards to other ideas.
## Pro’s and Con’s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pro’s</th>
<th>Con’s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Subject of SWOT Analysis:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strength</th>
<th>Weakness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Creating a Short List

Criteria:

• Costs and benefits
• Factored impact of any disagreeing parties’ interests
• Foresight
• Obstacles
• Values
Choosing a Solution

• Decide on a criterion (or criteria)
• Survey which options members like and don’t like
Using the Multi-Option Technique

• When to use:
  – If you are not limited to choosing one best option and follow through on solutions can be simultaneously.
  – Assign a person or team to follow through on each option.
  – The solutions followed through in a multi-option technique are not necessarily complimentary to one another.
Intervention May Be Necessary To:

• Help the group achieve their goals.
• Protect group process.
• Prevent the escalation of an issue.
When to Intervene

• The group is stuck.

• The group is about to move on without realizing an important aspect of the discussion is unresolved or unaddressed.

• A negative pattern develops despite soft interventions

• Gets too personal.

• Process is being hampered by a dominant person or clique

• Misunderstandings.

• Perceives tension and suspiciousness.
Levels of Intervention

• No intervention
• Reflective technique
• Solicit the group’s observations
• Interpret observations
• Suggest solutions
• Restructure the process or an aspect of it
• Confront
Intervention Techniques

• Use of processes
• Boomerang it back
• ICE it
Using Your Processes

• **Problem:** Lack of information
  **Solution:** Make presentation time on the agenda

• **Problem:** Lack of understanding
  **Solution:** Break the group into pairs or chunk information

• **Problem:** Monopoly of the floor by certain member
  **Solution:** Round Robin
Boomerang it Back

• Present an issue back to the group for resolution.

• Rephrase a group’s concern into a question.
  – Member: “Maybe we are just too tired to think of a new idea for this project.”
  – Facilitator: “*Do you think you are too tired?*”

• Bounce a question back.
  – Member: “Should we continue this project?”
  – Facilitator: “*What do you think? Should we?*”
ICE stands for:

- **Identify**: “What do you think is going on in the group right now?”
- **Check for agreement**: “So, if I understand correctly, this is what is happening? Is this correct?”
- **Evaluate how to resolve**: “How do we go about addressing this problem?”
Facilitation 101

THINGS TO REMEMBER
Building Positive Energy and Goodwill

- Have a good attitude.
- Frame things positively.
- Create actionable items.
- Try to keep emotions out of your statements.
- Take a break when you need it.
- If you say, “I see where you’re coming from,” make sure you mean it.
- Invite the other person to step into your shoes.
- Help share as much information as you can.
Be Open

• Help others look at the situation from another person’s perspective.

• Build a bridge by:
  – Active Listening
  – Use Common Language
  – Highlight Similarities
  – Sustained Communication
Keep in mind . . .

• People generally don’t want to deal with individuals whose intention is to win at all points, or be declared “right” for the sake of being right.

• A person who is willing to “give in” from time to time comes across as sensible and realistic.
The Power of Emotion

• Focus on positive emotions as benefits
• Focus on a negative emotion, and then add a call to action
• Recognize issues may be personal
• Gage body language
• Emotion can balance the coldness of reason
The Power of Facts

• Facts are objective data, and can be verified
• Brings logic to augments
• Facts can temper strong emotions
Disagreeing Constructively

• Solution-focus
• Mutual respect
• Win-Win solution
• Reasonable concessions
• Learning-focused
Reaching Consensus... Ask Yourself

• Have we reached an agreement that comes as close as possible to fulfilling the group’s interest(s)?

• Will all parties of the group fulfill their commitment? Do we have a good process for measuring and monitoring fulfillment?

• Does the group feel satisfied by the substance of the agreement and the process by which it was reached?
Top Five Things to Remember

1. Focus on interests rather than positions.
2. Surface the underlying value that makes people take their positions.
3. Involve all parties in the solution-making process.
4. Increase sameness and reduce differentiation.
5. An increased empathy can make finding common interests easier.
Summary

• Differentiate between process and content in the context of a group discussion.

• Provide guidelines in dealing with disruptions, dysfunctions, and difficult people in groups.

• Identify ways a facilitator can help a group reach a consensus: from encouraging participation to choosing a solution.

• Define what interventions are, when they are appropriate, and how to implement them.
QUESTIONS?