



Bonner Curriculum

Facilitation 202: More Techniques and Strategies

Overview:

This session provides participants with advanced tools and techniques for facilitation, whether for use in meetings or trainings. Through small group work using situations of typical facilitation challenges generated by participants, the workshop guides participants to review and select appropriate tools and strategies. It also introduces and incorporates a wide range of tools and games. The session actively involves participants in presenting, using role-plays and the opportunity for feedback.

This session is a great complement to Facilitation 201, which introduces a framework and set of techniques. ***This session also draw on a lengthy handout of Games Galore (which you may want to use all of the time). You should print that out separately.***

Category:

Facilitation; communication; management; leadership skills; presentation

Level:

Moderate to Advanced

Recommended

Bonner Sequence: This workshop is an advanced facilitation training, designed to follow 101 and 201. It is very suitable for project coordination training or student leadership training, especially for students who will play a role in leading others in meetings, workshops, retreats, etc.

expectation	explore	experience	example	expertise

VALUES: ALL - community engagement, community building

Type:

Structured activities suitable for workshop (e.g. retreat or training)

Focus or Goals of this Guide:

- Provide participants with a range of tools and strategies for facilitation, building their skill set and knowledge of how to apply tools
- Provide participants with a lengthy set of icebreakers and games, as well as guidance for selecting and using them
- Provide participants with the opportunity to apply these techniques for their own purposes, using more complex and common scenarios, and to learn from group feedback

Materials:

- Flip chart and markers
- Handouts enclosed

How to Prepare:

Review the trainer guide and the attached **Games, Games, Games** handout. Become comfortable with all of the facilitation techniques and prepare handouts. Review and modify scenarios to fit purpose and activities of participants.

How to Do/Brief Outline:

This workshop provides a lot of meaty material for people to work with on facilitation. Modify the times to fit your context:

1) Context, Definitions, Frameworks	suggested time 10 minutes
2) Games, Games, Games	suggested time 20 minutes
3) Tips and Tools Galore	suggested time 20 minutes
4) Small Group Work Time	suggested time 20 minutes
5) Small Group Presentations	suggested time 40 minutes
6) Wrap	suggested time 10 minutes

Part 1) Context, Definitions, Frameworks

Suggested time 10 minutes

Start with a brief brainstorm asking the group, “What are some things a Facilitator does?”

Lead into presenting a **Definition of Facilitation:**

The process of helping participants to learn from an activity. The literal meaning of facilitator is “one who makes things easy.” Sometimes a facilitator is called a trainer.

Explain:

- The facilitator serves as a coordinator and organizer of the small groups, and ensures everyone is participating and staying on task. A facilitator never imposes a solution on to the group. Facilitators clarify issues, focus discussions, bring out viewpoints, synthesize differences, and look for underlying agreements. However, this does not mean they impose a solution on the group.
- As a facilitator, you are responsible for preparing for and implementing all aspects of the training, from the content of the workshops, the activities, reflection, and evaluation.
- It is critical for the facilitator to have the capacity to develop mutual respect among the group in order to maximize the learning. You must be willing to take risks and work hard.
- You are there as a guide and to listen. People will view you as an expert in the topic you are facilitating. Make sure you are knowledgeable about the topic and feel comfortable with people questioning your resources of information.

Distribute the **Roles of Facilitators** handout and review its contents.

Then distribute the **Facilitation Framework** and **Effective Facilitation Behaviors** handouts. In that model, a facilitator must balance goals/aims, process, and dynamics about people (inclusion). Give a real, personal example of doing so, if possible (like in a meeting or training).

Also explain that basically facilitation is a process of building small agreements (of content and process) within a group. If you keep that in mind, you can consider the tips (from the Effective Behaviors handout) as a guide.

This is all to set content for the training. Now transition to the next section, in which you will do some interactive games with the group.

Part2) Games, Games, Games

Suggested time 20 minutes

Start this section by leading the group in a few different games, such as these below. Or choose others from the handout of *Games, Games, Games* in this document, making sure they have different types of activities, tones, and so on.

Human Sculptures

[This icebreaker is best with groups of about 10-20; if there are more than 20 members, split them into two subgroups]

In this non-competitive activity, members serve as the human "clay" to be formed by the member serving as sculptor. The sculptors should be asked to provide an interpretation or depiction of some category of events or other focus topics, to be chosen by the trainers. For example, you might ask for interpretations in "human clay" of any of the following:

- An important event in the life of a typical student/volunteer/program member
- An anticipated service experience
- An important public event
- A movie scene
- An event from a book
- A scene or line from a song

The trainer or another staff member may want to serve as the sculptor first, to demonstrate the process and reduce member inhibitions. Then ask for volunteers. The sculptor should move members around without speaking, until the human sculpture is complete, and then explain it to the group while they maintain their poses.

If public events or anticipated service events are used, it is easy to have two sculptors simultaneously interpret the event and then compare their sculptures. The human sculptures can also be done with several individuals or the whole group serving as a team of sculptors, in which case talking is permitted.

Be sure the room is big and open enough for the groups to move around. You may want to provide some furniture or other items such as chairs, tables, or books to be incorporated into the sculptures. Allow time for 2-3 human sculptures.

Boop:

[This is good for smaller groups, if you have a large group break them into smaller groups. Break the group into teams of 3-4 people.]

Have the small groups join hands to form a circle. Give each group an inflated balloon. Make sure the groups have space in between them so they can safely move around. The object is to keep your balloon up in the air and off the ground. The groups must keep their hands joined throughout the game- if they break their hands they are out of the game. Give the groups about a minute to practice keeping the balloon up in the air. Now it's time to play the game.

As the facilitator, you call out certain body parts the group must use to keep the balloon in the air. For example, start off by calling "hands", then move onto "elbows" or "knees." You can then use combinations, "head-elbow." What this means is that a head shot must follow an elbow shot, or the group is out of the game. Have fun with making up your own body combinations. This is an excellent game to do after a meal.

You keep doing this until one group is left. A fun way to end the game is to say “fire in the hole.” This means all the groups must use their body to pop the balloon.

End with the BIRTHDAY GAME, which will result in the group being lined up by age (a clever way of then forming groups with diverse age representation).

Then, have them count off so that they end up in small groups of 3-5 (divide number of participants by 3-5, your choice, for number).

Birthday Game:

Explain that without talking or verbalizations, people must line up from youngest to oldest, in order of birthday. Give them only a few minutes to do so. People can use gestures.

Do some general debrief questions with the group, getting them to think about the different functions of games. For example:

- What kind of tone does each of those games create?
- Which game would be more appropriate for a group of 60?
- Which game would be more appropriate for a diversity workshop?
- Which game would be more appropriate for a reflection workshop?
- What are settings or participant characteristics that would make each of the games inappropriate?
- What else do you think?

End by presenting the following considerations for how to choose games:

[Flip Chart] A game should be chosen based on:

- **Purpose and Theme:** does it fit with the purpose of the activity/session (e.g., to motivate, to laugh, to have fun) and the day overall?
- **Tone:** does it set the right tone for your purpose (e.g., you don't want a somber reflection game at the beginning of a day of service)?
- **Size (and Space) of Group:** is the game appropriate for the size of the group and the space the group has to do the game?
- **Length:** will the game take the right amount of time (e.g., will it fit into the time you have)?
- **Complexity:** can the group do the game easily in the given constraints (e.g., it's not great to have a game where written instructions and pencils are required when you're outdoors in a windy parking lot)?

Part 3) Tips and Tools Galore

Suggested time 20 minutes

Explain that next the workshop is going to allow for folks to learn about and apply a range of facilitation tools.

Distribute the **Tips and Tools Galore** packet.

You can:

- 1) Introduce it, through review by page or a few tools
- 2) Give people a few minutes to glance it over and ask if there are general questions.

Then, give each small group an assignment:

Generate 3-5 (you define) specific examples of challenging issues a facilitator faces in the following areas:

- Group 1 Challenges related to the environment/context (such as timing, room, etc.)
- Group 2 Challenges related to individual participant's motivation/participation (such as a sleeper)
- Group 3 Challenges related to group dynamics (such as cliques)
- Group 4 Other general challenges

If you have more participants than can fit into four groups (of 3-5), double up.

Give each group blank sheets of colored paper (letter size) to record the specific challenge (one per sheet) or a large flip chart pad to record them on.

After a few minutes, have each group share what they came up with.

Part 4) Small Group Work Time

Suggested time 20 minutes

Now, assign each group using the **Tips and Tools Galore** handout, a strategy for addressing 1-2 of the specific challenges. Switch the assignments so that the group has to deal with a challenge another group came up with. For example:

- Group 1 do Group 4 general challenges
- Group 2 do Group 1 Challenges related to the environment/context (such as timing, room, etc.)
- Group 3 do Group 2 Challenges related to individual participant's motivation/participation (such as a sleeper)
- Group 4 do Group 3 Challenges related to group dynamics (such as cliques, etc)

Again, explain that each group should do the following:

- 1) Review the **Tips and Tools Galore** for ideas
- 2) Identify one or more to tackle the specific challenge(s) you pick.
- 3) In 20 minutes, your group should be ready to present (verbally) the strategies you'd use and/or act it out in a role play/skit.

While the groups are working, roam to check in. Also, give time checks. **Finally, you should also select 1-2 strategies to deal with each of the challenges presented, in the debrief.**

Part 5) Small Group Presentations

Suggested time 40 minutes

A. Have each group present their role play/skit/presentation.

Engage the whole group in providing questions, comments, and/or feedback. You can ask:

- What did the group do well?
- In what ways is that strategy/technique a good choice for the situation?
- What are some other techniques/ways that the situation could be handled by the facilitator?

B. Then, also present your summary (which you can work on while the groups are preparing their presentations). This provides you with a chance to highlight and teach other techniques in the packet. You can to present tools/strategies that didn't get mentioned and/or reaffirm the use of those used.

Part 6) Wrap

Suggested time 10 minutes

Wrap with some open comments and discussion, a round of what did each person learn, or evaluation.

You can also end with the **PLUS/DELTA** tool, presenting that handout.



Roles of Facilitators

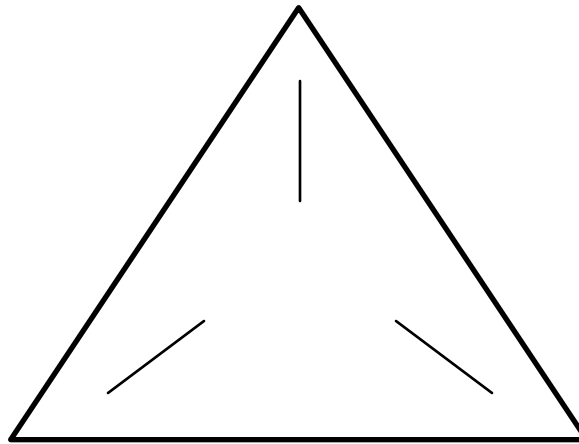
- **Facilitators are the standard- setters for the discussion.** Facilitators must stay focused and alert, interested in the discussion and the learning that is taking place. They create the standards of communication, by looking around the room at all participants, listening closely, and encouraging all participants to contribute to the group.
- **Facilitators make the workshop environment a priority.** Everything from how the chairs are set up, candy, quotes on the wall, location of restrooms, and many other logistical items. The facilitator is responsible for gauging the physical environment of the training and how the environment relates to the feeling of the workshop.
- **Facilitators are mindful of timing issues.** It is easy to over-schedule activities and not incorporate enough downtime for the participants. Avoid planning intensive activities directly before or after a meal. Always plan for activities taking longer than you think they will last. Facilitators need to constantly check-in with the group to gauge their energy level.
- **Facilitators are responsible for articulating the purpose of the discussion and its significance to the group.** It is important to clearly state the goal and purpose of each activity and section of the training. Also, let the group know the expected time that will be spent on each activity.
- **Facilitators make use of various techniques/tools to keep the discussion moving when tension arises or discussion comes to a halt.** The facilitator must be prepared with tools to keep the learning happening.
- **Facilitators are responsible for paying attention to group behaviors.** You to be observant of verbal and non-verbal cues from the group. You can encourage people to explain their behaviors during check-in periods.
- **Facilitators should be relaxed and have a sense of humor that makes sure discussions are enjoyable as well as educational.** Group discussions can often take a very serious turn and become intense. It is important to remember we do not have to be fired-up or uptight in order to have effective discussions. Laughter and a relaxed environment can be the greatest methods for a good discussion.



Facilitation Framework

Effective facilitators balance their focus along three dimensions.

Outcomes/Goals



Process/How

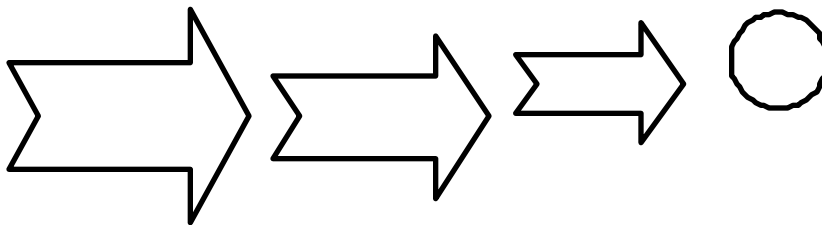
Dynamics/People

Outcomes/Goals	The facilitator is attempting to get to a particular outcome or end. This is usually a goal or aim.
Process/How	The facilitator is concerned about <i>how</i> to get to the aim, paying attention to the quality of the process. For instance, the facilitator doesn't want to make all decisions or do all the talking; but at the same time, the facilitator is concerned about the flow, efficiency, and ease of the process.
Inclusion/People	The facilitator has to be aware of and observant about the individuals' and group's behavior and participation, attempting to reaffirm and trust participants contributions



Effective Behaviors

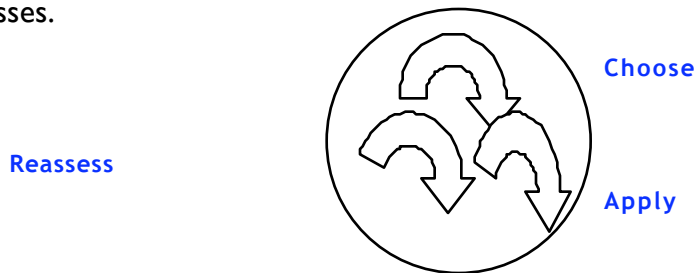
Collaboration begins with working together. Facilitation is basically a way of guiding a group to work together. Most situations can follow a process of opening, narrowing, and closing. This can happen in one session or over time.



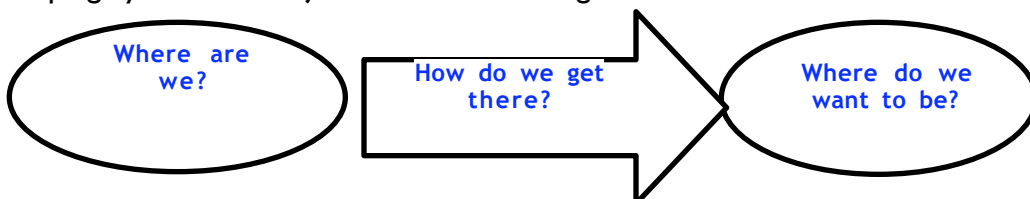
Penny Wise...Pound Foolish. Be certain to use your preventions (and decrease your need for interventions).

Implementable decisions are made up of a **series of small agreements.**

There is no one right way to facilitate, although there are some generally more effective ways to use certain techniques. Collaboration and facilitation are heuristic processes.



Keep your eyes on the goal. Facilitators are flexible while keeping eyes on the objective at each strategic moment.





Cooperative Learning Roles

Cooperative learning has many different roles for team members during group activities. In groups of four, one person should take both the timekeeper and observer role. In groups of three, another person should take both the recorder and reporter roles. Make sure to assume a different role each time you work in a cooperative learning group. Group members should take turns, so everyone gets a chance to experience each role.

- **Facilitator** - the person responsible for organizing the work of the group, and being sure the group stays on task.
- **Recorder** - the person who takes notes, writes on newsprint as the group brainstorms, and/or prepares the newsprint.
- **Reporter** - the person who shares with other teams the work or conclusions of the team.
- **Timekeeper** - the person who assures that the team is able to devote appropriate time to each assigned task and complete all its tasks within the allotted time; this role is especially useful when the team has a tight deadline.
- **Observer**- the person who watches the interaction of the group members and reports on difficulties or successes in group interaction.



Tips and Tools Galore

Behaviors for Facilitators to Avoid:

- Downplaying people's ideas
- Pushing personal agendas and opinions as the "right" answer
- Dominating the group
- Saying umm, aahh
- Reading from a manuscript
- Telling inappropriate or offensive stories
- Making up an answer- you never know who is in the room
- Allowing people to bully others in the group
- Taking a stance with one section of the group
- Telling too much about your personal experiences and life- keep a healthy balance- you are seen as the leader in the room
- Assuming the demographics of your group

Basic Tips for Facilitators:

Know your audience BEFORE the training- their educational backgrounds, ages, work/service environments, expectations. Survey the participants to see if they need special accommodations for the training (e.g., American Sign Language interpreter, wheelchair ramp access).

Exude confidence- be clear, enthusiastic, breathe!

Use humor, stories, and examples that directly relate to their work.

Evaluate needs of the group, especially at the end of the day to see what you can change for the next day. Consider using the +/- ? method (found in the handout section of this workshop).

Select an appropriate activity that will meet the needs of your group and have lots of fun energizers/icebreakers on hand.

Have lots of visually appealing handouts and flip charts- they help add the practical material the participants leave your workshop with.

Determine needed supplies, room requirements, chair set-up.

Think through the exercise and visualize potential problems and pitfalls- one of the biggest is not allotting enough time for activities.

Clearly explain activity directions and be prepared for questions.

Observe individual participation and involvement during exercises.

Be aware of individuals that may be experiencing discomfort or are not participating.

Follow up the exercise with discussion.

Processing will reveal the thoughts and feelings never expressed previously.

Be available to talk/ debrief with participants during break times and before/after the training.

Evaluate the experience and write down notes for future trainings.

Programmatic Facilitation Tools:

There are certain steps you will want to take when you are facilitating trainings. We listed them below. As you become more experienced, you will add your own personality to the following items. Observe other facilitators and see how they facilitate their trainings.

Design the Training with Various Teaching Methods: No one learns or retains information the same way. Therefore you need to have a bunch of different ways you demonstrate and teach the methods in the training. According to the National Training Laboratory, research shows the following average retention rates for different training methods:

5% Lecture

10% Reading

20% Audio-Visual

30% Demonstration

50% Discussion Group

75% Practice by Doing

90% Teaching Others

Eye Contact: Move towards the participants when they are speaking to indicate your interest and respect to what they are saying. Make sure you have good eye contact at all time. Look around the room and make eye contact with each person, while you are talking, for at least 5 seconds.

Cooperative Learning Roles: The roles should be posted on flip chart paper in the room and explained to the group before the training starts. Explain that when they are broken into small groups to perform an activity (not an icebreaker), they should use the cooperative roles. Make sure the participants rotate roles. See the handout section for an explanation of the roles.

Introduce Facilitators: Plan to welcome everyone to your training by telling them about your self and other facilitators. Say your name, your role in the training, your experience on the topic, fun stuff about yourself, and any mistakes you may have made in the past on the topic that will bring smiles or learning for the group.

Fist to Five Consensus Building: When a group comes to consensus on a matter, it means that everyone in the group can support the decision. They don't all have to think it's the best decision, but they all agree they can live with it. To use this technique, the facilitator restates the proposal/idea and asks everyone to show their level of support. Each person responds by showing a fist or a number of fingers that corresponds to their opinion. It is a good idea to post what each finger means so everyone knows exactly what they are representing.

Fist- a no vote. A way to block consensus. "I need to talk more about the proposal and require changes for it to pass."

1 Finger- "I still need to discuss certain issues and suggest changes that should be made."

2 Fingers- "I am more comfortable with the proposal but would like to discuss some minor issues."

3 Fingers- "I'm not in total agreement but feel comfortable to let this decision or proposal pass without further discussion."

4 Fingers- "I think it's a good idea/decision and will work for it."

5 Fingers- "It's a great idea and I will be one of the leaders in implementing it."

If anyone shows fewer than three fingers, he or she should be given the opportunity to state objections, and the team should address these concerns. Teams continue the Fist-to-Five process until they have achieved consensus (a minimum of three fingers or higher) or determine they must move to the next issue.

Prioritizing Your Group's Ideas: Choose one of the following techniques when you need to have your group make a decision based on several options.

N/3- each participant gets as many votes as the total number of proposal items divided by 3. People can not stack their points.

Assigned Points- Each participant gets an assigned number of votes and can stack points.

Working Agreements/ Group Rules: Developing ground rules or working agreements helps frame the training and gets every one on the same page as to group norms and expectations. You can start out by asking the group "what agreements would

we like to have to ensure a positive learning environment?” Have people list ideas on flip chart paper. Ensure everyone is comfortable with the agreements/rules written down. Then have everyone sign their name to the paper. The facilitator closes by stating, “this is an organizational agreement. We may need to add agreements as the training progresses.” Keep the agreements/rules in a highly visible place. This is great technique to use if the group is not following one of the agreements. For example, if one of the agreements was to “start on time” and after meals the majority of the group comes 5 minutes late, the facilitator can then remind the group we all agreed to start on time and when people are late it breaks one of our working agreements. The facilitator can also develop a list of agreements/rules to follow throughout the training. See the handout section for an example.

Ensuring Access: Survey the training location and room before the training. Ensure there is adequate lighting, parking spaces, elevators, wheelchair ramps, etc. Notify the participants ahead of the training if there are things they need to be aware of to make access to more available. Make sure break necessities— bathrooms, water fountains, pay phones—are in working order. If you do have participants with wheelchairs, take away some chairs so they have a place at the table.

Games and Icebreakers: These games are crucial for setting the tone of the training. Many icebreakers are in the handout section of this workshop.

Subdividing Groups: It is inevitable that in some part of the workshop you will need to break a large group into smaller groups. There is a list of ways you can subdivide a group in the handout section. A favorite is to have a bowl with pieces of paper in it that have different animals on each piece of paper. The animals should all have equal representation in the bowl (i.e., if you have 5 cows, you must have 5 pigs). Each participant selects a piece of paper out of the bowl and when the facilitator says “go” everyone should then start miming their animal’s sound (e.g., cow= person saying moo). Tell them to find their fellow animal friends and this is the group they will work in for the activity.

Elicit Expectations of the Group: Before you go into the content of your workshop, ask the participants why they came to this workshop, what do they want to learn, etc. and write their responses down on flip chart paper. Then go through each statement and say whether or not that will be covered in the workshop. Be honest, if it will not be covered clearly say why not and that they can get more information from you or direct them to another workshop that may better suit their needs.

Stacking: When your group is in a discussion and many people have their hands raised, use the technique of stacking. Write the people’s names in order of them raising their hands so they do not have to keep their hands up and you do not have to remember who is next.

Handsignals: Create some handsignals that everyone agrees on before the training. For example, if you need the room to quiet down you would put bunny ears over head. If you need the person to close their point you would roll you hands in a circle.

Stress Relief: At times the discussion can be heated. When this happens have the group sing a funny song, tell some jokes, give back rubs in big circle, take a moment to sit in silence to reflect on other's comments, or breath deeply to get focused.

Prepare Handouts and Flip Charts: Before the training, prepare as many flip charts and have all your handouts copied. Use bright colors and images for your flip charts. In the handout section you will find tips to make your flip charts visually appealing.

Talking Stick: If you have someone who is dominating the discussion, perhaps you could give them a non-speaking role in an activity. You can also avoid people speaking over one another by having a symbolic talking stick- you can use a koosh ball, rain stick, etc.

Responding to Challenging People: It is inevitable that you will face people in the group that challenge you or are blocking what others are saying. In general you need to address the behavior-not the person-when handling a challenge from one or a few individuals. Try to establish responses that you memorize and can pull out of your head to respond when people are being difficult. NEVER seem negative or that you are treating someone unjustly, this will affect the whole learning environment, making the participants feel uncomfortable.

Responses to challenging people that you can use:

- ☛ Would you see me at the break to discuss this point further?
- ☛ That is an interesting dilemma, perhaps we can discuss this over lunch.
- ☛ You are very knowledgeable about this topic. Thank you for sharing another perspective.
- ☛ Actually, for this presentation I pulled resources from...
- ☛ I hear 3 questions. Let's deal with one question at a time. (then repeat the questions you heard them ask to check for clarity)
- ☛ Thank you for asking. I must not have been clear before. Let me try to explain the concept in a different way.

Getting the Groups Attention: When you are attempting to get the groups attention and get them focused, try one of the following techniques.

Clapping: The facilitator says "If you can hear my voice clap once." If that does not work they continue, "If you can hear my voice clap two times." If that does not work they go onto three times. The group typically catches on after three claps.

Lights Out: Turning off the lights or flicking them on and off is rather grade schoolish, however it does get the group's attention.

Silence: The facilitator can simply stand in the front or middle of the room in silence until the group realizes what is happening.

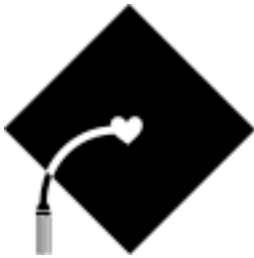
Raising Your Hand: The facilitator can simply raise their hand and stand in silence until everyone else raises their hands and is silent.

Put up a Parking Garage: Items and questions will come up during the training that may not be relevant to the content of the training at that particular moment. Therefore, in order to listen and keep everyone engaged, place a piece of flip chart paper on the wall that says “Parking Garage.” In the beginning of the training explain that if a question comes up during the training that you can deal with at that time, we will place it in the garage so we do not forget about the question and so that we can designate time to discuss the question or idea.

Gifts/Tokens: It is fun for trainers to have “stuff” to give to the participants of the workshop. Some facilitators have candy out, others choose to have food and drinks. There is also creative stuff to give participants. See the handout section for a list of items you could give to your training participants.

Ouch Rule: Before you get started, perhaps as you are introducing yourself, explain to the group you have an “ouch rule” in effect. If at anytime during the training you or a group participant says or does something that is offensive, you can raise your hand and say- “ouch, that hurt” and explain what happened.

Vibeswatcher: A role you can give a facilitator is to watch the group process. They are aware of the underlying feelings, check body language, stops negative group process (e.g. put downs, domineering), helps resolve conflicts, suggests different tools when the group gets stuck, and deals with outside distractions.



Plus/Delta: A Method of Debrief and Closure

At the end of an activity or as a check-in during the day and at the very end of the day, the facilitator asks the group to discuss the entire training from the room set-up, atmosphere, content, flow, etc.

The facilitator first asks for the pluses, then the deltas (Greek word for change). It is critical to explain that this is not what is good and what is bad. This is a method for highlighting what went well/what worked and what needs to change so learning is taking place.

An example of plus/delta after a training on children's literacy:

+	?
The things that worked	Changes for the future
Scavenger hunt with kids books Making book folders Learning how to select books for kids at different reading levels Facilitator's humor	<input type="checkbox"/> Room is too cold <input type="checkbox"/> More water and drinks <input type="checkbox"/> Provide clearer directions before the activities <input type="checkbox"/> Give more time for small group work