

# Facilitation Skills

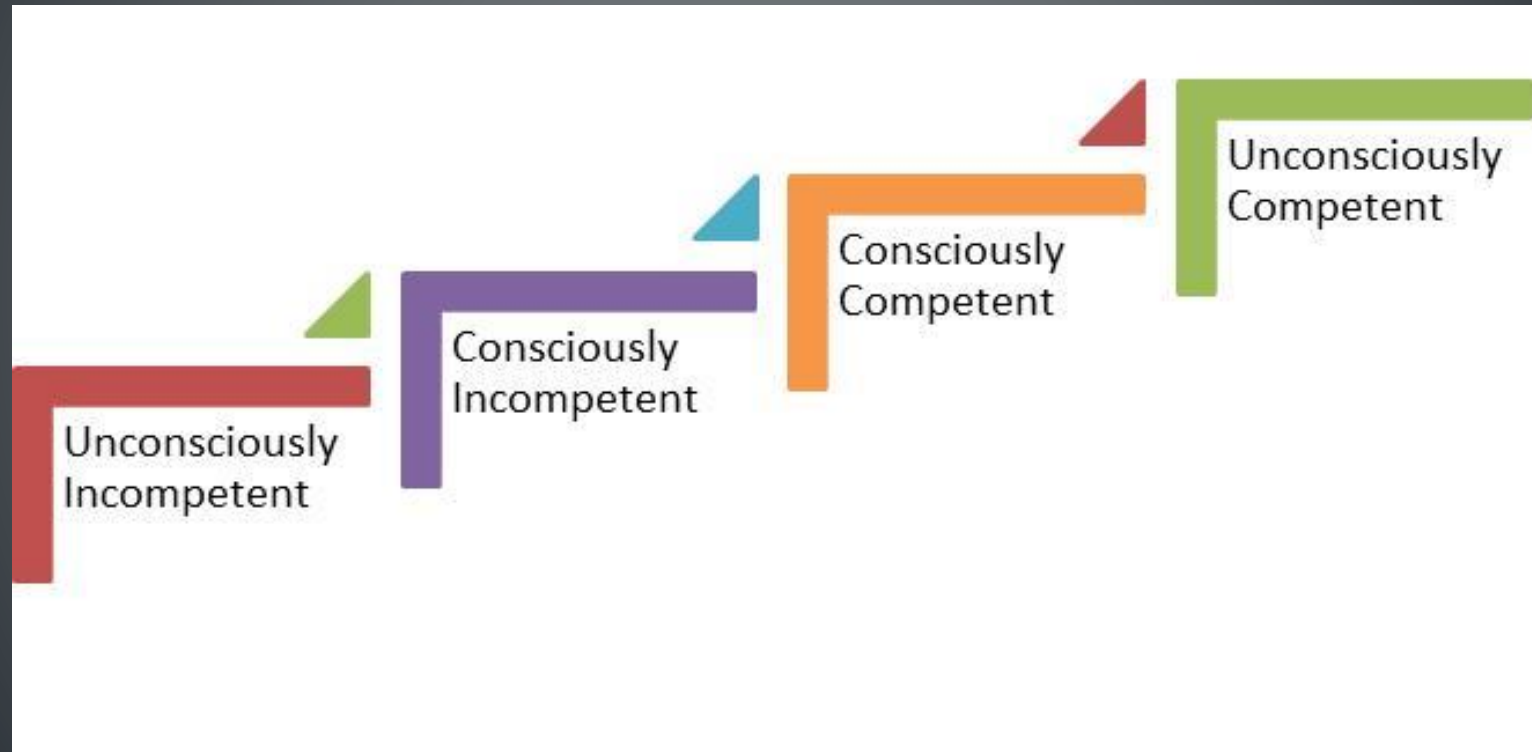
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# What are your experiences with facilitating?



As with learning many types of skills, the learning ladder applies



# What is facilitation?

- Helps a group clarify goals and desired outcomes
- Neutral party to assist with the process of decision making, division of work, brainstorming, etc
- Keep meetings focused and moving along
- Promotes sense of
  - Safety
  - Inclusion
  - Trust

# Promote safety, inclusion, trust

- Confidentiality
- Equal airtime
- Non-judgmental listening
- Timeliness
- Engaged
- Right to pass



<b>Training</b>	<b>Presenting</b>	<b>Facilitation</b>
Participants are present to learn.	Audience is present to receive prepared remarks.	Participants are members of teams whose mission is to recommend new ideas or improvements.
Objectives are based upon learning.	Objectives are based on what is to be communicated, i.e., sell, inform, motivate, describe.	Objectives are based on process improvements.
Lesson plans are prepared to enhance learning structure.	Presenter's outline structures a logical presentation.	An agenda is used to structure the meeting for effectiveness.
Instructor is a catalyst for learning.	Presenter primarily answers rather than asks questions.	Questions are used to develop individual involvement in the group.
Instructor asks questions to evaluate learning.	Visual aids are use to present data (charts, graphs, tables).	Flip chart is used to record team member's inputs and ideas.
Visual and training aids (tapes, films, cases, roleplays) are used to illustrate learning points.	Data, charts, graphs are used to support messages or recommendations.	Facilitator teaches members to use tools for team problem solving.
Involvement (experiential learning) is used to learn from others' experience and retain interest.	Communication is largely one-way from presenter to audience.	Facilitator manages the meeting structure, not content.

## Behaviors That Help Effectiveness

<b><i>Behavior</i></b>	<b><i>Description</i></b>
Listens Actively	looks at the person who is speaking, nods, asks probing questions and acknowledges what is said by paraphrasing point(s) made
Supports	encourages others to develop ideas and make suggestions; gives them recognition for their ideas
Probes	goes beyond the surface comments by questioning teammates to uncover hidden information
Clarifies	asks members for more information about what they mean; clears up confusion
Offers Ideas	shares suggestions, ideas, solutions, and proposals
Includes Others	asks quiet members for their opinions, making sure no one is left out
Summarizes	pulls together ideas from a number of people; determines where the group is and what has been covered
Harmonizes	reconciles opposing points of view; links together similar ideas; points out where ideas are the same
Manages Conflict	listens to the views of others; clarifies issues and key points made by opponents; seeks solutions

## Behaviors That Hinder Effectiveness

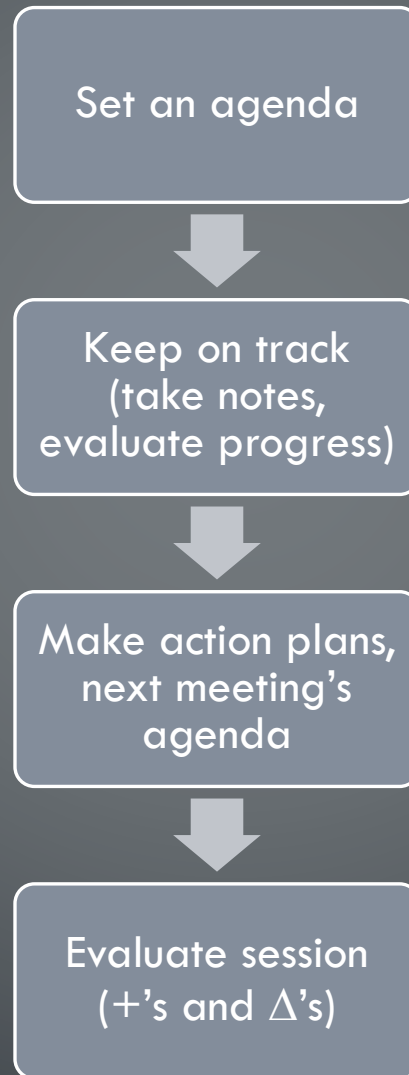
<i>Behavior</i>	<i>Description</i>
"Yeah But's"	discredits the ideas of others
Blocks	insists on getting one's way; doesn't compromise; stands in the way of the team's progress
Grandstands	draws attention to one's personal skills; boasts
Goes Off Topic	directs the conversation off onto other topics
Dominates	tries to "run" the group through dictating, bullying
Withdraws	doesn't participate or offer help or support to others
Devil's Advocate	takes pride in being contrary
Criticizes	makes negative comments about people or their ideas
Personal Slurs	hurls insults at other people



# Process

- Clarify session goal/set an agenda
- Develop ground rules
- Set time frames/appoint timekeeper/create parking lot
- Start discussion
- Check purpose/process/pace throughout
- Maintain the climate (safety, inclusion, trust)
- Record ideas, progress, and goals
- Paraphrase and summarize throughout
- Clarify and ratify decisions
- Create actions plans
- Develop follow-up/create next agenda
- Evaluate the session

# Most important aspects of process

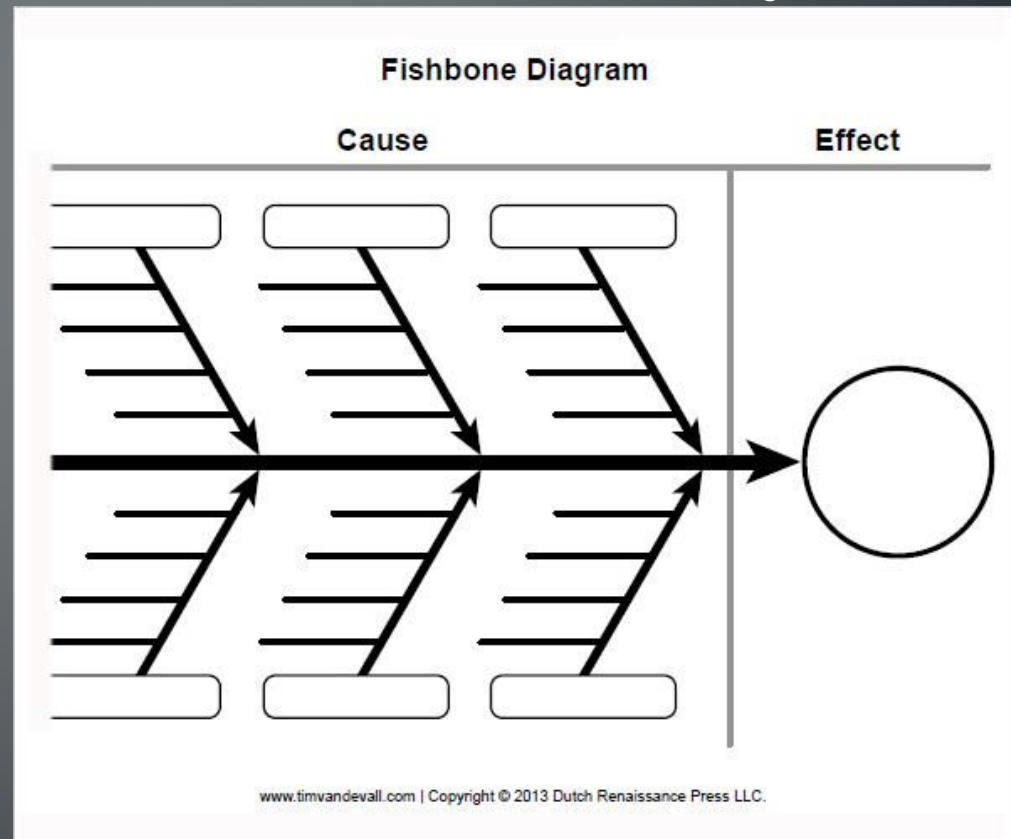


# Group techniques

- **Facilitating participation/solving problems**
  - Brainstorming - quantity, not quality! All ideas recorded, no evaluation until the process is over
  - Response rounds – group members brainstorm individually, and then present thoughts one by one in round robin fashion
  - Pass the envelope – group members write down ideas on slips of paper, and take turns reading them aloud
  - Subgroups – work in smaller groups, debrief with larger group

# Group techniques

- **Examine and reflect on the situation at hand**
  - Force-field analysis – examination of factors that help/hinder, pros/cons, strengths/weaknesses, things going well/could do better
  - Root cause analysis – get to the bottom of what causes are leading to the observed effect
    - **Use fishbone diagram**



# Group techniques

- Examine and reflect on the situation at hand
  - Gap analysis – describe the present and desired future states; evaluate what are the gaps between the two and what are the barriers to the desired state; develop an action plan



# Helpful roles

- Roles for facilitator to fulfill, OR to assign to various group members
  - Scribe – keep notes
  - Timekeeper – keep track of time
  - Includer – make sure all are participating, and invite those who are quiet to chime in
  - Process checker – periodically assess progress towards stated goals and consistency with stated agenda; note when getting stuck, getting off track, etc

# Group members – possible challenges

- “The Mummy” does not freely participate in discussions. The motivation might be indifference, an inferiority complex, confusion about the issues or process, or a feeling of superiority.
- Possible solutions:
  - Be patient.
  - Ask direct questions to the person on topics you know he or she has expertise.
  - Assign as subgroup facilitator.
  - Ask for his/her thoughts on what someone else has said
  - Ask this member if you can help clarify the process or if someone in the group can help clarify the issues.

# Group members – possible challenges

- “The Windbag” comments too frequently and tends to dominate discussions. He or she also tends to be the first to speak on each issue.
- Possible solutions:
  - Establish procedures to limit the Windbag's discussion, e.g., “Let's go around the table and get one idea from each person.”
  - Target questions to other members by name.
  - Use nonverbal signals
  - Do not assign subgroup leadership roles to person.

# Group members – possible challenges

- “The Rambler” will often get off track in his/her remarks, misses the point, or uses far-fetched examples to make a point.
- Possible solutions:
  - Note that the group is getting off track and discussing things not on the agenda, and propose coming back to it at the end if time remains
  - Do not assign a subgroup leadership role to this person.
  - Consider assigning this individual to take notes, thus neutralizing his remarks.

# Group members – possible challenges

- “The Homesteader” takes an initial position and is highly reluctant to budge or consider other viable alternatives.
- Possible solutions:
  - Ask group to review pros and cons of alternatives
  - Focus on consensus for committing to a process and desired outcome, rather than asking if all agree or if all are “happy” with the decision
  - Give the Homesteader a graceful way out with an alternative.



# Group members – possible challenges

- Aggressor – Makes personal attacks using belittling and insulting comments
- Blocker – Opposes every idea or opinion that is put forward and yet refuses to make own suggestions
- Recognition Seeker – Uses group meetings to draw personal attention to him or herself.
- Self-confessor – Uses the group meetings as an avenue to disclose personal feelings and issues
- Disrupter - Distracts other people by telling jokes, playing pranks, or even reading unrelated material
- Dominator – Tries to control the conversation and dictate what people should be doing
- Help Seeker – Actively looks for sympathy by expressing feelings of inadequacy

# Use your basic facilitation skills

- Active Listening
- Paraphrasing
- Empathy
- Summarizing
- Immediacy
- Linking
- Inclusion
- Validating/Normalizing
- Silence
- Modeling
- Pacing
- Problem solving
- Advice giving
- Goal setting

# Get back on track... in 3 easy steps!

## 1) Describe what you see

“I’m noticing that...”

## 2) Describe the potential impact

“I’m concerned that...”

## 3) Redirect

“Let’s try to...” “Let’s make sure to...” “How should we handle this?”

# Get back on track... in 1 easy step!

- **Another option – revisit after meeting:**
  - “That’s a good question/you bring up an important issue/etc. I want to make sure we stay on track here, and I want to make sure your question/concern gets the time it deserves, so let’s hold off on that for now and you and I can talk after the meeting to discuss it further.”

# Plan ahead for potential barriers

**Facilitator Moments:**

Put on your facilitator's hat, then try to finish as many of these sentence as you can.

When one group member seems to do most of the talking, I might...

When an individual is silent for a long period of time, I could...

When someone in the team "puts down" another member, I might...

When a group seems to want to reach a decision, but appears unable to, I might...

When someone comes late, I might...