

Gearing You For Growth

Bursaries | **Business Skills** | Coaching and Mentoring | Computer Skills | E-Learning | Learnerships | Skills Development | Virtual Training

Facilitation Skills

Course Overview

It is impossible to be part of an organisation today and not attend meetings.

Staff meetings, project meetings, planning and coordinating meetings all take time. There has been a growing realization that we have to pay attention to the process elements of meetings if we want them to be effective. With its focus on asking rather than telling, and listening to build consensus, facilitation is the new leadership ideal, the core competency everybody needs.

Managers and supervisors are often asked to facilitate rather than instructor manage their meetings and training sessions. How can you facilitate, rather than control, group decision-making and team interaction? With no formal training, people may find it difficult to make the transition from instructors or managers to facilitators.

This two-day workshop has been created to make core facilitation skills better understood and readily available for your organization. It represents materials and ideas that have been tested and refined over twenty years of active facilitation in all types of settings.

Course Objectives

At the end of this workshop, delegates will be able to:

- Distinguish facilitation from instruction and training.
- Identify the competencies linked to effective small group facilitation.
- Understand the difference between content and process.
- Identify the stages of team development and ways to help teams through each stage.
- Use common process tools to make meetings easier and more productive.

Prerequisite

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Duration

- 2 Days



Course Outline

Defining Your Role

To begin, delegates will explore the differences between facilitation, training, and chairing.

How Facilitators Work

Next, delegates will explore key facilitation skills, levels of facilitation, facilitation language, and things to do to ensure facilitation success.

Establishing Ground Rules

In this session, delegates will discuss ground rules, also known as norms. They will also work together to generate a list of ground rules for the remainder of the workshop.

Content and Process

While facilitators are responsible for the process, it is delegates who are responsible for and manage the content. This session will explore the differences between these two aspects of a meeting.

Types of Thinking

Next, delegates will learn about divergent thinking and convergent thinking, as well as the grey area (also known as the Groan Zone) between the two.

Handling Controversial Issues

In this session, delegates will learn how to handle controversial issues in a neutral and professional way.

Communication Skills

This session will explore the building blocks of good communication: active listening, questioning skills, probing techniques, and managing your body language.

Listening for Common Ground

For most people, it seems to be instinctive to try to find something in common with their fellow humans. In this session, we will explore the importance of listening for common ground in facilitation.

Common Facilitation Techniques

This session will begin with a lecture on 16 important facilitation techniques. Then, delegates will divide into groups to prepare and present a short demonstration on a chosen technique.

Providing Effective Feedback

Part of your role as a facilitator includes providing and accepting feedback. This session will give delegates some tips on giving and receiving feedback. It will conclude with an exercise that will help them practice this skill.

Managing Divergent Perspectives

Next, delegates will learn some ways to manage divergent perspectives. Then, they will apply their knowledge to a case study.



The Language of Facilitation

In this session, delegates will learn about some communication elements that are unique to facilitation. Then, they will apply their knowledge to an interactive case study.

Building Agendas

Part of facilitating meetings is developing an agenda. This session will outline a brief, easy process to help facilitators build a good agenda.

Dealing with Difficult Dynamics

In this session, delegates will complete a mix and match exercise to identify possible difficult behaviors and ways to manage them. Then, delegates will learn about and practice twelve easy, effective ways to intervene in a group discussion.

Building Sustainable Agreements

Getting a group to come to an agreement is not much good if that agreement is not supported by true consensus. This session will give delegates ways to build sustainable agreements.

Stages of Team Development

Next, delegates will learn about Tuckman and Jensen's Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing, and Adjourning model, which outlines the stages of team development. Delegates will also identify some ways to help groups through each stage.

Analysis Tools

The final session will introduce delegates to two decision-making tools: SWOT analysis and force field analysis.

Workshop Wrap-Up

At the end of the course, delegates will have an opportunity to ask questions and fill out an action plan.