

FACILITATION SKILLS – SELF-ASSESSMENT*

Give yourself a score out of 5 for each of the following areas, where 4 - 5 = your strengths; 1 - 2 = areas that you would like to improve in; and 3 = “satisfactory.”

Engaging (or General Presentation) Skills:

- Setting a positive and comfortable tone.
- Helping participants transition from their past experiences into a new context.
- Helping participants reflect on what they already know and preparing them for interactive learning.
- Conveying enthusiasm.
- Speaking clearly and without verbal distractions.
- Maintaining eye contact with the entire group.

Informing Skills:

- Giving factual information clearly and accurately.
- Helping group members gain new knowledge.
- Using guest speakers to provide content information.
- Using video clips to provide content information.
- Facilitating the exchange and processing of information within the group.

Involving Skills:

- Keeping the group on track.
- Involving all group members in the discussion.
- Guiding discussion using open-ended questions, reflective listening and summarizing.
- Managing any challenging dynamics in the group.
- Being flexible and adjusting the presentation to meet participants’ needs.
- Encouraging positive interaction and learning among group members.
- Keeping the focus on the group rather than the leader.

Applying Skills:

- Preparing group members to move from active experimentation within the group to concrete experience beyond the group.
- Helping group members focus on planning for the future and applying learning from within the group to other contexts.
- Bringing closure to the group.
- Spending enough time in planning and preparation before each group session.

Conducting an Activity:

- Giving clear and organized directions.
- Managing the time well.
- Processing fully to ensure focus on learning objectives.
- Finding out what participants learned and how they plan to use it.

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Four Types of Group Facilitation Skills for College Student Leaders**

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Being an effective group leader involves using skills that allow you to influence the way a group interacts and learns. These skills are collectively referred to as “Group Facilitation Skills.” In order to develop these skills, you will need to identify, learn, and practice a wide variety of specific behaviors that promote positive group interactions. This page describes four types of facilitation skills that promote different types of experiential learning. The model represented here assumes that **an effective group leader has facilitation skills appropriate for promoting different types of interactive learning**. These skills were originally identified and described in the book, Workshops: Designing and facilitating experiential learning by J. E. Brooks-Harris & S. R. Stock-Ward (1999). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Engaging Facilitation Skills invite members to be a part of a group. They encourage a member to feel included and valued within the group context. These skills help individuals make the transition from their past experiences into a new context. They help group members reflect on what they already know and prepare them for interactive learning. Engaging skills are used to create curiosity, interest and energy. They encourage the discovery of personal meaning and interpersonal connections.

Informing Facilitation Skills are used to provide a group with information from outside the group and to help the group learn about itself. These skills include teaching factual information and allowing group members to gain new knowledge. Two types of information are relevant to a group learning format; first, content information from outside the group and, second, process information from within the group itself.

Involving Facilitation Skills encourage positive interaction and learning between group members. These skills create an opportunity for active experimentation, encourage learning by practice and allow group members to put new knowledge to practical use. Because involvement occurs when group members themselves practice and gain hands-on experience, these facilitation skills require a shift in focus away from the leader and toward the group and the members within the group.

Planning/Applying Facilitation Skills focus on planning for the future and applying learning from the group to other contexts. These skills encourage members to work together to make specific plans to accomplish group or individual goals. Planning skills prepare group members to move from active experimentation within the group to concrete experience beyond the group.

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