

Facilitation Skills
Presented by Susan Fee
Licensed Professional Counselor and Trainer
www.susanfee.com

Tele-seminar Agenda:

- Define facilitation and necessary skills
- How to run effective meetings and increase participation
- Tips for facilitating difficult situations and personalities
- Q&A (last 15 minutes). *You may also submit questions in advance to Susan_Fee@msn.com*

What is facilitation?

Facilitation is organizing and managing group activities to make the best use of time and resources while achieving the group's desired outcome.

A facilitator's role does not include:

- 1.
- 2.

How is facilitation helpful to groups?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Effective facilitators possess strong interpersonal skills:

- Body language
- Delivery
- Listening
- Empathy
- Honesty
- Conflict resolution

Preparing for Meetings

1. Ask critical questions
 - Why are we meeting?
 - Could this issue be addressed in a memo?
 - Who really needs to attend?
2. Build Agenda
 - Does the agenda support the purpose?
 - How much time is available? Will questions/discussion be allowed?
 - What actions/participation will be required?
3. Distribute agenda/materials
 - Distribute agenda 24-48 hours in advance
 - Distribute other materials in time for preparation
 - Notify participants of actions required before and during meeting
4. Finalize preparations
 - Determine room logistics (seating, equipment, handouts)

Pre-Meeting Facilitator Considerations

- Level of formality
- Seating that most supports topic
- Group dynamics, power issues, hidden agendas, hot topics
- Likelihood of agreement, dissension
- Follow up

Running an Effective Meeting

- Start on time (what you allow you teach)
- Announce purpose and clarify outcome expectations
- Ice breaker (if necessary)
- Review agenda
- Assign roles (timekeeper, recorder, “set aside” recorder)
- Set ground rules

Examples:

Facilitator Techniques

1. Initiating discussion

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2. Encourage participation

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3. Stop side conversations

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4. Focus ramblers

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5. Curb tangential discussions

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6. Uncover hidden agendas

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Facilitating Conflict

Examine your personal assumptions regarding conflict:

Allow conflict when:

- It allows members to grow and change
- It allows members to understand one another better
- It increases options and considerations on the table
- It brings out problems or issues that should be addressed
- It increases involvement

Intervene when:

- It takes focus off group goals
- It leads to unrelated side issues best handled separately
- It polarizes the group
- It involves personal attacks (breaks ground rules)
- It disregards values of group or organization

Steps to intervene:

1. Revisit ground rules
2. Explore root of the conflict (values, attitudes, needs, expectations, perceptions, resources, personalities)
3. Encourage each side to listen, paraphrase, use empathy
4. Encourage each side to take part in problem solving (finding commonalities)
5. Put agreement in writing

Conflict Resolution Ground Rules

- Both parties state their problem
- Use “I” statements
- No zapping or cross-complaining
- No interruptions
- Restate what you’ve heard
- Ask clarifying questions (not “why”)
- Stay in present and future, no bringing up the past

Further resources available at www.susanfee.com: *Secrets for Successful Presentations*, *Dealing With Difficult People*, and *Positive First Impressions*