

The role of the Facilitator

Facilitation in general

Facilitation focuses primarily on processes, where information is shared between the participants in a group. The facilitator eases and improves the efficiency of this knowledge sharing using structured techniques and communication skills. Examples of facilitated arrangements are strategic planning, decision meetings, conflict handling, problem solution, creative (product) development and team based initiatives.

Work description

To utilise better the time and effort of the many participants normally participating in a project, particularly in connection to workshops, an external consultant may have the special responsibility of facilitating the process. The responsibility may include:

- Planning workshops
- Manage workshops
- Structure and present information from workshops

Responsibility

- Secure efficient usage of the time and knowledge of the participants.
- Secure that the overall picture of the problems is nuanced and not biased by a few dominating participants.
- Secure that the area is broadly covered and that the resulting picture both represents a common and informative view from the participants.

Facilitator skills

- Efficient in applying methods that separate process from content
- Manages the client relationship professionally and prepares thoroughly
- Uses time and space intentionally
- Is trained and skilled in evoking participation and creativity
- Is skilled in appreciating the group and its knowledge
- Maintains objectivity
- Skilled in reading the underlying dynamics in the group
- Orchestrates the drama in the situation
- Releases blocks in the process
- Adapts to changing situations
- Takes responsibility for the journey of the group
- Produces documentation and a process that ensures results
- Demonstrates professionalism, self-confidence and authenticity
- Maintain personal integrity

Characteristics of a Facilitator

- Is asking rather than telling
- Prepared to use time to build relations rather than just being task oriented
- Initiate conversations rather than waiting for others to start
- Paying personal compliments

- Asks for the opinion of others rather than just give his own
- Negotiates solutions rather than dictate
- Listens without interruptions
- Drawing energy from outside themselves rather than from within
- basing decisions upon intuitions rather than having to have facts
- Self confident
- More enthusiastic than systematic
- more outgoing than serious
- More coach than scientist
- More like a counsellor than a sergeant
- Is naturally curious towards people and life in general
- Is able to keep the big picture and still work with the detail