

The Facilitation Laboratory

A training program of the University of New Hampshire PowerPlay Interactive Development,
NH Listens of the Carsey School of Public Policy and UNH Cooperative Extension

Best Practices

Facilitator

- Take time for Introductions
- Clarify purpose of gathering
- Clarify facilitator's role
- Don't let comments get personal
- Use your body language, location to facilitate
- Help group members hear each other by repeating
- Tell participants where the discussion is going
- Repeat and post the question
- Give clear directions
- Follow up to get clarification
- Remind group to participate and stay on topic
- Be authentic
- Scribe and write everything down
- Repeat what you are working on to keep focus (we are brainstorming)
- Be aware of your physical position in the group
- Listen
- Use and share good data on topic
- Remind participants to speak for themselves
- It is ok to be firm
- Ensure everyone has the opportunity to speak
- Consider sitting with everyone else
- Look for cues from others who may want to participate
- Clarify jargon or terms being used
- Stay neutral – no swaying
- Values can be part of discussion but don't personalize
- Articulate that participants are coming from different perspectives – that's ok!

Disruption

- Treat each other with respect
- Treat each other as neighbors
- Disruption can be subtle
- Go back to ground rules
- You might have to interrupt
- Consider an emergency signal
- Change your position in the room
- Use round robin to give everyone a chance to speak, if needed
- Use strong voice and say participants name
- Say thank you and move on – turn to next person
- Acknowledge things are difficult
- Define conflict words

Ground Rules

- Establish ground rules and review
- Visibly commit to ground rules – ask all participants to nod or raise hand in support
- Have group members read rules one by one
- Ask the group to help each other with the rules
- Come back to the ground rules, if needed



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