Facilitation Skills Training

Team Planning Instructions

Participant Resources

**Special Olympics Facilitation Skills Training**

Participant Resource

**SESSION NORMS:**

Agreements to create a safe spacefor everyone to learn from each other, have fun, and accomplish the learning goals

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| **Facilitation is a way of helping people share thoughts and ideas** |

**Characteristics of an effective facilitator**

**Think of facilitators you’ve seen:**

1. What makes them good?

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1. What are they thinking when they are facilitating?

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1. What are they saying? What are they feeling? What are they doing?

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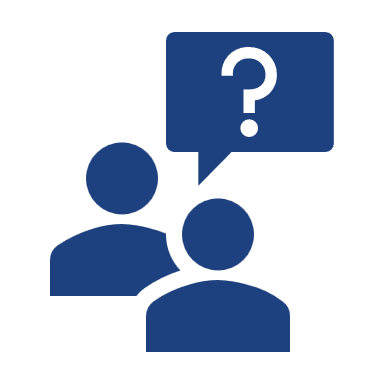
**Facilitator as coach**

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| **COMMUNICATION DECISION MAKING ADAPTABILITY RELATIONSHIP BUILDING GOAL ORIENTED CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**  **BASIC LEADERSHIP SKILLS** | | | |  |
| **NOTES:** |
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|  | **ADAPTABILITY**  Responding to learning needs in the moment. |  | **CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**  Constantly supporting participants to be their best. |  |
|  | **GOAL ORIENTED**  Knowing the goal of the training. |  | **RELATIONSHIP BUILDING**  Helping the participants to work together by building understanding with others in the training. |
|  | **DECISION-MAKING**  Knowing when to ask someone a question, when to give people silence, and when to start, discuss, and complete the training. |  | **COMMUNICATION**  Sharing information on what the training requires, what the participant group needs, what an individual participant needs. |

Key facilitation skills

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| **Listen by:** |  | **Engage by:** |  | **Connect by:** |
| Asking questions |  | Encouraging |  | Summarizing |

**Types of Que****stions**



Open-ended:

Questions that begin with ‘What’, “How” and sometimes ‘Why’. They are to clarify and gain elaboration to open up a conversation.

Closed-Ended:

Questions that elicit short answer responses (i.e. yes/no or one word) to narrow/close down a conversation

Leading:

Questions that prompt or encourage the answer the facilitator wants participants to give



**Encouraging**

Through words:

Uh huh, Say more about that, That’s great, anybody have anything to add?, Good!, Thank you, etc.

Through our gestures and body language:

Nodding one’s head, maintaining eye contact, open body position

Paying attention:

Picking up on the last word or two of someone else’s sentence to build your response on, making sure you are not distracted doing other things.



**Summarizing**

Summarizing is pulling important ideas together for further discussion and to check for understanding. Summarizing:

* Encourages participants to think more about what they or others say
* Ensures that everyone in the discussion is clear about what has happened in the just completed portion of the discussion

**We often start off summarizing with phrases like:**

*From our work this morning, I see that..*

*Let me try to summarize…*

*I think what we are saying is that we want to...*

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| **NOTE:** We have an additional skill of Paraphrasing that we have not discussed in the training, but it is here as an additional resource. |

Paraphrasing is using your own words to reflect what the speaker is saying and feeling in a concise way.

* Seek to Understand:

Show that you are paying attention and that what the speaker says is important

* Clarify Ideas:

Give the speaker the chance to correct you if what you understood is not quite correct.

**We often start off paraphrasing with words like:**

*You are saying...*

*In other words...*

*I gather that...*

*If I understood what you are saying...*

Key facilitation skills practice

**Please make note of how you would respond to:**

“Tell me about your experience in the Special Olympics”.

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Deciding how to handle questions

When a facilitator is asked a question, they either know the answer or they do not.

**If they DON'T know the answer, they should…**

Actively listen to gain understanding by paraphrasing and encouraging as needed.

**Make a choice:**

RETURN:

Ask the asker what they think/what their experience tells them.

**For example:** “*That’s a good question, what are your thoughts on that?”*

RELAY:

Ask the group if they know the answer/what their experience tells them

**For example:** “Interesting, what do others think about that?”

PASS:

Don’t answer now, but maybe later with the person who asked or in another meeting.

**For example:** “Thanks for offering that question, unfortunately we don’t have time to answer it now, could you and I discuss it more during the break?”

**If they DO know the answer, they should…**

Actively listen to gain understanding by paraphrasing and encouraging as needed.

**Make a choice:**

ANSWER

As direct and concise as possible

RETURN or RELAY:

Decide it is better for others to contribute

PASS:

Decide there is not enough time in the meeting/training to answer

Action planning

**Today we covered:**

* Characteristics of a good facilitator
* Definition of facilitation and the facilitator role
* Key facilitation skills (asking questions, paraphrasing and encouraging)
* Different ways to answer questions (Return, Relay, Pass)

Continuing the learning journey

1. What are your facilitation goals going forward? (What do you want to improve?)

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1. How will you practice being a facilitator? (reference facilitation opportunities)

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