



Facilitation Skills

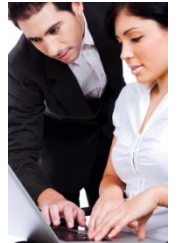
**Scroll Through the Following Slides
to Learn More About Our
Facilitation Skills Materials**

www.brainstormdynamics.com

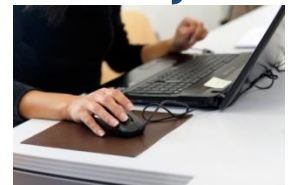
Brief Overview



Our Facilitation Skills Content Can Change the Way You Create Some of Your Training and Learning Materials



Making it Simple and Easy to Customize and Publish Workbooks, Leader's Guides, eLearning Content, Handouts, and Other Learning Materials . . .



Saving Both Time and Money



The Participant's Workbook and Leader's Guide



Are Created in Microsoft WORD

Overview

Facilitation Skills provides you with the essential information and skills needed for you to excel as a facilitator.

This program will assist you in stimulating and guiding discussions by using key facilitator behaviors. You will learn to focus on the structure of sessions and not on the content. Client contracts, agendas, and meeting structure and process, are all reviewed to achieve maximum participation and results. Facilitator empowerment is explored along with the listening and questioning skills needed to deal with negative meeting behaviors and to keep the process moving in a positive direction.

Facilitation Skills is designed for you to actively participate with your peers in the training workshop. This training program encourages you to improve your knowledge and skills by integrating your work-related situations into the workshop.

Course Objectives

Our goal is to build greater personal skill and confidence in your ability to facilitate group discussions or meetings by focusing on the areas listed below.

- Identifying Desirable Facilitating Behaviors
- Managing Structure, Not Content
- Developing Client Contracts
- Developing the Structure and Process for Your Meeting
- Clarifying the Facilitator's Level of Empowerment
- Encouraging Participation Through Questions and Listening Skills
- Closing a Meeting Confidently
- Dealing With Negative Meeting Behaviors
- Understanding and Applying Specific Client Follow-Up Activities

Personal Objectives

In this section of your workbook, write out one or two personal objectives you would like to accomplish by the end of Facilitation Skills. Use these objectives as your measuring tools to help you determine where to focus your energies during the workshop. Try to limit your initial objective to about 10 to 15 words and maybe one or two bullets. As you get into the exercises and talk to other participants, you can modify your objectives.



Managing Structure, Not Content



The role of the facilitator is to manage the meeting structure while remaining neutral regarding the meeting content. The meeting content is the responsibility of the group. The position of neutrality must be understood and practiced by the facilitator if the group's potential is to be fully reached. The facilitator who personally moves into heavy involvement of the group's content issues runs the risk of reducing group involvement, trust, and openness.

Structure - Fulfills the "how" questions: How the meeting's issues and subjects are dealt with; how the meeting proceeds in terms of agenda and team tools; how discussions take place; how decision tools are used; how formats, flip charts, and involvement take place; how the meeting's physical environment will be arranged.

Content - Answers the "what" questions: What are the meeting's subjects, issues, problems, analysis, recommendations, and supporting data? What issues will be dealt with and in what sequence?

Exercise

In your small group, talk out-loud and determine whether the activity that is described below is part of content or structure. Provide reasons for your selection.

	Content	Structure
1. Development and distribution of team meeting agenda and preparation of the room.	_____	_____
2. Statement of meeting objectives.	_____	_____
3. Moving into subgroups to discuss possible improvement solutions.	_____	_____
4. Discussion involving clarification of group objective.	_____	_____
5. A brainstorming session to develop improvement ideas.	_____	_____
6. Cost information on purchase of equipment and supplies.	_____	_____
7. A free-flowing discussion resulting from the facilitator's questions.	_____	_____
8. Progress report on a group project.	_____	_____
9. Summarizing and clarifying a group decision.	_____	_____
10. A presentation of existing policies by a group member.	_____	_____

Sample Two-Day Agenda

The times listed below are approximate and should be used only as a basic guideline. It's more important to allow the participants to spend time in the exercises that benefit them the most. You can easily modify these times. Try not to let the clock run your workshop. Observe the participants and make your time decisions accordingly.

Opening the Workshop	20 minutes	8:30 - 8:50
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Break	15 minutes	1:55 - 2:10
Skill Practice	60 minutes	2:10 - 3:10
Encouraging Participation Through Questions	15 minutes	3:10 - 3:25
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Types of Questions to Ask	45 minutes	3:35 - 4:20
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Managing Structure, Not Content

- 1) State the following and direct participants to page 7.

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In your small group, talk out-loud and determine whether the activity that is described on page 7 is part of content or structure. Make sure you provide reasons for your selection.

Does anyone have any questions?

Answer any questions.

- 2) State the following to debrief the exercise.

Let's go around the room and see how you answered each one.

Gain responses for each one. Talk about any confusion or difference in opinions.

The odd numbers are structure. The even numbers are content.

Any questions before we move on?

Answer any questions.

Add any personal insight.

- 3) Draw conclusions.

Sample Workbook Pages

FACILITATION SKILLS

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Short-Term Meetings

If you are going to facilitate this program in a series of short-term meetings instead of two-days, divide the program into the seven segments listed below. Each segment of the program will run from around 45 minutes to three hours.

Segment 1 - Leadership, and Management With Leadership

• Workbook pages 1 - 10

Segment 2 - Skills of an Effective Leader, and Blocks to Leadership

• Workbook pages 11 - 15

LEADERSHIP

Skill Practice

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Coaches shouldn't allow the exercise to go longer than 2 minutes. There should be plenty to coach in that time frame. Once the exercise is stopped, the coach provides his or her insight using the Coaching Checklists on the following two pages. Once the person coaching is finished, the person practicing goes again and tries to incorporate the coaching he or she just received. Remember, the repetitions are critical. If you follow the rules, and the coaches provide their insights properly, the exercises will be worthwhile. Outlined below are some basic coaching guidelines and rules for the skill practice.

Skill Practice Coaching

LEADERSHIP

Skill Practice Coaching Checklist

- Does the Person Practicing:
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 - Clarify and Confirm?
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 - Use Effective Questions?

What Went Well?

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FACILITATION SKILLS

Encouraging Participation Through Questions

Experienced facilitators will tell you that the greatest and most important tool in successful facilitation is gaining involvement and participation from the group members. The measure of the group's success largely derives from both the quantity and quality of the group's involvement.

Accomplished facilitators never create unpleasant feelings in attaining involvement. Instead, they attempt to create fulfillment and satisfaction within the group as a result of participation.

Outlined below and on the following page are eight general rules for effectively asking non-threatening questions to get participation.

1. Initially ask each question of the entire group.

• For example, ask a general question like, "What are the possible reasons for increased problems with . . . ?" Try not to ask, "Bob, in your area, what are the possible reasons for increased problems with . . . ?"

2. Pause and allow group members time to consider the question.

• Some facilitators become anxious if a question doesn't elicit an immediate response. If this happens to you, relax. The group members are thinking. Silence is powerful when you are the person controlling it. Use it to your advantage.

3. If a group member responds, acknowledge the remark, and explore the response further if you think it's necessary.

• An example is outlined below.

Group member: "One of the reasons we have more problems is because the paperwork we receive is confusing."

Facilitator: "What's so confusing about the paperwork?"

Group member: "Well, for starters, the form is poorly designed, causing us unnecessary . . ."

4. If no one responds to a question, consider rewording the question or asking if the question needs clarification.

• For example, ask the question, "Have I explained this clearly?" rather than, "Do you understand?"

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LEADERSHIP

Practice Coaching Checklist

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Types of Questions to Ask

There are five categories of questions that skilled facilitators use to gain greater participation and involvement by their group members. These types of questions include:

1. Open-Ended
2. Greater Response
3. Redirection
4. Feedback or Clarification
5. Close-Ended

Types of Questions to Ask Exercise

In your small group, talk out-loud and discuss each type of question. Using the examples provided as your guide, create several new questions that you can use as a facilitator. Write your new questions in the spaces provided.

1. Open-Ended Questions

An open-ended question is one that cannot be answered with a single word or phrase such as "yes" or "no." Open-ended questions are powerful because they stimulate thinking, encourage discussion and interaction, and discourage group members from prematurely taking definitive positions on issues not yet thoroughly discussed. They typically begin with words such as "how," "what," and "why." Listed below are a few examples of open-ended questions.

- "How do the rest of you feel about this?"
- "How will this solution impact you?"
- "How do you want to evaluate your ideas?"
- "What are your thoughts about this?"
- "What can be done to minimize the potential impact?"
- "What happens if we don't solve the problem?"
- "Why are these problems recurring?"
- "Why are we having problems like those listed on the flip chart?"
- "Why do you believe this one idea is so critical?"

Sample Leader's Guide Pages

Sample Two-Day Agenda

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Skill Practice	60 minutes	2:10 - 3:10
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Listening Acknowledgments	15 minutes	4:20 - 4:35

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Sample Leader's Guide Pages

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Answer any questions.

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Facilitator Empowerment

1) State the following and direct participants to page 17.

Facilitator Empowerment is our next main topic beginning on page 17. As you know, empowerment is a process that must be understood and performed on a regular basis if you expect to excel as a facilitator. Too often, empowerment is defined in such a way that makes it difficult to clearly understand what it means. We feel the best way to define the process, especially as it relates to facilitation, is to break it down into five different levels. You can see the definitions outlined for each level. It begins with the facilitator not being empowered at all at level one, and moves to level five, which is total facilitator empowerment.

On pages 17 through 19 is an exercise for you to do in your small group. Under each of the five levels, identify work-related situations that fit within the description. The descriptions are only a guideline. If you currently are working with a client, you may want to use them to complete the exercise. Remember, this is a small group exercise, so discuss each level before writing your responses in the spaces provided.

Does anyone have any questions?

Answer any questions.

Walk around and assist as needed.

2) State the following to debrief the exercise.

I'd like to get from each group some of the work-related examples you came up for each level of empowerment. Make sure you listen to the responses from the other groups. There may be similar work-related situations you identified that you put into a different level. We can discuss the reasons to see if we can agree on the appropriate level.

Gain responses from each group. You may want to use the flip chart.

3) State the following and direct the participants to pages 20 to 22.

I'm going to walk you through three pages of exercises that you will take each work-related situation through. This is still a talk out-loud exercise among your group.

The next phase of this exercise is to take the work-related situations you wrote down under the "five levels of empowerment" and determine the "range of acceptability." The range of acceptability is defined as the guidelines and limits that are established for the facilitator. Sometimes the range is well established. Other times, it's not.

Meetings

series of short-term meetings instead of two-days. See below. Each segment of the program will run

Leadership

Blocks to Leadership

LEADERSHIP

Skill Practice

practice skills in this program. Use any of the previous work under Listening Responses or Questioning Skills. This first is practiced in groups of three people. The person practicing role and keep the conversation alive using their listening responses, and questioning skills for about 2 minutes. That's all. When practicing is to act as an employee and respond as appropriate in the group is the coach.

Use to go longer than 2 minutes. There should be plenty of time when the exercise is stopped, the coach provides his or her insight on the following two pages. Once the person coaching is finished and tries to incorporate the coaching he or she just received is critical. If you follow the rules, and the coaches' procedures will be worthwhile. Outlined below are some basic skill practice.

Skill Practice Coaching

LEADERSHIP

Practice Coaching Checklist

Use the Prevailing Emotion? Listening Responses?

5?

5?

5?



Sample Leader's Guide Pages

Managing Meeting Content

1) State the following and direct participants to page 44.

Now we're going to discuss as a facilitator is to manage meeting content. The meeting neutrality must be understood to be fully reached. The facilitator's group's content issues regarding the meeting's physical structure.

Structure fulfills the "how" with; how the meeting place; how decision tools; how the meeting's physical structure.

Content answers the "what" analysis, recommendation, what sequence?

In your small group, talk on page 7 is part of content.

Does anyone have any questions? Answer any questions.

2) State the following to direct participants to page 44.

Let's go around the room. Gain responses for each of the five levels of empowerment.

The odd numbers are structure. Gain responses from each of the five levels of empowerment.

Any questions before we begin? Answer any questions.

Add any personal insight.

3) Draw conclusions.

1) State the following and direct participants to page 44.

Facilitator Empowerment empowerment is a process you expect to excel as a facilitator makes it difficult to clear process, especially as it relates to the meeting. You can see the definition of empowerment at all levels of empowerment.

On pages 17 through 19 five levels, identify work are only a guideline. If you are to complete the exercise, before writing your response.

Does anyone have any questions? Answer any questions.

Walk around and assist as needed.

2) State the following to direct participants to page 44.

I'd like to get from each level of empowerment. I may be similar work-related. We can discuss the reasons for the behavior.

Gain responses from each of the five levels of empowerment.

3) State the following and direct participants to page 44.

I'm going to walk you through the situation through. This is the next phase of this exercise.

The next phase of this exercise the "five levels of empowerment of acceptability is defined by the facilitator. Sometimes the range of empowerment is defined by the facilitator.

Handling Difficult Team Members

1) State the following and direct participants to page 44.

This is the tough part of facilitation, dealing with negative behaviors. A participant is designated as troublesome when his or her behavior is directly and negatively impacting the team's productivity or hindering team cohesiveness in terms of trust, openness, commitment, and participation.

Most facilitators become alarmed too early about a team member's conduct and label some of them unnecessarily as troublesome or difficult. Generally, a facilitator should not be too concerned about an individual's conduct within the first four to six months of team formation, especially if the undesirable behaviors occur only occasionally. This initial period may be quite different from later meetings, given the considerable amount of transition that may be taking place.

If the behavior does not subside in an appropriate time period, or is of a severe nature, the facilitator or team leader should take action to address the troublesome member's conduct.

In working with this individual, your goal is to reduce, alter, or eliminate the team member's undesirable behaviors without hurting his or her self-worth or capability to contribute. Thus, you should never verbally scold or embarrass the person in front of the group, even though you might want to. To help you handle these situations, consider the four suggestions on page 44.

Your first opportunity to correct troublesome behavior should be made during the meeting. If an individual is dominating the discussion, try saying, "Bob, you have made several contributions. I'd like to hear how other team members see this issue." The key is to be direct, but tactful.

A second option is to talk with the person candidly about the behavior in private. For example, if a person is rarely contributing to the discussion, you might approach the team member before the meeting and say, "Bob, the team really needs your input on this issue. Why haven't you been contributing?"

A third option is to use the team's informal leaders - those members most respected for their knowledge and experience. These "leaders" can help if you ask them to tactfully intervene.

Finally, you may wish periodically to ask the team to self-analyze their development and to bring negative behaviors to the surface for discussion.

Add any personal insight.

2) Draw conclusions.

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