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# Facilitation Skills

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## Course Overview

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. Managers and supervisors are often asked to “facilitate” rather than “instruct” or “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” to “facilitators”. This workshop is designed to make core facilitation skills better understood and readily available for your organization. It presents materials and ideas that have been tested and refined over twenty years of active facilitation in all types of settings.

## Learning Objectives

- At the conclusion of this course the participant will be able to
- Distinguish facilitation from instruction and training.
- Provide facilitators with commonly used process tools to make their meetings easier and more productive.
- Identify the competencies linked to effective small group facilitation.
- Demonstrate through simulations, role-play, critical incidents, and other exercises, each facilitator competency.

## Pre-Workshop Assignments

- Prior to the workshops, participants are asked to prepare a self-assessment report identifying personal learning objectives for the training program.

## Workshop Outline

### Day 1

- Introductions, Objectives, Agenda
- Pre-assignment
- The purpose of group facilitation
- Assignment for Day 2
- Difference between “content” and “process”
- Difference between “instructor” and “facilitator”
- What group dynamics are really like
  - Divergent thinking
  - Convergent thinking
  - The Groan Zone
- What is a facilitator?
- What is a facilitator’s role?
- Facilitative listening skills
  - Listening skills
  - Developing Questioning Techniques
    - Open
    - Closed
    - Probes
  - Observing Body Language
  - Other Process Skills
- Review

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## Day 2

- Facilitating Open Discussion
- Structured Activities
  - Brainstorming
  - Categorizing
  - Debriefing
- Difficult Situations & Difficult People
- Preventions and Interventions
- Developing Sustainable Agreements
- Surveying the Territory
- Building a Shared Framework of Understanding
- Developing Sustainable Criteria
- Gradients of Agreement
- Practice: Assignment
- Personal Action Plan