

Facilitation Challenges



OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, participants will be able to:

- Know and practice effective facilitation skills



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Before the session begins, prepare flipchart sheet with the header: Facilitation Challenges.
2. Welcome participants and review the objectives for the session.
3. Explain that there are some challenges to facilitation that are related to certain kinds of behaviors and others that may be more contextual. For instance, a challenging behavior may be a participant who talks a lot. A contextual challenge may arise when you are facilitating a group with whom you don't share the same identity/culture.
4. Ask, "What are some challenges you have faced when facilitating or participating in a workshop or meeting?"
5. Take 5 minutes to brainstorm and write answers on flipchart. Then ask the group to choose 4 to 5 topics. Write each topic as a heading on a piece of flipchart paper. Post the flipchart pages in different areas of the room.
6. Explain that the participants will now have a chance to do a gallery walk. There will be 3 different rounds of 10 minutes each. Each participant can choose to go to whichever topic most interests them, discuss ideas for how to approach that challenge, and then write notes on the flipchart page. They can stay at the same challenge or change to another challenge when the facilitator rings the bell or gives a signal at the end of each 10-minute session.
7. At the end, have each group quickly read through what was written on their flipchart page.
8. Debrief, the session by asking:
 - a. Who would like to share one thing they learned about facilitating a group today?
 - b. As a CHW, how might you use this information in your work?
9. Wrap up
 - Distribute and reference handout on "Principles for Group Facilitation" for further reading on their own leisure time.
 - Thank participants for their contributions.



Related C3 Roles

Building individual and community capacity

Related C3 Skills

Communication skills, education and facilitation skills



Method(s) of Instruction

World Cafe/Gallery Walk



Estimated time

45 minutes



Key Concepts

Facilitation skills



Materials

- Flipchart
- Markers
- Bell or other alarm

Handouts

- Principles for Group Facilitation

Principles for Group Facilitation

Purpose and Preparation

- Think about what your goal or purpose is as a facilitator. How can you not only move groups through the agenda, but also guide them in a way to think more critically about how they see the world?
- Consider what your role is as a facilitator, particularly in groups that you are not familiar with.
- Get to know your audience. Information about their prior and current work, hopes for the training, and demographic data should be used to adapt your training to make it relevant for the audience.
- Although facilitators are not expected to be experts, they should be familiar with the content. Think about your process for including updated information into the training.
- For each activity, know what your objective is and the process (or methods) used to help the participants achieve that objective.
- Take the time to ground yourself and prepare mentally and emotionally before you arrive.
- Allow enough time to set up the space so that you don't feel rushed.

Sharing Power

- Think critically about how to balance power and privilege in the room.
- Share as much power as possible with the participants.
- Allow and provide space for groups to make their own decisions.
- Encourage participants to take risks.
- Facilitators should bring their own personality and life experience to the table. At the same time, be mindful about how much you are speaking and whether your comments are helping the group to move forward.

In the Moment

- Learn how to build trust with the participants. Do this early and often.
- Be humble and flexible.
- Remember that the agenda is a tool to help you achieve the objectives – don't feel like you have to strictly follow the agenda if the learning is happening in another way.
- Use different strategies to balance participation in the room.



- Think about how to actively involve participants in their learning.
- Provide enough space for participants to respond to questions and requests for input (i.e. allowing more than one or two people to respond; being comfortable with silence and counting to eight in your head before moving on).
- Invite, don't force, people to participate. Some people don't feel comfortable talking in front of a large group and may participate more in a pair or small group activity.
- Learn to read the energy in the room and know when to give space for healing, for exploration or extension of the topic addressed, or to move on.
- Use a "Question Warehouse" or "Bike Rack" when there is a question that cannot be answered or if a discussion is off topic and the group would like to return to it at a future time.
- Be aware of your own perceptions, judgments, or prejudices in the moment and how this may be influencing your behavior.
- When a group member raises a question, first put it back to the group to see what others already know. Clarify as needed.
- Consider how you will clarify information that is shared that is not up to date or correct in a way that is respectful and not shaming.
- Know how you react to conflict and feelings of discomfort. Recognize when conflicts arise and do your best to handle it in a healthy way.

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