

FACILITATION SKILLS FOR CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT STAFF

Administrative Section

ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION

OVERVIEW

This Facilitator Guide contains all the information that you need to prepare for and conduct the *Facilitation Skills for Child Support Enforcement Staff* workshop.

Training Notes are provided to help you deliver the workshop. Use these notes as a suggested “script” for presenting content, leading discussions, and conducting activities. The notes are located in the “*You need to say/do*” section of each Training Notes page and appear in blue font for easy identification. Additional information, such as background or resource information, and/or information related to exercises, is provided in the “*You need to know*” section of each Training Notes page.

Copies of the Participant Guide pages are also included in this Facilitator Guide and appear opposite the corresponding Training Notes.

The Facilitator Guide has:

- An Administrative Section
- A section for each module.

This Administrative Section contains the following information:

- Workshop learning goals
- Target audience
- Workshop schedule
- Training approaches
- Participant materials
- Equipment, supplies, and training aids
- Room requirements
- Notes to the facilitator
- Pre-workshop packet materials.

WORKSHOP LEARNING GOALS

The learning goals of the workshop are to increase the participants’ facilitation skills and knowledge and improve their ability to facilitate meetings, work groups and project teams, presentations, and panel discussions.

TARGET AUDIENCE

This workshop is developed for State and Federal managers of the Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE). The recommended number of participants per workshop is 12.

WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

This workshop will take approximately 3 days to complete. The time is based on an approximate 6½-hour instructional day with 15-minute mid-morning and mid-afternoon breaks and a 1-hour break for lunch.

It is important to present the modules in accordance with the daily schedule. If time becomes a problem, make adjustments by eliminating or shortening exercises to ensure the modules are completed on schedule. The following table gives the schedule for the modules.

DAY	MODULE NUMBER AND TITLE	ESTIMATED TIME
1	Module 1: Introductions and Overview	50 minutes
	Module 2: The Role of the Facilitator	50 minutes
	Module 3: Understanding Self and Others	2 hours 15 minutes
	Module 4: Understanding Team Development and Team Dynamics	2 hours 30 minutes
2	Module 5: Facilitating Participation	6 hours 30 minutes
3	Module 6: Managing Challenging Behaviors	3 hours 45 minutes
	Module 7: Facilitating Problem-Solving and Decision-Making	1 hour 30 minutes
	Module 8: Facilitating With Technology	1 hour
	Module 9: Summary and Close of Workshop	30 minutes

TRAINING APPROACHES

This workshop is based on adult learning principles. Adults learn best when they actively participate and the training is related to real life examples. To this end, a variety of training approaches are used in this workshop, including:

- Participative lecture
- Large and small group discussions
- Structured group and individual exercises
- Paired share
- Role play
- Demonstrations.

PARTICIPANT MATERIALS

Each participant is to receive the *Facilitation Skills for Child Support Enforcement Staff* Participant Guide. The guide is divided into nine modules. Each module contains:

- Learning goal for the module
- Learning objectives for the module
- Key points of the module
- Summarized information contained in the module
- Exercise materials.

At the end of each major topic, there is a “reflection exercise.” These exercises take a variety of forms. They are designed to help the transfer of learning by asking participants to reflect on what they have learned and apply the learning to their workplace situations.

Pre-Workshop Packet

Prior to attending the workshop, each participant is to receive a pre-workshop packet that contains the following materials:

- The Hardy Educational Learning Profile (HELP)
- Article on facilitation
- Participant Profile.

This material may be distributed to participants through electronic mail or other distribution systems.

Pre-Workshop Packet, continued

Participants are to complete the HELP and read the article prior to attending the workshop and bring the materials with them to the workshop. A copy of the HELP is located in Module 3 Appendix. A copy of the article is located at the end of this Administrative Section.

Participants are also to complete their Participant Profiles and return them as instructed prior to the workshop. This data is useful as it gives you, the facilitator, an idea of the participants' background, level of skill, experience, etc. so that you can prepare for and tailor the workshop. A copy of the Participant Profile is located at the end of this Administrative Section.

EQUIPMENT, SUPPLIES, AND TRAINING AIDS

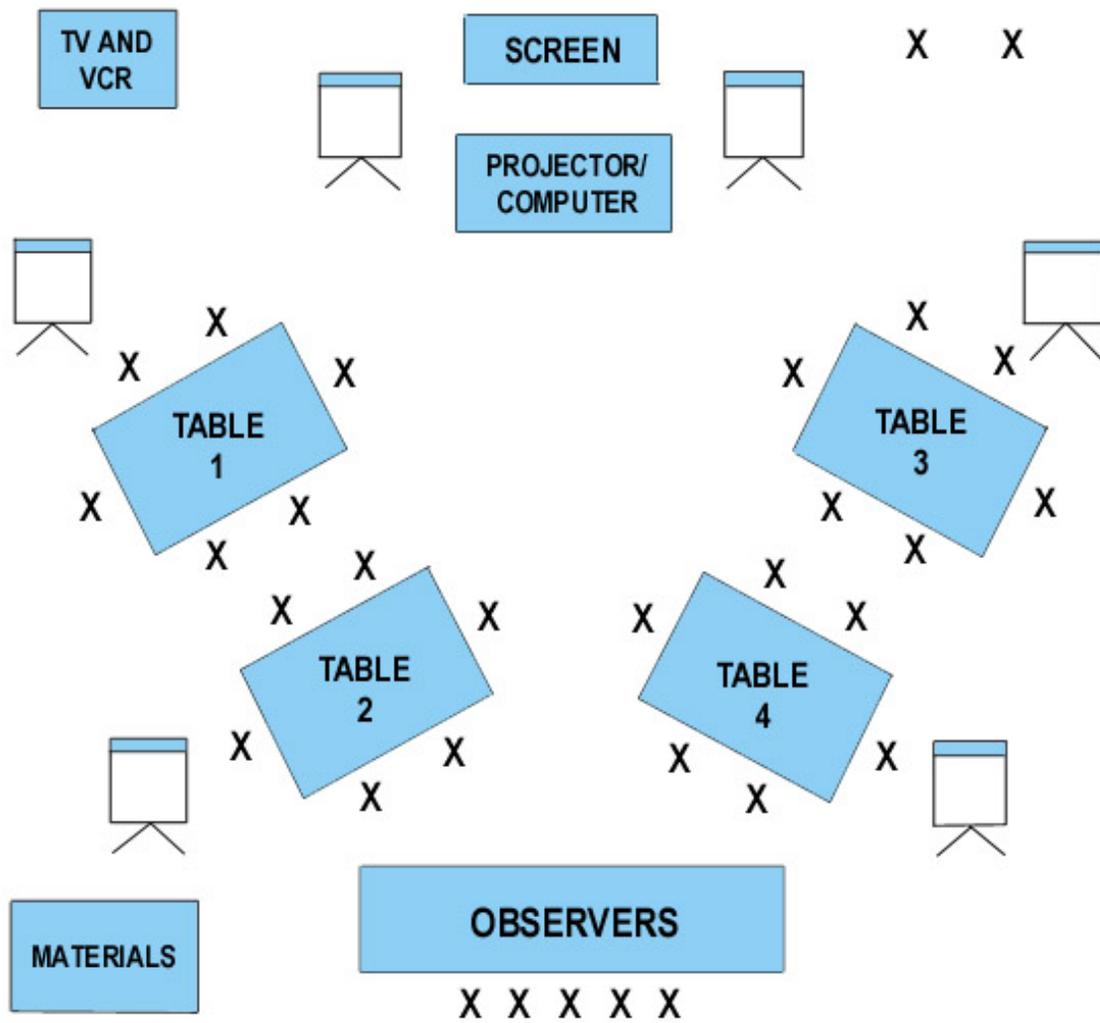
An inventory of the equipment, supplies, and training aids you will need for the workshop is given below. Each module identifies the specific items you will need to conduct that module.

- Computer projection system and screen
- TV and VCR
- Small size Post-It™ notes
- 3 to 4 flipchart easels with chart paper
- 35 to 50 Lego™ blocks and/or Lincoln Logs
- 3 tennis balls per group of six people
- 1 set of Q & A cards
- 3"x5" index cards
- 5 Avery Dots™ per participant
- 1 Koosh Ball™
- Name tents or name tags
- 4 sets of colored markers
- 1 large roll of masking tape
- Handouts for Modules, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9
- CD-ROM/floppy disk with PowerPoint slides
- Video, "Groupthink" by CRM films
- Video, "Power of Words" by CRM films

ROOM REQUIREMENTS

Provide tables at which four to six participants may be seated or provide any other seating arrangement that allows participants to work in small groups. The figure on the next page shows a suggested room arrangement.

ROOM ARRANGEMENT



NOTES TO THE FACILITATOR

1. A critical factor in determining success in meeting participants' needs is the analysis of your group prior to the workshop. The Participant Profiles will help you in your analysis. Gather as much information as possible about who is attending, their expectations, their experience facilitating groups, and any issues that might impact the participants' learning. Use this information to tailor your delivery of the workshop's content.
2. If possible, conduct a follow-up session/meeting or conduct a written post-evaluation several weeks to a month after participants have attended the workshop. This will maximize participants' learning by providing a forum for a "check-in," input on what is working well, not working, support needed, etc.
3. This workshop is designed so that participants have an opportunity to develop and apply the facilitation skills and knowledge through practice sessions. During these sessions, they not only receive feedback from other participants, but also receive feedback and coaching from an experienced facilitator. To achieve this, it is recommended that the practice sessions be conducted by two facilitators (one for each practice group). As facilitators of this workshop, it is critical that you and your co-facilitator "model" the skills and demonstrate the knowledge of an effective facilitator. You should have experience facilitating small and large groups. It is also important to model the principles of adult learning and involve the participants by encouraging active participation in discussions so that they can learn from each other.
4. Modules 2 through 5 provide the core skills and knowledge that participants need to be effective facilitators. These modules are the building blocks for subsequent modules and should be presented in the order in which they appear. Module 6 provides additional tips and techniques that help a facilitator to manage challenging behaviors. Modules 7 and 8 address specific applications of the core skills and knowledge in a variety of facilitation situations. Module 9 is the workshop summary and closing activities.

All modules are designed as "stand-alone" pieces. This allows you greater flexibility in delivering the workshop content. You may wish to deliver the workshop in its entirety; that is offer the 3 days in consecutive order (i.e., Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday). However, if participant availability and time constraints are an issue, the workshop design will allow you to deliver the workshop content over a longer period of time or as "just-in-time" training. It is not advisable, however, to allow too much time to pass between modules. Beginning the new module with a brief review of what was last covered will increase participants' retention.

NOTES TO THE FACILITATOR, CONTINUED

5. The following checklist will help you prepare for the workshop.

- √ Review the Facilitator Guide and all pre-workshop materials.
- √ Be familiar with resources (i.e., books) that are referenced.
- √ Arrange for the equipment and participant materials needed for the workshop.
- √ Obtain the necessary supplies.
- √ Ensure adequate copies of all handouts have been printed.
- √ Prepare pre-charted flipcharts.
- √ Prepare the room and equipment.
- √ Run through the PowerPoint slide presentation.
- √ Preview the videos.
- √ Practice, practice, practice.

THE ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR

By Robert Bacal 1998

Most people associate the word “facilitator” with the training environment. Often, that person at the front of the room leading a training session is referred to as the course facilitator. While it is true that some seminar leaders do “facilitate,” the facilitation role is often important in other areas. For example, the chairperson at a meeting often takes on the responsibility for facilitating the meeting, rather than “running it.” The government employee involved in mediation of disputes between other parties is also a facilitator. Human resources staff members often facilitate discussions in various contexts. And staff that works with groups of stakeholders and members of the public may be well advised to take on a facilitating role rather than a directing one.

For those of you who already are involved in facilitating, or those of you that may do so in the future, we are going to look at what the facilitation role entails.

Basic Definition

A facilitator is an individual whose job is to help to manage a process of information exchange. While an “expert’s” role is to offer advice, particularly about the content of a discussion, the facilitator’s role is to help with HOW the discussion is proceeding.

In short, the facilitator’s responsibility is to address the journey, rather than the destination.

When Facilitation Is Appropriate

A facilitation approach is appropriate when the organization is concerned not only with the decision that is made, but also with the way the decision is made. For example, an organization may be moving away from an autocratic style of management to a participatory one. So, to encourage staff to embrace more involvement, the manager may choose to act as a facilitator rather than an expert or the final arbiter for the decision. In this situation longer-term process goals become as important as getting a good decision.

As another example, let’s envision a government employee whose task is to communicate with members of the public/interest groups regarding legislation and regulation. Since one purpose of this communication is to reduce resistance to legislation and regulations, the employee can choose a more facilitative, consultative role, rather than being a simple “bearer of information.” In this case, the facilitation role is more likely to encourage others to be more cooperative.

Competencies & Characteristics

If you are involved in facilitation (even if you’ve never called it that), or may be involved, you might want to consider the competencies and characteristics of an effective facilitator as outlined by the Institute of Cultural Affairs (Canada).

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THE ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR, CONTINUED

Competencies

The facilitator:

- Distinguishes process from content
- Manages the client relationship and prepares thoroughly
- Uses time and space intentionally
- Is skilled in evoking participation and creativity
- Is practiced in honoring the group and affirming its wisdom
- Is capable of maintaining objectivity
- Is skilled in reading the underlying dynamics of the group
- Releases blocks to the process
- Adapts to the changing situation
- Assumes (or shares) responsibility for the group journey
- Demonstrates professionalism, self-confidence, and authenticity
- Maintains personal integrity.

Characteristics

The facilitator commits to a style of:

- Asking rather than telling
- Paying personal compliments
- Willing to spend time in building relationships rather than always being task-oriented
- Initiating conversation rather than waiting for someone else to do so
- Asking for others' opinions rather than always having to offer their own
- Negotiating rather than dictating decision-making
- Listening without interrupting
- Emoting but able to be restrained when the situation requires it
- Drawing energy from outside themselves rather than from within
- Basing decisions upon intuitions rather than having to have facts
- Having sufficient self-confidence that they can look someone in the eye when talking to them
- More persuasive than sequential
- More enthusiastic than systematic
- More outgoing than serious
- More like a counselor than a sergeant
- More like a coach than a scientist
- Being naturally curious about people, things, and life in general
- Keeping the big picture in mind while working on the nitty-gritty.

Conclusion

If you have a natural task-oriented style, you may find it difficult to be thrust into a situation where facilitating is a more effective approach. It isn't always easy to give up the "expert" position in a group. You may find it useful to examine your involvement in group activities to determine if you can translate the above characteristics and competencies into changes in your behavior that will allow you to contribute more effectively to the group and to achieving your organization's goals.

**FACILITATION SKILLS FOR CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT
CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM
PARTICIPANT PROFILE**

Please complete the information below and return to:

*Office of Child Support Enforcement
C/O Human Technology, Inc.
6738 Curran Street
McLean, VA 22101
(703) 448-6072 (fax)
Email: tharrell@humtech.com*

Name: _____ Title: _____

Office Mailing Address: _____

City, State, ZIP Code: _____

Telephone and FAX Numbers: _____

E-mail Address: _____

The information you provide on this form will assist the National Training Center staff in tailoring the training to your needs.

1. How long have you worked in the Child Support Enforcement Program?

2. What is your current position and how long have you held your current position?

3. Describe your experience as a facilitator. Please include the types of situations/groups you currently facilitate or plan to facilitate.

