

Workshop Outline: Facilitation, Level 1

Workshop Objectives:

By the end of this workshop, everyone should:

- Understand the importance of effective facilitation
- Understand how facilitation is a tool for good decision-making
- Know about different kinds of decision-making
- Have some tools on how to facilitate group decision-making processes
- Have some tools on how to facilitate effective meetings

Audience:

- 10- 40 participants, post-secondary level
- Lots of new people, many different experience levels
- Hands on!!

Total Time: 1.5 hours

Materials:

- Powerpoint and projector
- Flip chart
- Markers
- Scrap paper
- Pens

Intro to session! (5 minutes)

Activity: spectrum of experiences with meetings (20 minutes)

Place yourself along the spectrum (Agree/Disagree) based on the following statements.

- It is easy to think in a group
- I always feel comfortable voicing my opinion
- I often feel unmotivated to act between meetings
- I usually feel happy with the outcomes of decisions at group meetings
- I love going to meetings
- I often find not much gets accomplished during meetings

Note: encourage people to be honest with themselves, and to think of meetings they've had in a number of different settings – from clubs, to group class work, to work meetings, etc.

At the end of each statement have people on either end of the spectrum speak to why they are standing where they are: what makes you feel that way? People can move around based on the responses they hear, if it elicits new emotions or ideas for them.

So... what is facilitation and why do we bother? (15 minutes)

- Brainstorm two separate lists!

Types of Decision-making (5 minutes)

- Dictatorships
- Oligarchy
- Majority Rules (or Roberts Rules of Order)
- Participatory Decision Making
- Informal Consensus

Testing for consensus: (20 minutes)

Activity:

- Question: we as a group need to decide on if we will support local or organic food for the lunch at our conference (disclaimer: we don't actually believe local and organic need to be pitted against each other, but for the sake of this activity we will role play!)
- Break into small groups and brainstorm ideas on which they would support
- Bring it back to the group, and each group puts forward a proposal
- Test for consensus: agree, concerned/questions/disagree/abstain/block

Strategies for great meetings:

Before, during and after – think, pair, share (15 minutes)

Before: Before: Agenda Setting!

- Topic → Outcome
- Outcome → Process
- Send agenda out ahead of time
- Leave lots of time!
- Plan activities

During: the diamond of group decision-making

- Think, Pair Share
- Brainstorming
- Small Group Discussions
- Go around/popcorn
- Gradients of Agreement

After: Follow Up

- Send out minutes
- Ensure support structures are in place
- Check those action-items off the list!

Troubleshooting

- Have examples of meetings that haven't gone so well → what didn't go well?
How can we apply some of these tools to them?