



“FACILITATION TECHNIQUES IN LEARNING AND THINKING”

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Teaching, Training, Facilitating

Same, Similar, Different?

- **Teaching:** Spotlight on guru; mostly one-way communication; learning from “expert”; primarily didactic; individual or group
- **Training:** Skill based learning; focus on SME (Subject Matter Expert) and trainee; learning from expert; mixture of didactic and experiential; individual or group
- **FACILITATION:** group process focused on an outcome from the group

FACILITATION : Let's review the basics

Group facilitation is a **process** in which

(A) a person who is acceptable to all members of the group, and is

(B) substantively **neutral**, and

(C) has **no decision-making** authority,
intervenes to help a **group**

(A) improve the way it identifies and solves problems and B) make decisions, in order to increase the group's effectiveness/objectives.

A FACILITATOR

- The group facilitator's job is to make it easier for the group to do its work.
- The role of the facilitator is to help participants learn how to work together by providing the structure (process) while the group remains focused on the content. The facilitator's magic role is to balance process and content!
- **The facilitator addresses the journey, rather than the destination**

Facilitator Responsibilities

- ✔ Sets the standards/guidelines for the discussion
- ✔ Makes the workshop environment a responsibility
- ✔ Mindful of timing issues
- ✔ Articulates the purpose of the discussion and its importance
- ✔ Uses multiple techniques and tools to keep discussion moving
- ✔ Pays attention to group behavior
- ✔ Creates a relaxed environment so that discussions are enjoyable and educational

When to Facilitate

- ✔ Make Decisions
- ✔ Share Information
- ✔ Plan Work
- ✔ Learn From One Another
- ✔ Create Buy-In
- ✔ Solve Problems

Can facilitation be used in teaching and training?

Facilitation: a Group Process

- Why a group process? Highly participatory, sum of group > than individual, multiple perspectives

Challenges in Group Facilitation

- ☞ Manage power imbalances
- ☞ Enable participants to give each other feedback
- ☞ Deal positively with criticism
- ☞ Accept that you may not be able to please everyone all the time
- ☞ Cope with judgmental attitudes
- ☞ Balance participation

Techniques of Effective Facilitators

Do not come across as an “expert”; rather display friendly and honest attitude, some knowledge of the subject matter of the workshop, good communication skills:

- ** active listening
- ** good questioning
- ** reflecting
- ** clarifying
- ** asking probing questions
- ** managing group work
- ** conflict management
- ** summarizing
- ** debriefing
- ** time keeping

What Facilitators Should Not Do!

- ☞ Talk too much
- ☞ Dominate the group
- ☞ Read from a script
- ☞ Tell inappropriate stories
- ☞ Allow a few people to dominate
- ☞ Push the “right” answer
- ☞ Not be prepared
- ☞ Take sides with a few people
- ☞ Make up an answer
- ☞ Tell too much about personal experience
- ☞ Philosophize
- ☞ Be a bad time manager
- ☞ Not speak articulately
- ☞ Focus on individual participants
- ☞ Downplay people’s ideas
- ☞ **Impose a solution**

An Activity: Handling Special Situations When Facilitating

How would you manage these situations???

- ☞ **Skeptical participants**
- ☞ **Multicultural participants**
- ☞ **Inactive participants**
- ☞ **Overly talkative participants (debate)**
- ☞ **Disruptive participants (mobiles, side conversations)**
- ☞ **Others? (staying on time, returning from breaks, conflict (personal attacks))**

(15 Minutes)

Best Practices/Interventions

- **Generalize and remind group there is no “one way”. (Skeptics)**
- **Acknowledge at the first session that culture influences our values, behaviors and interpretations, in our professional and personal lives. (Multicultural)**
- **Validate and call non participant by name and direct an easy non threatening question to them (Inactive)**
- **Acknowledge “excellent points and it shows the issue is important. Let me help get some focus here” take attention back (Overly talkative)**
- **Set ground rules and remind people of the ground rules when they are broken, stop talking, call for a break, shift gears (Disruptive)**

A FACILITATOR

A leader is best when people barely know he exists

Not so good when people obey and acclaim him

Worst when they despise him

Fail to honour people, they fail to honour you

**But of a good leader who talks little
when his work is done, his aim fulfilled**

they will say : "we did this ourselves"

**Lao Tzu
604 BC**

The “Cool” Facilitator is...

....a **Guide** on the side...not a *sage* on the stage!

Useful websites:

www.iaf-world.org

www.thiagi.com

<http://www.facilitatoru.com/>

http://www.bonner.org/resources/modules/modules_pdf/BonCurFacilitation101.pdf

http://www.bonner.org/resources/modules/modules_pdf/BonCurFacilitation202.pdf