

Workshop 4c: Governance and Stewardship

Session c: The Role of the Facilitator

Learning Objectives/Desired Outcomes:

Participants will leave this workshop with...

- Knowing the basics of meeting facilitation
- Increased familiarity and comfort with the role of facilitator
- Increased facilitation and communication skills
- Strategies for navigating the challenges that can arise in meetings
- Understanding that learning how to work and communicate cooperatively is a muscle that we develop

Materials

- Handout: Towards Authentic Participation (or the Practices of Participatory Groups)
- Handout: Know your Meeting, Know Yourself
- Blank poster paper and markers

Preparation

- NOTE: this is a 3 hour session (including time to share food); make sure to set-up extra time with the group for this intensive facilitation skill-building session
- Prepare quarter sheets with a fill-in-the-blank script for “Collaborative Introductions”
- Prepare strips with different roles and instructions typed on them for “Roleplaying” exercise
- Write the “RolePlaying” scenario up on butcher paper or whiteboard

Agenda

1. OPENING CIRCLE (Seeds) = personal connections

Collaborative Introductions	Time: 30 min
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Share the goals and approach of the session: <i>Today we will be both having a training on facilitation, and learning how to facilitate, we'll be taking time at each section to explain what we are doing and why we are doing it!</i>2. Invite people to pair up with someone they know the least3. Give the pairs 5 minutes to interview each other and to make	<p><u>Purpose:</u></p> <p>To establish bonds between individuals</p> <p>To improve listening skills</p> <p>To practice basic presentation skills and public speaking</p>

<p>sure to find out:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Let pairs know they will each be responsible for introducing the other 5. Pass out strips with the introductions script to help them with their introductions 6. After 5 minutes bring them back to the larger group, and begin presentations. Encourage people to introduce each other with energy and pizzaaz. 7. After the introductions, reflect with the group: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>How was that?</i> b. <i>What did you notice?</i> c. <i>As a facilitator, why is it important to take time to make sure people talk to each other and have proper introduction?</i> d. <i>What are other ways you have noticed facilitators building relationships and trust at the beginning of a session?</i> 	<p>To understand the value of relationship building</p> <p><u>Facilitator's notes:</u></p> <p>Possible ideas that may come from the group and/or that you might want to reinforce... we do introductions to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - help people realize who we are and why we are here - help people feel welcome - start to build connections with each other <p>The more connected people feel to each other the more likely they are to participate fully</p> <p>It helps to have a chance to be a little bit silly with each other (but not too silly :)</p>
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2. FIREBUILDER (Preparing the soil) = relationship and trust building

<p>The Practices of Participatory Groups</p>	<p>Time: 30</p>
<p><u>Instructions:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask participants to think about a situation in which they did not feel comfortable to participate. What were the conditions that made it difficult to participate? 2. Next, ask participants to think about a situation when they felt very comfortable to participate in a group., What were the conditions that facilitated participation? 3. Distribute the handout, "Towards Authentic Participation," and ask the everyone to read through the list, putting a check next to the ones they have experienced and a star next to the ones they want to experience more 4. Generate a list of group agreements by asking the following questions and scribing answers: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What stands out to you? Or feels important to you as we seek to increase participation everywhere we go? 	<p><u>Purpose:</u></p> <p>To identify the different practices of participatory groups and conventional groups</p> <p>To personally identify with the ones that feel most relevant to the group</p> <p>To articulate the role of the facilitator in creating the conditions for authentic participation</p> <p><u>Facilitator Notes:</u></p> <p>Listen carefully when people share what stands out to them</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. What group agreements will support healthy participation? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Once you have a good list of agreements, ask the group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Does this look good? b. Anything missing? c. Any questions about what's up here or things you would change? 6. Ask everyone to raise their hands if they agree to commit to these group agreements 7. Reflect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. How was that process? b. Do you feel good about these agreements? c. Why is it important for a group to select and agree on a set of guidelines for how they want to work together? 	<p>about the practices of participatory groups and help people translate their thoughts into group guidelines.</p>
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3. BRIDGE EXERCISE (Planting the seeds) = connecting personal experiences to the big picture

<h2>The Role of the Facilitator</h2>	<p>Time: 30</p>
<p><u>Instructions:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Build off the last exercise to set-up this one: <i>So, we know meaningful participation is the goal, and we have an idea of some of the group agreements that can support participation, but now let's think about the role of the facilitator in creating the conditions for authentic participation...</i> 2. Ask the group the following questions and scribe answers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Why is good facilitation important?</i> b. <i>What have you seen facilitators do that works?</i> c. <i>What mistakes have you seen facilitators make?</i> 3. Build on the group's thoughts to add your thoughts about effective facilitation practices 4. Ask the group: <i>Based on this list, how would you define facilitation? What is facilitation?</i> 5. Build on what people say to create a shared definition of facilitation 6. Ask, <i>What does the facilitator do?</i> 	<p><u>Purpose:</u></p> <p>To clarify the role of the facilitator and facilitation best practices to support authentic participation</p> <p>To co-create a definition of facilitation</p> <p><u>Facilitator Notes:</u></p> <p>Possible definition of facilitation: To facilitate means "to make easy;" so the task of the facilitator is to make it easy for the group to do the work they've come together to do.</p>

<p>7. Scribe what the group comes up with and add your own thoughts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Reviews the goals and the agenda b. Moves the process forward c. Pays attention to the social dynamics in the room d. Helps the group achieve results e. Calls on people who want to speak f. Keeps the group focused on the goals g. Guides the group through decisions h. Balances participation so all voices are heard i. Helps keep the energy of the group up j. Asks questions k. Summarizes what people say as a way of moving the process forward l. Engages the group in problem solving m. Helps the group address uneven power dynamics and oppressive actions or comments <p>8. Ask, "What's challenging about facilitation?"</p> <p>9. Take answers and scribe them</p> <p>10. If you have time: focus on the challenge of having to interrupt someone who is speaking too much. Model a negative way of interrupting someone and then a positive way. Get people into groups of three and have them practice interrupting each other.</p>	
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4. BIG PICTURE LEARNING (Sun and Water) = New learning/big picture content

<p>ROLEPLAYS: Learning by Fire</p>	<p>Time: 35</p>
<p>1. Start with a spectrum to understand how confident participants currently feel to facilitate a meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Stand up and physically draw an imaginary line down the center of the room and explain to participants: <i>This line represents a continuum or a spectrum of beliefs. Standing at this end (walk over to one end of the line) means you feel extremely confident to facilitate meetings. In fact, you could help others to facilitate meetings. While standing at this end (walk over to the other end of the imaginary line), means you don't feel confident at all to facilitate meetings.</i> 	<p><u>Purpose:</u></p> <p>To confront facilitation fears</p> <p>To quickly hone facilitation skills</p> <p>To underscore the importance of thoughtful planning and participatory approaches</p>

In fact, you are petrified of it. You can choose anywhere along this line to stand to show where you stand in your own mind on this issue/topic. Any questions?

- b. Invite everyone to choose their positions.
 - c. Ask for a quick reflection on what people notice about the group's positioning. Maybe everyone is bunched up in one area. Maybe the group is evenly split. Maybe there is a big range. Whatever it is, invite someone from the group to share what they notice
 - d. Solicit statements from people at the two extremes and from at the middle to explain why they chose that position
2. Great, well at the end of the session today we will come back to the spectrum to see where everyone is at. Sometimes the best way to build confidence is by jumping into the fire!
 3. *Let's think about all the different facilitation nightmares we have - Here is a scenario we will work with over the next 30 minutes:*

Scenario: *You are at a monthly board meeting for the Housing Cooperative that you all live in. The building Manager Ms Rodriguez has received mixed reviews in the 20 unit apartment building. This meeting is to talk about whether you need to take any action to change the situation*

4. *What are the things that could go wrong? The fears we have about facilitating a meeting like this?*
5. Have someone scribe the worst case scenarios that people share, while you write different characters on strips for people to take on in the following role play (see examples to the right)
6. Explain how role playing works and what the point is:

Role playing is like rehearsal for real life; so think of this as a chance to make mistakes and learn from them. If you are a participant and have been given instructions to do something challenging, please allow the facilitator to effectively address it. This is a great chance to do a bit of acting, but you can also play yourself and operate as you would in a meeting, advocate for what you want, etc.

7. Begin the role play. There are many ways you could go about it. Here are two:
 - a. (more time:) Set it up, hand out roles, and rotate facilitators every five minutes
 - b. (less time:) Set it up, ask for 1-3 volunteers, hand out roles and rotate the volunteer facilitators every 5-10 min.

Facilitator Notes:

If more than 10 people, do the role play in 2 groups...

Some examples of worst case scenario characters you can write on the strips (ahead of time) and then feel free to add additional ones as people share their fears:

- You had to talk to the Ms R about a plumbing issue lately and they were short with you, you think its because your friends with her ex. You do not trust her. Bring this up at least twice.
- You think that she should have a regular evaluation by the board, she hasn't had one since she started 7 months ago
- You are still upset that the board hired Ms R, we should have hired Sr. Garcia.
- You think she is doing a great job. You interrupt someone else at least once or twice to say so.
- You are unclear what the point of having a building manager is, and insist on having it explained to you
- You want to discuss your feelings about this with the person sitting next to you while others are talking.

<p>8. After one or more people have had the chance to facilitate in a challenging scenario (with no real preparation), reflect with the group:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>What internal dynamics in the group did you notice?</i> b. <i>What strategies did the facilitators use to address them?</i> c. <i>What questions did this bring up for you?</i> d. <i>What lessons are you taking away from this exercise?</i> 	
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5. CREATING CONTENT (Harvest): Analysis and/or action steps

<p>Know Your Meeting, Know Yourself</p>	<p>Time: 40 min</p>
<p>1. Build off the role playing experience to set up this exercise: <i>Okay so that was fun to dive head first into a challenging facilitation scenario and one of the things we got from that is the importance of thoughtful planning and lead thinking. Let's take some time to practice thoughtful planning and lead thinking around some actual facilitation experiences you might have...</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Brainstorm: <i>What are some of the situations you find yourself (or will find yourself) facilitating a group?</i> Take ideas and write them up on the whiteboard 3. Distribute the handout: "Know your meeting, Know yourself" 4. Ask everyone to choose a real-life or possible future scenario and work with a partner to complete the handout 5. Framing: <i>Every meeting is different, every facilitator is different. So, this sheet has some reflection questions to help you know your meeting/know yourself</i> 6. Give everyone 20 minutes to work on their handouts with a partner 7. Come back together for a quick reflection: <i>What stood out to you as you were working on this?</i> 	<p><u>Purpose:</u> To apply the lessons from today's session to an actual scenario participants might be faced with</p> <p>To draw on peer support to reflect on and apply facilitation best practices</p> <p><u>Facilitator's notes:</u> Walk around and support people as they complete the worksheet.. It is a good time to check-in with people one-one-one on anything coming up for them around facilitation</p>

6. CLOSING CIRCLE (Saving Seeds) = Reflection

<p>Spectrum Reflection</p>	<p>Time: 10</p>
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1. Ask everyone to come back to the imaginary line you had drawn earlier for the reflection on confidence levels for facilitation and decide where they stand now.
2. Ask for quick reflections... If you are standing in a little different place than last time, why? What is making the difference for you?
3. Next ask everyone to share one thing (one action, experience, piece of support) that will help them move down the line towards confidence. For each thing that people share, ask people to move if that thing would also improve their own confidence...
4. Form one final standing circle and ask everyone to share one word about facilitation that is standing out for them
5. Conclude by letting people know you are excited we are building our collective capacity around facilitation as this is key to collaborative economics...

And in the next two sessions we are going to look at the assets we have in our communities so we can create the projects we need, and put these skills to work...

Purpose:

To evaluate the training based on people's shifting confidence levels with regards to facilitation

To get a sense of where people are at after the session

To understand what people will need to further build their own confidence

To encourage personal responsibility for building facilitation skills

Facilitator Notes:

Don't worry if there are people who feel no more confident (or even less confident!) than they did at the beginning. This can be a function of learning more about a topic and realizing how little you know. This is actually a great place for people to be - it means they are about to shift up a level - this humility (and possibly new-found respect for facilitation) will allow them to do that.

Make sure people feel safe to share if they feel less or equally confident as they did at the beginning on the workshop...