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## Introduction

Facilitator – *one that helps to bring about an outcome by providing indirect or unobtrusive assistance, guidance, or supervision*.

# Course Objectives

By the end of this course, participants will:

* + Identify facilitator roles (hats) and the traits and behaviors of successful facilitators
  + Learn the steps involved in planning and preparation
  + Learn and practice facilitation tools and techniques
  + Learn successful strategies for managing conflict
  + Understand how all planning, tools and techniques, group dynamics and facilitator skills interact for successful outcomes

# Discussion

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Good facilitation/facilitator characteristics | Bad facilitation/facilitator characteristics |
|  |  |

**Why I want to become a facilitator:**

## Top Hat outline

## Event Planner

### Preparation and Planning

# Meeting Roles

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Meeting Leader/Convener | Set goals  Identify sideboards  Articulate decision rules  Determine or suggest meeting participants  Develop agenda (with facilitator)  Send agenda to participants |
| Participants | Arrive on time and are prepared  Participate in the meeting  Follow through and report on any post-meeting assignments |
| Facilitator | *Before the meeting*  Advise leader on meeting scope  Propose process design to accomplish leader goals  Suggest participants, if appropriate  Discuss meeting leader role during meeting and how to communicate with leader if they step out of their role during the meeting  Identify logistic needs (room reservation, size & layout, supplies, etc.) and agree who will be responsible for arrangements  Coordinate roles and responsibilities with the co-facilitator |
| *During the meeting*  Keep meeting leader and participants focused and on track  Make sure everyone has a chance to participate  Serve as a process guide; makes suggestions on how to proceed  Provide frameworks for helping the group think clearly  Defend others from personal attack |
| *After the meeting*  Provide all meeting materials to the meeting leader (chart notes, brainstorm ideas, etc.  Prepare summaries and/or recommendations as determined ahead of time with the meeting leader. |
| Co-facilitator | Assist the facilitator  Meet with facilitator prior to the meeting to discuss expectations of who will do what  May serve as recorder |
| Recorder | Capture group memory  Brainstorm ideas  Key points  Decisions  Action items  Parking lot items |

# Planning Steps

***Go slow to go fast***

Use the **Facilitation Guide** (*Toolbox: Section 1*) as a guide for discussion with the person who has asked you to facilitate a meeting

* Purpose
* Context
* Topic(s)
* Out of scope (or sideboards)
* Goal(s)
* Objectives
* Potential issues
* Decision-making process
* Deliverable(s)
* Participation
  + Leader
  + Facilitator
  + Recorder
  + Participants
  + Stakeholders
* Preparation
* Follow-up Responsibilities
* Logistics

Use the **meeting checklist** (*Toolbox: Section 2*) as a guide and reminder to ensure all planning steps have been accounted for.

# Room Arrangement Considerations

When determining room arrangement, consider:

* Group size
* Technology needs
* Placement of technology
* Room dimensions

A few room arrangement ideas are:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Style** | **Layout** | **When to use** |
| Boardroom |  | - Shorter sessions  - Open discussion is needed  - Smaller group  -Limited technology sharing |
| Hollow Square |  | - Facilitates easy interaction and communication  - Limited technology sharing |
| U-Shape |  | - Presentation/technology needed, along with interaction and communication within the group  - Participants have a workspace for writing |
| Auditorium |  | - Large group of people  - Limited to no group interaction |
| Classroom |  | - Medium group size  - Presentation/technology needed  - Interaction within table group |
| Herringbone |  | - Medium group size  - Presentation/technology needed  - Interaction within table group  - Facilitator preference |

## Top Hat outlineGuide

### Facilitation Tools & Techniques

# Setting the Stage

When opening a meeting:

* Before the meeting begins, try to introduce yourself and welcome all the meeting participants
* Introduce yourself, and explain your role as the facilitator
  + Introduce scribe and/or co-facilitator and their roles
* Have meeting participants introduce themselves and identify their connection to the meeting topic. Use small ice breaker as appropriate (see *Toolbox: Section 3* for ideas).
* Review logistics
  + Bathroom location
  + Trash/recycling
  + Breaks/Lunch
  + Nursing Mothers room location
* Review the meeting objectives
  + Get agreement from the group on the objectives
* Review the agenda
  + Get agreement from the group on the agenda
* Rules of Engagement
  + You may start with some suggestions and ask the group for additions
  + Get agreement from the group that they will abide by the rules of engagement

# Rules of Engagement: FEEL FREE TO CHANGE BASED ON AGENCY CULTURE/EXPECTATIONS

* Have agenda prepared.
* Define the decisions to be made, who has the authority to make them, and ensure the right people are in the room.
* Start on time, end on time.
* Listen to and respect all voices.
* Adopt a “yes, if” mindset.
* Participate 100% by sharing ideas, asking questions, and contributing to discussions.
* Be bold.
* Don’t be afraid to make a decision and take action.
* Clearly identify stakeholders and share meeting outcomes with those you are responsible to keep in the loop.
* Keep the voice and requirements of the customer (internal or external) in mind.
* Keep comments brief and to the point – don’t repeat what others have already said.
* Share objections with the whole group.
* Respect individuals and their perspectives when disagreeing.
* Be fully present and don’t attend to non-meeting business.
* Avoid inside jokes or other banter that excludes others.
* Attack the problem, not the person.
* Note pending issues or discussions and schedule follow-up meetings as needed.
* Identify next steps and responsible individuals.
* Follow-up on your assigned next steps.
* Once decisions are made, move forward together.

# During the Meeting

* Utilize tools (*Toolbox: Section 4*) to lead the group through discussions.
* For tips on charting, see *Toolbox: Section 5*.
* Consider a mindset of: “I ask, instead of tell” and “I listen instead of talking”
* Embrace silence. Resist the temptation to fill the silence and let the group process as they need.
* See *Toolbox: Section 6* for tips to manage regular interval team huddles
* Ask questions!

**Open-ended Questions:**

* + What is going on here?
  + What’s the matter?
  + Where, when, and in what ways do you see it?

**History-taking Questions:**

* + When did this begin?
  + How has it changed?
  + How does it compare to what has happened in the past?

# How to End a Meeting:

* As a group, go back to the objectives. Did we achieve our desired result? Discuss how the meeting results will be applied.
* Individually, ask the group one takeaway from the meeting.
* Review and discuss action items. Ensure responsible party knows what is expected by when.
* Discuss next possible steps: future meetings, subgroup work, approval of minutes from this meeting, etc.

# Mistaken Assumptions

Facilitators often come into a group with mistaken assumptions. Many of these can be avoided through the planning process and meeting with the group leader.

Some of these assumptions are:

* People want to be at the meeting
* Everyone is clear on the purpose of the meeting
* There are no distractions, baggage or historical precedents blocking participation
* People understand the role and powers of a facilitator
* People at the meeting are appropriately empowered to make decisions and act
* There are no political or interpersonal factors operating behind the scenes
* Neutral means unassertive
* Quietness = Acceptance
* I have to put up with their behavior
* I’m experienced; I’ll just wing it!
* It’s my fault things didn’t work out!

# Facilitation Habits to Avoid

We have all been to workshops or meetings run by poor facilitators. But some facilitators can drive us nuts. Be aware of your style and avoid becoming one of the bad facilitator types listed below!

* **The Drill Sergeant**—The facilitator who is rigidly stuck on the agenda and puts the clock above content
* **The Guardian**—The facilitator who makes certain that all conversation goes through him or her and not from participant to participant
* **The Know-it-all** –The facilitator who always has the answer. The know-it-all can’t say “I don’t know.”
* **The Ice Cube**—The distant and aloof facilitator who is unwilling to personalize the experience
* **The Blabber**—The facilitator who loves the sound of his or her own voice
* **The Pretender**—The facilitator who doesn’t ask real questions but only “pretense questions” that are really designed to give the facilitator an excuse to pontificate
* **The "I Can't Hear You" Person**—The facilitator who refuses to listen
* **The Marathoner**—The facilitator who piles activities on top of one another, doesn’t allow for breaks, and ignores the need for groups to reflect on a topic or idea
* **The Parrot**—The facilitator who relentlessly recaps information, restates ideas, and summarizes the obvious
* **The Molasses Mover**—The facilitator who is painfully slow and doesn’t have a feel for pacing, variety, or style
* **The Passenger**—The facilitator who lets people talk too long and gives up the reins of facilitation
* **The Storyteller**—The facilitator who tells far too many cutesy stories and never really gets to the content
* **The Centerpiece**—The facilitator who makes himself or herself the real content of the workshop
* **The Tunnel Driver**—The facilitator who keeps doing the same thing hour after hour

## Top Hat outlinePerformer

### Center Stage – Lead by Example (All eyes are on you!)

### Engage and re-engage your audience!

Albert Mehrabian, psychology professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, noted that while words are important, the meaning and emotion of the message is heavily interpreted through body language and tone of voice.

(*www.masterclass.com/articles/how-to-use-the-7-38-55-rule-to-negotiate-effectively)*

From the moment you step into the room, participants are sizing you up, making judgements, and establishing their first impressions of you. How you deliver yourself – how you look, move, and sound – sets the stage either for a captivated, engaged audience or for an irritated, distracted one.

# Elements of Delivery

* Appearance
* Eye Contact
* Facial Expressions
* Gestures
* Movement
* Voice

# **Appearance** – Posture, Clothes, Grooming

Thoughts on appearance:

* Lift your head up and relax your shoulder blades.
* Dress slightly better than the audience.
* Appear well groomed.
* If seated, sit up straight to maximize height and vocal projection. Keep your feet firmly on the floor.

# **Eye Contact**

* Good eye contact is the “emotional handshake” you share with your audience.
* Caution: Be culturally sensitive to the fact that there is no universal rule across cultures about length and intensity of eye contact.

# **Facial Expressions**

Audiences not only use your facial expressions “to read” your emotions, but they will also begin to mirror those same emotions. It’s important to be aware of your facial expressions. What you radiate, the audience will radiate.

* Ensure your facial expressions match the thought or emotion you are expressing verbally.
* Relax your facial muscles before speaking; vary facial expressions while speaking.
* Tell your face to smile even under adverse or stressful conditions.
* There is strong evidence for the universal facial expressions of seven emotions—anger, contempt, disgust, fear, joy, sadness, and surprise.

(*www.apa.org/science/about/psa/2011/05/facial-expressions.aspx)*

# **Gestures**

It’s natural for people to use hand gestures when speaking. We use gestures to extend our ideas, our excitement, our intensity beyond our words – often without even realizing we are doing it.

Performers are mindful of their gestures and will use specific, appropriate gestures to hold their audience’s attention and to reinforce their message.

Make your gestures natural and connect them with your message. Gestures are an important part of the first and ongoing impression and should add impact to your message, not detract from it.

* Start with your hands by your side and elbows slightly away from your body.
* Remember to keep good posture.
* Wide, expansive gestures go beyond the frame of your body. They radiate your passion, your emotion, and your point.
* Gesture toward the audience with an open hand, palm up.
* Use symbolic gestures to communicate numbers, movement, and position.
* Vary your gestures. If you typically gesture with your right hand, try to use your left hand as well.
* Caution: Be culturally sensitive to the fact that some gesture that are considered neutral or positive in the United States are considered rude or inappropriate in others.
  + Thumbs up comparable to the middle finger
  + Pointing with index finger- alternatively point with two fingers
  + OK

# **Movement**

Purposeful movement catches the eye and demands attention. It keeps the audience engaged and makes all members of the audience feel like you are connected to them.

Purposeful movement also releases your nervous energy, establishes better connection with the audience, helps people stay focused on you and your message, and may make you look more confident.

Although the stage is yours, remember to use it wisely and purposefully.

* Enter with a brisk step and look at the audience. If you arrive first, greet each person as they enter the room and take their seat.
* Try to avoid putting barriers (podiums, desk, table, etc.) between you and the audience.
* Maintain an appropriate distance from audience members.
* Position your feet shoulder width apart.
* Distribute your weight evenly on the balls of your feet.
* Plant yourself for several sentences and then move on.
* Move to signal a new point or topic. This could be as simple as moving from one side of the “stage” to the other.

# **Voice**

How actors use their voice on stage determines how well their audience hears them, believes them, and remains engaged with their performance.

As a facilitator, the tips below are as important for you to practice and use as they are for actors performing on stage.

1. ***Project your voice*** – Everyone in the room deserves to hear you clearly. Practice projecting your voice by standing up straight; taking deep, slow breaths; and using your diaphragm when you speak.
2. ***Allow thinking room by pausing*** – In this case, pause means complete silence – no encouraging words, gestures, or sounds.

Silence is a powerful but (sometimes) difficult tool to apply. The secret is three—at least a three-second pause from the moment you ask a question *and* a three-second pause after a response. This simple-sounding technique allows people to process their thoughts, to process the thoughts/responses of others, and to feel listened to when they do respond.

Under a wide variety of instructional situations and levels. . . the quality of discourse can be markedly improved by increasing to 3 seconds or longer the average wait times used by [facilitators] after a question and after a response.

*Rowe, M. B. (1986). Wait time: slowing down might be a way of speeding up! Journal of Teacher Education, 37; 43*

1. ***Control the pitch of our voice*** – Pitch is the inflection in your voice. Contrary to a monotone speaker, a presenter/facilitator who varies the inflection in their speech conveys emotion and maintains the interest of the audience.

The power of pitch and tone of voice is often underestimated. Here is an exercise to demonstrate how much inflection can make a difference.

# Power of Pitch Exercise

|  |
| --- |
| **I never said he stole the money.**  Repeat the sentence above seven times each time putting emphasis/inflection on one word at a time in the order they are written.  (*Example, 1.* **I** *never said he stole the money. 2. I* **never** *said he stole the money.)* |

1. ***Pace yourself*** – Pace is the speed at which you speak. Vary your pace to engage an re-engage the audience. Speak at a natural, understandable pace – not too fast, not too slow.
2. ***Pronounce your words clearly*** – Pronounce the complete word. Be sure to pronounce consonants at the end of a word. Slow down to enunciate words that could possibly be misheard.

Beware the mondegreen\*. Mondegreens are often created by a person listening to a speaker, a poem, or a song; the listener, being unable to hear a phrase/lyric clearly, substitutes words that sound similar and that make sense.

* *Pledge of Allegiance*, the phrase “and to the Republic for *which it* stands” may have some people wondering who *Richard* Stands is and why don’t we hear more about him in history books.
* Elton John- Tiny Dancer “Hold me closer tiny dancer” or as its heard “Hold me closer, Tony Danza”
* Creedence Clearwater Revival- Bad Moon Rising “There’s a bad moon on the rise” or as its heard “There’s a bathroom on the right”

*\* A mondegreen is a misunderstood or misinterpreted word or phrase resulting from a mishearing, esp. of the lyrics to a song. (Oxford English Dictionary (Online edition), Oxford English Press, September 2002).*

## Top Hat outlineMediator/Psychologist

### Managing Group Dynamics

**What is your facilitation nightmare?**

# Group Dynamics

Facilitators can manage groups by:

* Greeting participants as they arrive and getting a feel for participants/group dynamics up front
* Asking the group to develop and agree to rules of engagement to guide behavior
* Providing clear guidance and expectations of participants on what they are being asked to do
* Communicating that meeting outcomes are the group’s shared responsibility
* Making sure everyone has an opportunity to participate and that all voices are heard.

# Understanding Personalities and Communication Styles

Different personality styles approach and interact in meetings differently.

By understanding DISC, you can:

* Understand your own communication style
* Identify the styles of others
* Learn ways to adjust to the styles of others for improved communication

Identifying the communication styles:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| C (Correctness Style) | D (Dominance Style) |
| - Analytical, detailed  - Quiet  - Careful, formal | **- Appears to be in a hurry**  **- Multi-tasking**  **- Direct** |
| S (Steadiness Style) | **I (Influencer Style)** |
| - Calm, reliable  - Careful, sincere  - Patient, amiable | **- Social**  **- Energetic, animated**  **- Impulsive, emotional** |

# Stages of Group Development

This model was developed by Bruce Tuckman in 1965 and is still in use. The model explains how group dynamics change as a team matures.

1. **Forming** 
   * Individual roles and responsibilities are not yet clear
   * Members have questions about the purpose, objectives, etc.
   * Members are dependent on the leader for content and expertise
   * Process is not high on members’ radar
2. **Storming**
   * There may be power struggles, and cliques may form as team members vie for position
   * A facilitator needs to keep the team focused on goals, so they are not distracted from the purpose
3. **Norming**
   * The group begins to develop norms
   * Roles and responsibilities are clear to members and accepted
   * There is a strong commitment to the group’s purpose(s)
   * The group “owns” its processes
4. **Performing**
   * Team members are strategically aware of what they are doing and why, and they have developed a shared vision
   * Disagreements within the group are resolved in positive ways
   * The group adapts its structure and processes to facilitate achieving objectives
   * **Diagram

     Description automatically generated**The group is able to work toward its goal(s) and attend to relationship and process issues

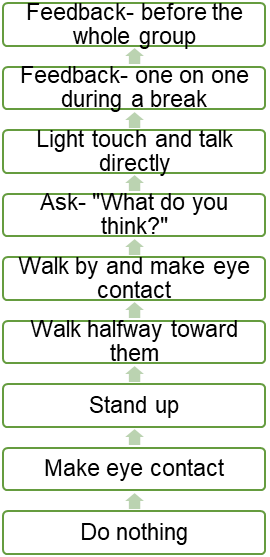
# Divergent and Convergent Thinking in Problem Solving

# Problem Behavior Interventions

Used during meetings to help people get back on track with process and/or content.

* Boomerang – redirect question to the group
* Regain focus – remind people of the process agreement
* Ask/say what’s going on – name something that isn’t working, e.g. “It’s very quiet. What does that mean?”
* Review/enforce ground rules and process agreements
* Use body language
* Regain focus by standing up and moving
* Move between two people in conflict so they can’t see each other
* Slowly move toward and stand by people having a side conversation
* Use humor – CAREFULLY! (self-deprecating is safest)

Start with the lowest level of intervention first, and only increase intervention if the distracting behavior continues:



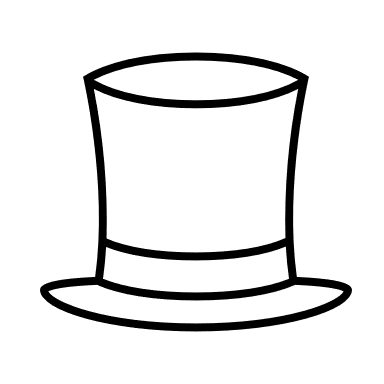
Lowest

Highest

See *Toolbox: Section 7* for common facilitator mistakes.

# Managing Problem Behaviors

|  |
| --- |
| **Side conversation**  *Side conversations may relate to the subject, but they may also occur because team members are becoming bored, friends are sitting together and “catching up,” or they just always talk when others are talking.* |
| Call for courtesy – Ask members to be courteous to others during the opening by stating/creating ground rules.  Catch their eye – Making eye contact with the whisperers may be enough to get them to stop.  Bring them into the discussion – Call one of the pair by name, restate the last remark made by the group and ask for an opinion on that topic.  Walk toward the whisperers – If you move around the room during meetings, saunter over and stand casually behind them.  Approach them during the break – Inform them that their side conversation is distracting and ask them to either refrain or share with the group. |
| **Conversation domination**  *This is the person who repeatedly interjects; is compelled to share their vast knowledge; or feels that they aren’t being heard. As a result, they repeatedly make the same comment. This individual usually has already offered several comments, even though many other members haven’t spoken.* |
| Invite others to comment – Balance participation by asking others to respond to the dominator’s comments. Hearing other members share their views may diminish their need to repeat them.  Propose a time limit – Set a reasonable time limit for each person’s comments. Ask an official timekeeper to enforce it or operate a time that sounds when time is up.  Record key points – Record each point or suggestion participants make on the chart paper, so they feel the group has acknowledged their perspective.  Use a round-robin – Go around the room and give each person an opportunity to comment briefly.  Hear all first – Propose that no one speak a second time until everyone else has spoken (or had an opportunity to) at least once. |
| **Repeaters, parrots, ramblers**  *Team members who continually raise their hand to speak. When called on, the repeat others’ comments. Like the conversation dominator, these individuals want to make sure they are heard but they may also be naturally wordy and have difficulty simplifying their statements.* |
| Point to similar comments – Record the gist of comments on the chart paper. When someone begins repeating a comment, point out where that comment has already been noted on the chart, check mark it on the list, and move on.  Thank the speaker – By doing so you acknowledge that the member has contributed to the discussion.  Demonstrate your understanding – Acknowledge the person’s point by summarizing what you hear. “So, your point is \_\_\_\_\_\_. Did I hear that correctly?” |
| **Verbal attackers**  *Many times, these individuals are bringing baggage from past experiences or topics that are very close to home for them. They may feel they have been attacked by the agency or by this topic in the past and are prepared to retaliate or try to distract the group.* |
| Enforce ground rules – Define in your ground rules what constitutes a personal attack. This allows you to be specific in rejecting a member’s behavior.  Use body language – Position yourself physically between the verbal combatants as a way of disrupting their ability to argue back and forth.  Talk privately with the attacker – During a break, speak to the individuals involved diffuse the situation. Acknowledge their passion and ask that they use a different method for expressing their points of view. |
| **Disruptive audience**  *These individuals speak out if you are not addressing an issue, they want you to address or are not address an issue in the way they agree with.* |
| Enforce the ground rules – Do not allow personal attacks on anyone at any time.  Give other options – Respectfully inform the participants of additional opportunities and venues to make comments such as written submission to your agency or in discussion with the sponsor. |
| **Absolute silence**  *When you ask for comments and no one responds, participants may not understand the issue at hand; they may be tired at the end of the day and just want to get this over with; or they may be angry with the facilitator or with the agency or the topic at hand.* |
| Allow some silence – Give them time to process what is happening.  Acknowledge the situation – Check in with the group by saying, “I notice that everyone is being very quiet. What are you thinking?”  Take a break – The group might be emotionally drained or tired and could use a rest. Or the group might benefit from an energizer exercise. |
| **Inability to reach consensus**  *Participants have contributed differing opinions, and the group seems to be split. This can happen when people feel strongly about their position, or they feel they haven’t been adequately heard.* |
| Emphasize agreement – Restate all the points that the group agrees on to isolate the specific points of disagreement.  Attempt a compromise – Ask the people who are not in agreement, “What would it take for you to agree to this decision? What aspect would need to be changed?” Does the full group see this as an acceptable option? If not, go back and forth until you come to some agreement or alternative option.  Predetermine a fallback decision-making process – What is needed to come to consensus? Is more data needed? Do you need to approach it in a different way? Do you need to isolate this issue and agree to move forward on everything else; and/or do you need to elect a small group to continue working on this specific topic in another meeting or two and get back to the larger group with revised options? |
| **Revisiting decisions**  *These are individuals that as you are concluding the meeting, they decide that they don’t like the outcome. These individuals may not have been engaged in the process or paying attention at all, or they may be trying to stall the process because they don’t like the outcome.* |
| Post decisions – Refer to the chart where the group’s decisions have been recorded.  Review decisions – When making decisions, make sure everyone understands what the group has decided. Do a wrap-up of what has occurred and how you got there. |

1. **Juggler - Facilitating Online Meetings**

**Think of a successful and productive online meeting. What made it successful?**

**Think of an unsuccessful and unproductive online meeting. What made it unsuccessful?**

# When to have a virtual meeting?

There are pros and cons to virtual meetings. One pro is the lack of travel time for off-site staff, but it is sometimes difficult to manage virtual meetings. Think through these questions before determining if virtual is the best method.

* Is the meeting content high stakes?
* Do you need discussion, especially with larger group of participants?
* How is your/the participants connectivity?
* How many people will be invited?
* Pros and cons of travel or staying in place.
* Does the meeting include external partners/stakeholders? Do they have the capability to join the meeting?

The answers to those questions will help guide whether to have the meeting in person or virtual. Many meetings could be help either in-person or virtually, especially with clear meeting roles, and still achieve the meeting goals. However, the meeting leader and facilitator need to have open conversations about the decision.

# Tools to Know Before the Meeting

Be prepared to use these tools during the meeting and be able to direct participants how to them.

* Hand raising:
  + Be prepared to monitor hand raising and put hands down as necessary
* Chat:
  + Be prepared to monitor chat throughout the meeting
  + Determine with the meeting organizer how to handle chat questions/comments (i.e., is there a Q&A session as part of the meeting agenda?)
* Mute
  + Be prepared to mute participants who inadvertently participant in the meeting unmuted, and are causing audio issues
* Polling
  + If the meeting could benefit from interactivity, have polling questions prepped and loaded into the meeting
  + For instructions on how to use the polling feature, find tutorials for your meeting platform online

# Before, During, and After the Meeting

* Plan for an online meeting the same way you would plan for an in-person. Some of the answers to the facilitation guide will be different, reflecting the different meeting setting. All participants need to at least have a functioning microphone/headset, but preferably also video capacity.
* Follow the same introductory steps of an in-person meeting, just be prepared to show documents with content on the screen (i.e., Behaviors in Action). If possible, have participants turn their video on for introductions.
* If there are members of the meeting that are external to MDC, determine how best to document their input. Sharing documents may not work so make sure to share the screen of a shared document.
* Group dynamics is difficult to monitor over a computer screen, especially when videos are off. Engage quieter members of the group by encouraging chat messages and even private messages to the facilitator.
* Closely monitor chat and the participant lists. Be prepared to mute participants that are accidentally unmuted.
* Have all needed documents open and ready to go before the start of the meeting. If using a shared document, already have that emailed to the participants (see *Toolbox: Section 8* for shared documents).
* Test any needed technology (i.e., polling, PowerPoint slides, videos) ahead of time and be prepared to pivot if something goes wrong.

*Tips for Online Facilitators: 12 Simple Ways to Engage Participants\**

1. **Name the Next Person:** Name who will speak next to answer your seed question or follow the person currently speaking.
2. **Random Round Robin:** Tell everyone that you are going to call on them by name to speak, but you will do so in random order.
3. **Great Starting Question:** Ask a provocative open-ended question you want answered. Avoid compound questions and closed-ended questions.
4. **Let’s Build a Lis**t: Ask everyone to create a list, together, that they are willing to work on or that are issues needing attention in the current meeting.
5. **Lots of Slides:** Require that presenters use a high volume of slides instead of displaying one slide and talking about it for a long time.
6. **Participant Quick Summary:** At the end of a module or section in your meeting, have a single person pre-assigned to provide a quick summary of the findings, decision, key learnings, next steps, agreements, etc. that came from the current agenda topic.
7. **What Are We Gonna Tell the Boss?** At the end of each module or meeting section, ask the participants to create a list of short, concise statements to use in briefing the boss about the outcome.
8. **So What?** At the end of the module ask the participants to answer, “So what did we just accomplish that is important for our next step(s)?”
9. **Instant Polling:** Have your technology support person ready to build a quick yes/no or multiple-choice survey to administer during the meeting.
10. **Popcorn Calling:** Tell participants you will be calling on them by name to comment or contribute but they will not be able to predict when you will call upon them.
11. **Turn on the Webcams:** From time to time, let everyone in the online meeting see the faces of their colleagues.
12. **Cheerlead and Role-Model:** As the facilitator you are well placed to be a positive role model and the one to set an expectation for participation. When someone does something good, celebrate it by asking the other participants to comment on what they liked about what just happened in the meeting.

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