Meeting Facilitation (F101)

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Agenda
1. Overview
2. Meeting Management Techniques
3. Process Facilitation Techniques
4. Resources

OVERVIEW OF FACILITATION CONCEPTS

Learning Objectives
1. Understand what facilitation is and what facilitators do
2. Describe how meeting management, process facilitation, and "subject matter expert" consulting are complementary

Facilitation is "Support Designed to Improve the Effectiveness of Group Work"

- Encourages collaboration
- Carefully planned — Key characteristics
- Generates specific outcomes

Objective: effective dialog, engagement and decision-making

- Method
  - Process leadership and support
  - Specialized techniques
  - Often involves design and management of meetings
- Who
  - Facilitator
  - Within and among groups
  - Subject matter experts

"The facilitator's greatest contribution is to provide structure so that participants can focus on making the best decisions possible." Ingrid Bens, Facilitation at a Glance, p. x

Benefits of Facilitation

PARTICIPATORY VALUES

- FULL PARTICIPATION
- MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING
- INCLUSIVE SOLUTIONS
- SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

iAf

We will apply the techniques of professional facilitators.

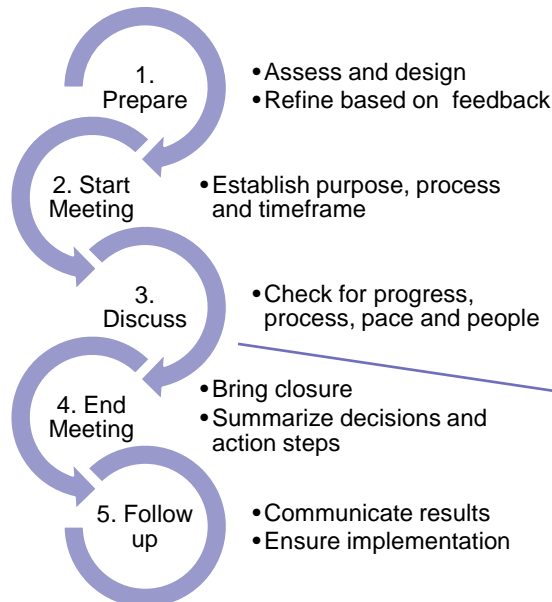International Association of Facilitators, www.iaf-world.org

What are the elements of an effective facilitated session?

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The Facilitation Process

1. Prepare
- Assess and design
- Refine based on feedback

2. Start Meeting
- Establish purpose, process and timeframe

3. Discuss
- Check for progress, process, pace and people

4. End Meeting
- Bring closure
- Summarize decisions and action steps

5. Follow up
- Communicate results
- Ensure implementation

Two Types of Discussions
- Non-decision (brainstorming, information sharing, etc.)
- Decision (recommendation, approval, action planning)

Please wait …
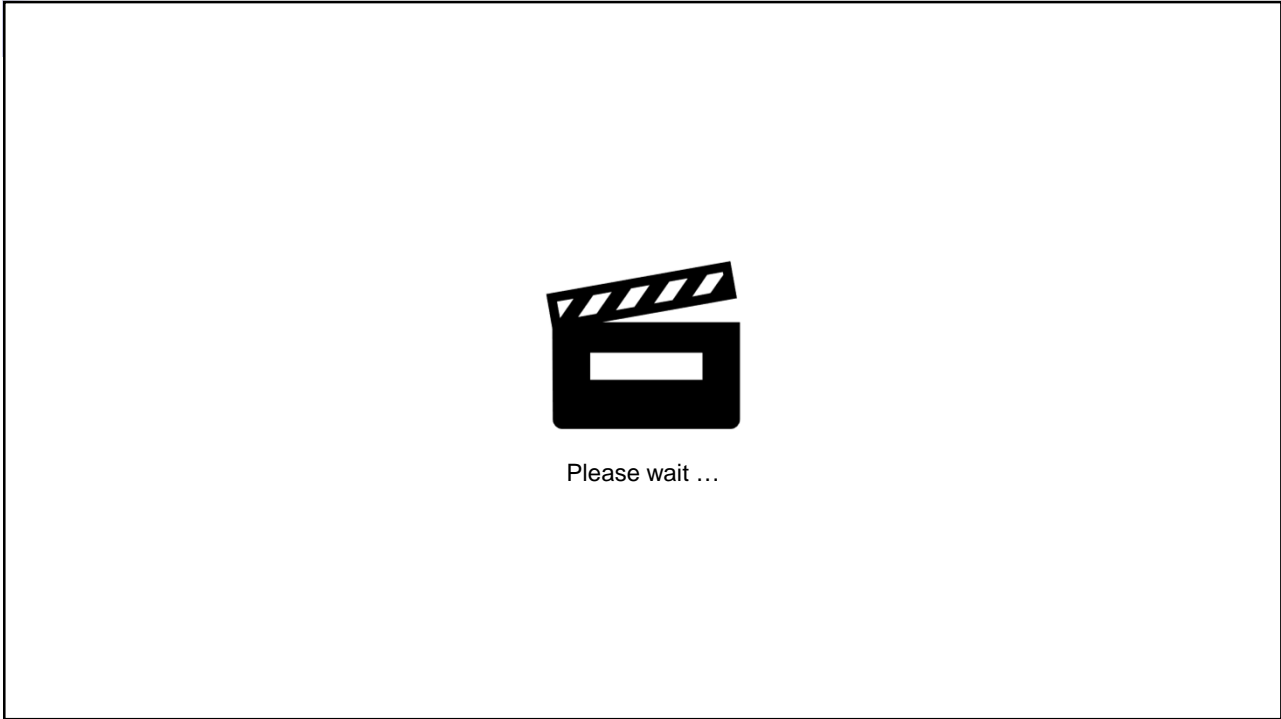
But What Does a Facilitator *Do*?

A facilitator actively guides a group's process and behavior by doing these things:

Architect (before)
1. Get agreement on desired results
2. Assess relevant context
3. Design the sessions
4. Prepare logistics

Pilot (during)
5. Manage room and materials
6. Clarify roles
7. Manage pace
8. Monitor progress
9. Steer the course
10. Ensure closure

Guide (always)
11. Create trust and safe space
12. Guide problem solving process
13. Inject enthusiasm and energy

The three categories are from the International Institute for Facilitation and Change

Three Types of Techniques in a Facilitator's Toolbox

Meeting management techniques
- Example: collect and follow up on action items
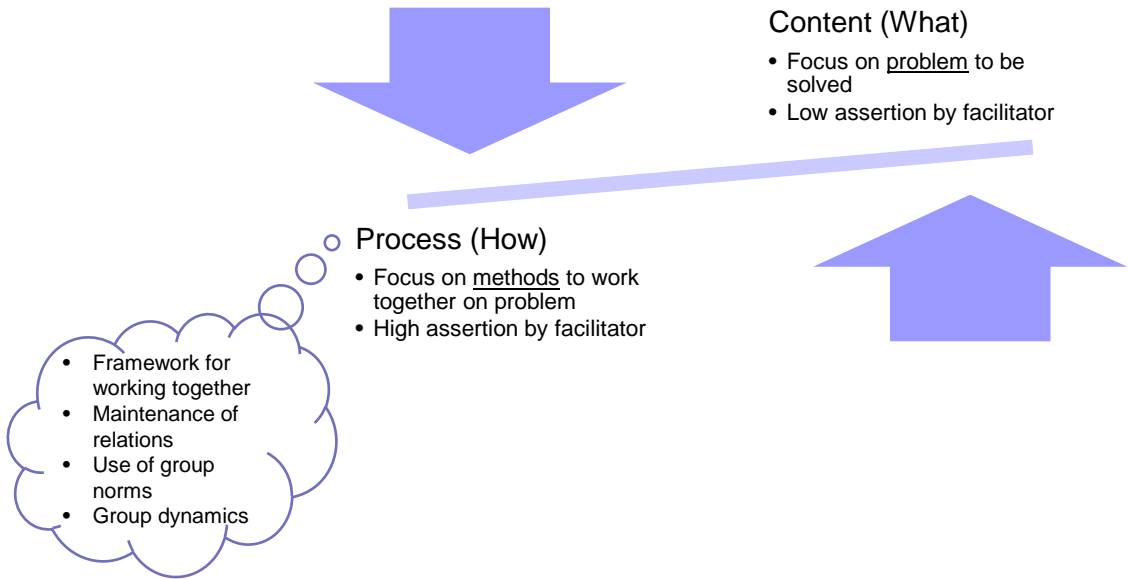
Consult based on subject matter expertise
- Example: recommend measures to increase the effectiveness of citizen participation organizations

Process facilitation techniques
- Example: use effective questions to steer discussion

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What's Process Facilitation?

Content (What)
- Focus on problem to be solved
- Low assertion by facilitator

Process (How)
- Focus on methods to work together on problem
- High assertion by facilitator

- Framework for working together
- Maintenance of relations
- Use of group norms
- Group dynamics

Examples of Facilitation Work

	Workgroup session	Strategic session
Main Purpose	Discussion, get tasks done together, and deliver information	Design processes, agree on solutions to complex problems, and engage high-level stakeholders
Typical Participants	Internal staff, possibly with external participants who have a specific and limited focus	Policymakers, executive staff, legislators, stakeholder organizations, and other senior-level decision makers
Facilitator's Role	Keep discussion moving and ensure meeting purpose is fulfilled	Structure and manage process to arrive at solutions to complex problems
Examples	• Staff meetings • Internal team meetingskeAction-planning meetings with external staekholders or constituents • Regular meetings of working groups	• Strategic planning • Workplan development • Process and organizational design • Stakeholder engagement • Public process mediation
Techniques Used		
Meeting Management	High	High
Process Facilitation	Med	High
SME Consulting	Low	varies

Rank the three types of facilitation techniques in the order you use them most

Provide subject matter expertise

Do process facilitation

Use meeting management techniques

Meeting Management Tools
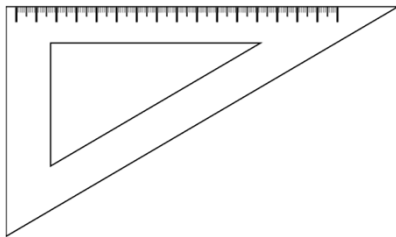
Designing and Managing the Meeting

MEETING MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

Drafting square by LG02 - Ekierka 90 60 30 deg.svgFurther work: Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=76211468

Learning Objectives
1. Understand how to prepare to lead an effective meeting
2. Describe what to do during the three main parts of a meeting
3. Know how to provide closure and follow-up
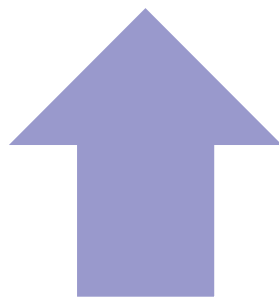
"Much teamwork is accomplished in meetings. We gather and distribute information, coordinate activities, uncover new problems, assign tasks, and make decisions."

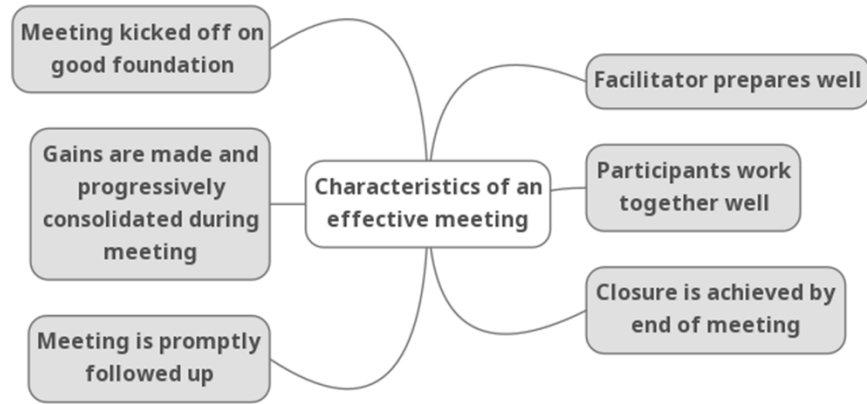- Eric Verzuh, Fast Forward MBA in Project Management, p.274
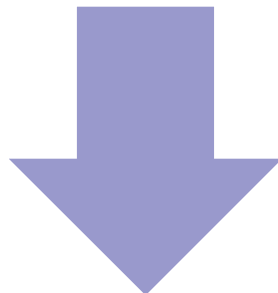
"You would be hard pressed to identify a bigger consumer or waster of organizational resources than meetings. The fact is that a lot of meetings are unnecessary, and often the necessary meetings are poorly run."

– James T. Brown, Handbook of Program Management, p. 153

Characteristics of an Effective Meeting

Meeting kicked off on good foundation

Facilitator prepares well

Gains are made and progressively consolidated during meeting

Characteristics of an effective meeting

Participants work together well

Meeting is promptly followed up

Closure is achieved by end of meeting

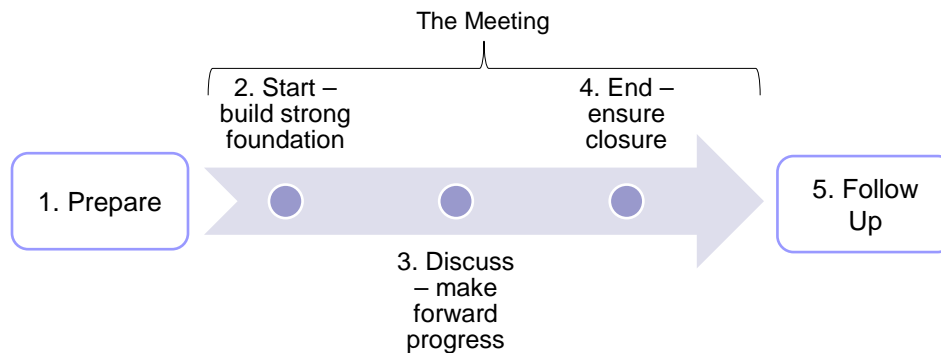### Chat ⌨

During presentation of this slide and next, please chat about meeting killers that you've experienced.

Five Phases of an Effective Meeting

The Meeting

2. Start – build strong foundation

4. End – ensure closure

1. Prepare

3. Discuss – make forward progress

5. Follow Up

A common rule of thumb is that every hour of meeting time requires 1 hour of preparation and 1 hour of follow up from each person working on that meeting. Complex facilitations will take more time.
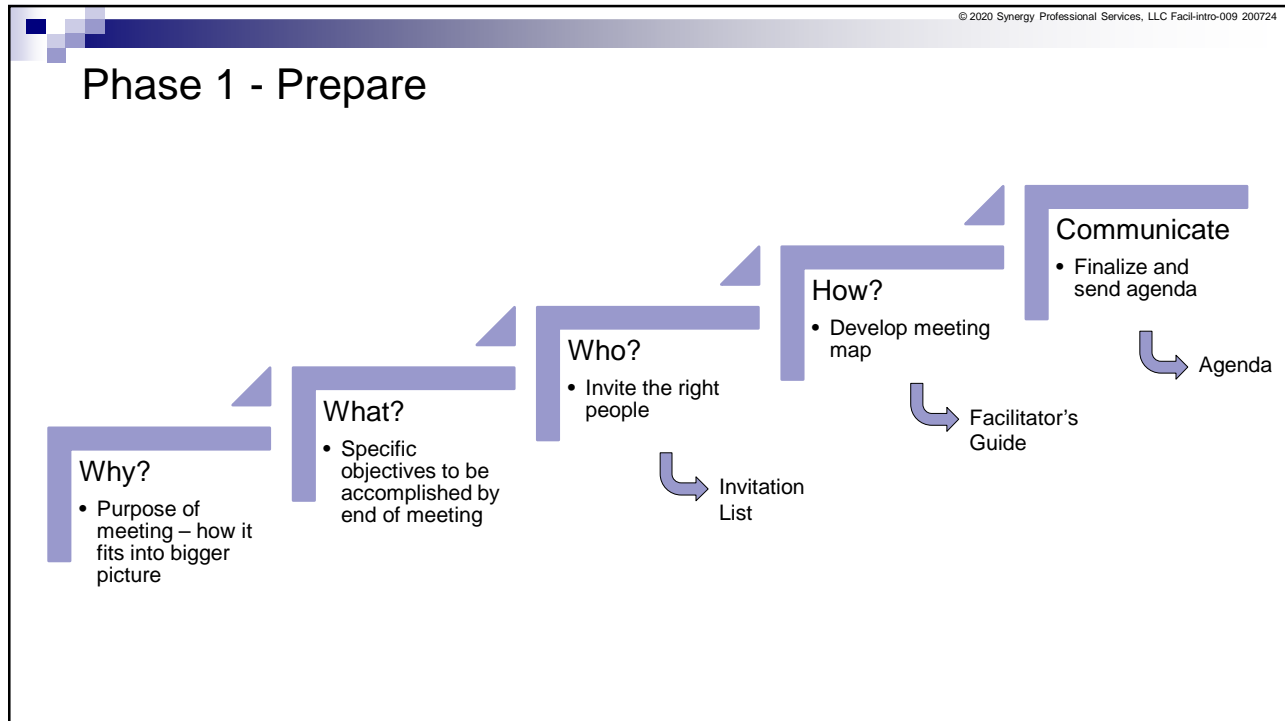
Phase 1 - Prepare

Why?
- Purpose of meeting – how it fits into bigger picture

What?
- Specific objectives to be accomplished by end of meeting

Who?
- Invite the right people

  ↳ Invitation List

How?
- Develop meeting map

  ↳ Facilitator's Guide

Communicate
- Finalize and send agenda

  ↳ Agenda

Which aspect of meeting preparation do you find most challenging?

Defining the meeting's alignment to the "big picture"

Setting specific objectives for the meeting

Mapping out how to accomplish meeting objectives

Clear advance communication about the meeting

Example of Why, What, and Who for a Meeting

COALITION TO END HOUSELESSNESS

CEH
Collaboration Meeting
Wednesday, February 8
1:00pm to 5:00pm

funding design -> implement
change

Purpose of Meeting (Why)

Bring together CEH members to make decisions necessary to transition from a grant-funded workgroup focused on strategy to a self-funded collaborative working on implementation and rollout planning.

Specific Objectives to Be Accomplished (What)

- Share next steps to implement proposed housing model (purpose: inform)
- Gauge service provider support for proposed additions to the model (purpose: assess)
- Reach agreement on MOU content to support a multi-payer coalition (purpose: decide)
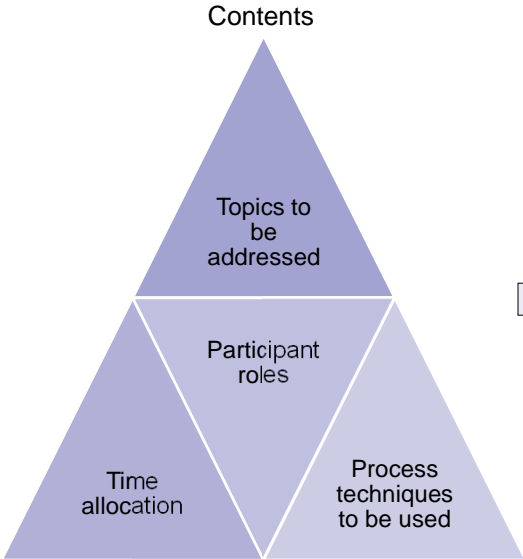- Discuss potential cost-sharing model to sustain the coalition (purpose: discuss)

Proposed Participants (Who)

- Representatives of city and county governments that are CEH members
- Executive directors of HomePlate, Barnabus's Place short-term shelter, Step-Up transitional housing, and Habitat for Humanity local affiliates.
- Representatives from CEH member organizations that provide services to help people transition from houselessness (job assistance, mental health, street outreach, addiction).
- Representatives from CEH's affordable housing working group
- Facilitator and assistants from the Institute for Community-based Policy

Facilitator's Guide Shows "How"

Contents

Topics to be addressed

Participant roles

Time allocation

Process techniques to be used

- Detailed agenda (for all participants)
- Facilitator's guide (for facilitator only)

Formal vs. informal

Create Facilitator's Guide

List topics
- List each topic to be addressed during the meeting

These topics, if successful, together should accomplish the specific objectives for the meeting

Define approach to each topic
- Purpose of topic
- Process techniques to be used
- Participant roles
- Time allocation

Topics for Coalition to End Houselessness Meeting

1. Review meeting's purpose, process, and norms
2. Updates from City and County co-sponsors
3. Upcoming public comment process
4. Finalize implementation success measures
5. Select MOU wording from options
6. Refine member cost-sharing model that will sustain the coalition
7. Wrap up and summarize next steps
8. Evaluate effectiveness of this meeting

Example of Approach for Topic 5 of CEH Meeting

Topic: Memorandum of Understanding for Multi-payer Coalition
Purpose: Reach tentative agreement (subject to approval from home organizations) on language for a memorandum of understanding between participating service providers, advocacy groups, and governmental members for an ongoing multi-payer coalition that will guide the implementation of our strategy to reduce houselessness by 25% in 5 years.

Techniques:
1. Review MOU draft language and lead discussion (facilitator: Martina from ICbP).
2. Use fist or five technique to gauge level of support, flush out concerns, and converge on list of items for follow-up action (facilitator: Martina from ICbP).

Other Roles:
1. Run web-based conference call and take notes for meeting summary (ICbP facilitation team).
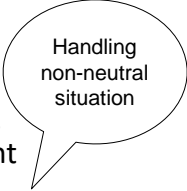
Tentative Duration: 55 m

Example of Approach for Topic 6 of CEH Meeting

Topic: Member cost-sharing model to sustain coalition.
Purpose: Reach tentative agreement (subject to approval from home organizations) on cost-sharing model in which CEH members jointly sustain the collaborative rather than relying on grant funding.
Techniques:
1. Martina (ICbP) presents cost-sharing options and facilitates Q&A.
2. Judy (county executive sponsor) facilitates discussion of options, leading to a group recommendation on preferred cost sharing model. ICbP people leave the room during this because vested interests might influence discussion and recommendation.
3. ICbP people re-join and Martina (ICbP) facilitates agreement on next steps.

Handling non-neutral situation

Other Roles:
1. Juan C will scribe on virtual whiteboard and manage PollEverywhere.

Tentative Duration: 1 h

Try It for Topic 9

Topic: Evaluate effectiveness of this meeting.
Purpose:

Techniques:

Other Roles:

Tentative Duration:

> Instructions: fill out the sections of the facilitator's guide for this topic. (3 minutes)
> 1. What do you want to achieve with this evaluation of effectiveness (purpose)?
> 2. What facilitation technique(s) do you as facilitator plan to use to achieve that purpose?
> 3. What roles will people play?
> 4. How much time will you allocate for this activity?

Use Info from Facilitator's Guide to Write and Send Agenda

COALITION TO END HOUSELESSNESS

CEH
Transition to Implementation Meeting
Wednesday, February 8
1:00pm to 5:00pm
https://us00web.zoom.us/j/123456789?pwd=ABCDE
United States (Toll Free): 1 877 987-6543
Access Code: 123-456-789

Example: final agenda sent to CEH participants in advance

Meeting Goals:
- Share next steps to implement proposed housing model (purpose: inform)
- Gauge service provider support for proposed additions to the model (purpose: assess)
- Reach agreement on MOU content to define a multi-payer coalition (purpose: decide)
- Discuss potential cost-sharing model to sustain the coalition (purpose: discuss)

Agenda

Time	Topic	Presenter
1:00	Welcome, Introductions, and Meeting Process	Martina Pandya, ICbP
1:20	Updates and Thoughts on Moving to Implementation	Judy Zerzan and Timo Fuuzari, exec sponsors
1:50	Assess How to Add System Level Success Measures	Timo Fuuzari
2:00	Break 1	
2:10	Sustaining the Coalition Through Implementation: Decide Content of Memorandum of Understanding	All, led by Martina Pandya
3:00	Break 2	
3:10	Sustaining the Coalition: Discuss Member Cost Sharing Proposal	All, led by Judy Zerzan
4:00	Break 3	
4:10	Wrap-up and Next Steps	All, led by Martina Pandya
4:45	Evaluation of Meeting Effectiveness	All, led by Martina Pandya
5:00	Adjourn	

Remember the two written outputs from preparation:
1. Facilitator's guide
2. Agenda

Editable Templates For You

Facilitator's Guide

Purpose of Meeting (why is it worth our time to hold this meeting?)

Specific Objectives to be Accomplished (what do we want to get done by its end?)
1.
2.

Participants Needed

Name	General Role or Purpose for Attending

Topics (total duration: __)
1. Topic name
   a. Purpose of topic:
   b. Process techniques and roles that will be used to achieve the purpose of this topic
      i.
      ii.
      iii.
   c. Other roles for this topic:
   d. Estimated duration:
2. Topic name
   a. Purpose of topic:
   b. Process techniques and roles that will be used to achieve the purpose of

Meeting Agenda

Date: <date>, <start time> - <end time>
Location or call-in info:
Meeting purpose: <short summary>
Specific objectives to be accomplished
   1.
   2.

Participants

Name	Meeting Role	Contact Info

Outline of meeting

	Time	Topic	Who facilitates?	How long?	Purpose[2]
1	9:00	Greetings, review agenda and update open action items		10 m	Update
2	9:10	Review risk landscape		5 m	Discuss
7	9:55	End • Review and log new decisions • Review and log new action items (clear action description, owner and due date) • Agree on next steps, meeting time & location		5 m	Decide

Attachments:
   1.
   2.

Phase 2 – Start of Meeting

Goal: build strong foundation for meeting

Rough guideline: 10% of meeting time

Chat ⌨

- Group A (A-G): What meeting norms or roles have you found to be most useful?
- Group B (H-N): What are some good ways to quickly bring everyone current?
- Group C (O-Z): What are the most important things for a meeting leader to do at the start of a meeting?

Review meeting purpose and agenda

Lay foundation for safe space and constructive behavior
• Clear roles
• Group norms

Bring everyone current

Examples of roles: Facilitator, Scribe, Timekeeper

Phase 3 – Discussion

Goal: make forward progress

Rough guideline: 80% of meeting time

Chat ⌨
During the presentation of this slide, please share tips for how to do the things shown here.

- Return to meeting agenda OR
- Revise agenda on the fly (ask)

Steer

Consolidate progress

Use good decision-making techniques

Make periodic process checks (the 4 P's)

Ensure everyone participates

- Summarize points of agreement as they happen
- Capture action items and decisions in real time
- Defer sidebars

Monitor the Four P's

1. **Progress**
2. **Process**
3. **Pace**
4. **People**

Use Action Items to Get Agreement on Next Steps

Issue and Action Item (AI) List

Project Name: Online for All			List owner: Jessica W.		
ID	Issue Description	Action and Status	Entry Date	Owner	Due Date
1	Department has decided that all fall MBA classes will be 100% virtual, so must replace face to face team exercises with something in cyberspace that is compatible with Zoom.	Find supplementary software that enables virtual, collaborative manipulation of forms, stickies, work breakdowns, and network diagrams. Status as of 6/30/20: Miro recommended by WU EDC, so prototyping virtual classroom. Next step is to demo to department head.	6/16/20	John S.	08/10/20
2					

Really important tips!
1. Ensure that each AI contains information on *what*, *who*, and *when*.
2. If you can't get a firm date for the *when*, ask for a "date for a date."
3. Capture action items and decisions in real time by writing on a whiteboard or flipchart. Take a photo at the end of the meeting.

Editable Template For You

Issue and Action Item List

Project:				List owner:		
ID	Issue Description	Action and Status	Entry Date	Owner	Due Date	
ex	New textbook unavailable from the publisher	Select & order alternate text for fall term. As of 7/7/15, evaluating 3 books	6/25/15	John S.	8/10/15	

Phase 4 – End of Meeting

Goal: ensure closure

Guideline: 10% of meeting time

Summarize next steps at a high level	Review details of action items and decisions	Occasionally evaluate effectiveness of meeting	Verify next meeting (time, location, and attendance)

Phase 5 - Follow Up

Promptly send written summary

Minimum: decision log, action item log and info on next meeting

Follow up action items

More really important tips!
1. Send summary within 1 business day of meeting end, if possible.
2. Full minutes are rarely necessary. I usually favor speed over comprehensiveness.

Example: meeting summary from a board meeting

Alternative method: mark up copy of meeting agenda

PPLF — Project and Portfolio Leaders' Forum

Meeting name: PPLF Board Meeting
Date held: 7/16/20
Present: Rob, Scott, Jeff, Tom
Absent: Riad (excused)
Next meeting: 10/15/20, 4:00 – 5:00, web conferencing ID 340-398-432 (the usual)

Decisions

1	Membership strategy will be to grow the group because without consistently adding new members the group size will eventually fall below critical mass due to natural attrition.
2	Agreed on primary areas of value for members: a. Networking with peers who at the same level and have complementary professional interests (in a safe environment with practitioners only) b. Learning from experienced, interesting speakers and panelists c. Access to large archive of past presentations
3	Decided to establish two new roles: membership director and outreach director

Action items

ID	Issue Description	Action and Status	Entry Date	Owner	Due Date
1	No way to measure progress	Analyze attendance data and propose metrics and targets for group health and growth	7/16/20	Scott	8/3/20
2	Interaction is a key objective of PPLF but it is lower at virtual meetings than at f2f meetings	Try several experiments to increase interaction at August online plenary meeting 1. Add several online polls 2. Add enforced time for everyone to prep questions for panel 3. Arrange for panelists to ask questions of the audience 4. Add a facilitated chat room	7/16/20	Jeff	8/19/20
3	Hard to find enough guest presenters with "star power"	Invite several previous top presenters back in 2021 for a "greatest hits" reprise	7/16/20	Jeff	10/6/20
4	Some members are not seeing GCal event reminders	Update event notification protocol: add LinkedIn group and add promotional reminders at 1 and 3 weeks before the event	7/23/20	Robert	7/23/20

Editable Template For You

Meeting Summary

Meeting name:
Date held:
Present:
Absent:
Next meeting:

Decisions

1	

Action items

ID	Issue Description	Action and Status	Entry Date	Owner	Due Date

Discuss Consolidation and Closure

Chat ⌨

- Group A (A-G): What techniques do you use to consolidate progress during a meeting?
- Group B (H-N): Give some tips for monitoring the 4 P's (progress, process, people and pace)
- Group C (O-Z): As a meeting facilitator, how have you encouraged follow up and closure?

Process Tools

Read-time Guidance towards the Goal

PROCESS FACILITATION TECHNIQUES

Learning Objectives
1. Explain what process facilitation is
2. Describe what neutrality means in the context of facilitation
3. List at least three process facilitation practices that you think are important to your work
4. Summarize several process tools from three major categories

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What Group Process and Behavior Includes

Role of Process Facilitator

Dictionary definition
• "Enabler"

Purpose
• Improve group effectiveness at problem solving

Responsibility
• Actively guide group's process and behavior

Typical method
• Design, management and follow-up of meetings

Areas of influence
• High on process
• Low on content
• But …

How the group:
1. Talks together
2. Identifies and solves problems
3. Makes decisions
4. Handles conflicts

Content: substantive matter at hand that group is dealing with

Five Core Process Facilitation Practices

| 1. Maintain neutrality | • Stay neutral on content (but not group behavior, process and function) |

But what about when you have subject matter expertise?

How Neutral?

| 1. Maintain neutrality | Stay neutral on content (but not group behavior, process and function) |

- <u>Process facilitator</u> focuses on process, but can gently influence direction of content
- (Must adapt when you are both process facilitator and content participant)

Ask questions to influence direction
> "What would be the benefits of [some new approach]?"

Offer suggestions that open new content directions
> "Let's consider [approach xyz]."

Temporarily take off the facilitator's hat to play a content role
> "Let me step out of the facilitator's role for a moment to tell you about [a relevant consideration]."

"Staying neutral is challenging in facilitation."
Ingrid Bens, Facilitation at a Glance, p. 8

Five Core Process Facilitation Practices

Chat

During presentation of this slide, please chat your tips on how to accomplish these practices.

Practice	Description
1. Maintain neutrality	Stay neutral on content (but not group behavior, process and function)
2. Actively listen	Understand and don't judge
3. Ask questions	Test assumptions, probe for information, and ratify for consensus
4. Continuously paraphrase	Acknowledge input and clarify ideas
5. Summarize discussions	Check for accuracy, obtain agreement and closure, and spark new thinking

Supplemental Process Facilitation Practices

1. Maintain neutrality
2. Actively listen
3. Ask questions
4. Continuously paraphrase
5. Summarize discussions

6. Record ideas

7. Synthesize ideas

8. Keep discussion on track

9. Test assumptions

10. Manage norms and make progress checks

Chat

Which of the ten practices are most important for the facilitation work you do?

Some Process Facilitation Tools

Selection
(convergence)

- Affinity diagrams
- Priority setting
- Decision grid
- Multi-voting
- E-voting
- Decision methods
- Parking lot

Problem solving

- Root cause analysis (Ishikawa diagrams)
- Five whys
- Gap analysis
- Force field analysis
- Pareto analysis
- Systematic problem-solving process (PSP)
- Alternatives and options
- Process mapping

Ideation
(divergence)

- Visioning
- Brainstorming
- Nominal Group Technique (NGT)
- SWOT (SOAR)
- Gallery walk
- Word cloud

What are your favorite facilitation or meeting management process tools?

Top

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Review

Role of Facilitator

A facilitator actively guides a group's process and behavior to improve its effectiveness at problem solving

Manage Meetings
- Effective meetings have five phases
- Preparation and follow-up are critical for an effective meeting

Facilitate Process
- Architect a session in advance
- Pilot during the session
- Guide participants in the right direction

Consult on Subject Matter
- Contribute special expertise
- Role clarity

Resources

Upcoming Full Day Workshop
Applied Facilitation Basics

Center for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas. Chapter 16: Group Facilitation and Problem-Solving. Retrieved from https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/leadership/group-facilitation.

International Association of Facilitators Methods database
www.iaf-world.org
www.sessionlab.com/library/iafmethods
(partially free)

Bens, I. (2016) *Facilitation at a Glance! Fourth Edition: Your Pocket Guide to Facilitation*. Methuen, MA: GOAL/QPC.

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