The background of the cover is a black and white photograph of a prison cell. The cell is composed of dark, heavy metal bars that create a grid pattern. The lighting is dramatic, with some areas being very dark and others catching light, highlighting the texture of the bars and the depth of the cell.

THE FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

Facilitation Guide

PROPERTY OF
NIC INFORMATION CENTER

REC'D APR 19 2007

Defining Facilitation

A LEADER WITH A FACILITATIVE STYLE HELPS A GROUP TO:

- Develop and use processes, methods and tools to achieve objectives
- Consistently reach desired outcomes
- Manage conflict and communication
- Find common ground to help teams solve problems and make decisions which take all members opinions into account
- Create a positive environment in which to work
- Help members to grow in their own capacity to self manage

**Remember the “Golden Rule” of facilitation:
Only do for the group that which it cannot do for itself**

Basic Facilitator Competencies

FOCUSING THE DISCUSSION

- Understand the requirements of the agenda and outcomes
- Use questions as powerful directional influences

CLARIFYING POINTS OF CONFUSION

- Rephrase what has been said to summarize
- Bridge comments to agenda or learning
- Help set the pace

MAINTAINING PARTICIPATION AND COOPERATION

- Maintain a positive environment where it is safe for all to contribute
- Facilitate the process
- Remain aware of group dynamics

BALANCING TASK AND PROCESS

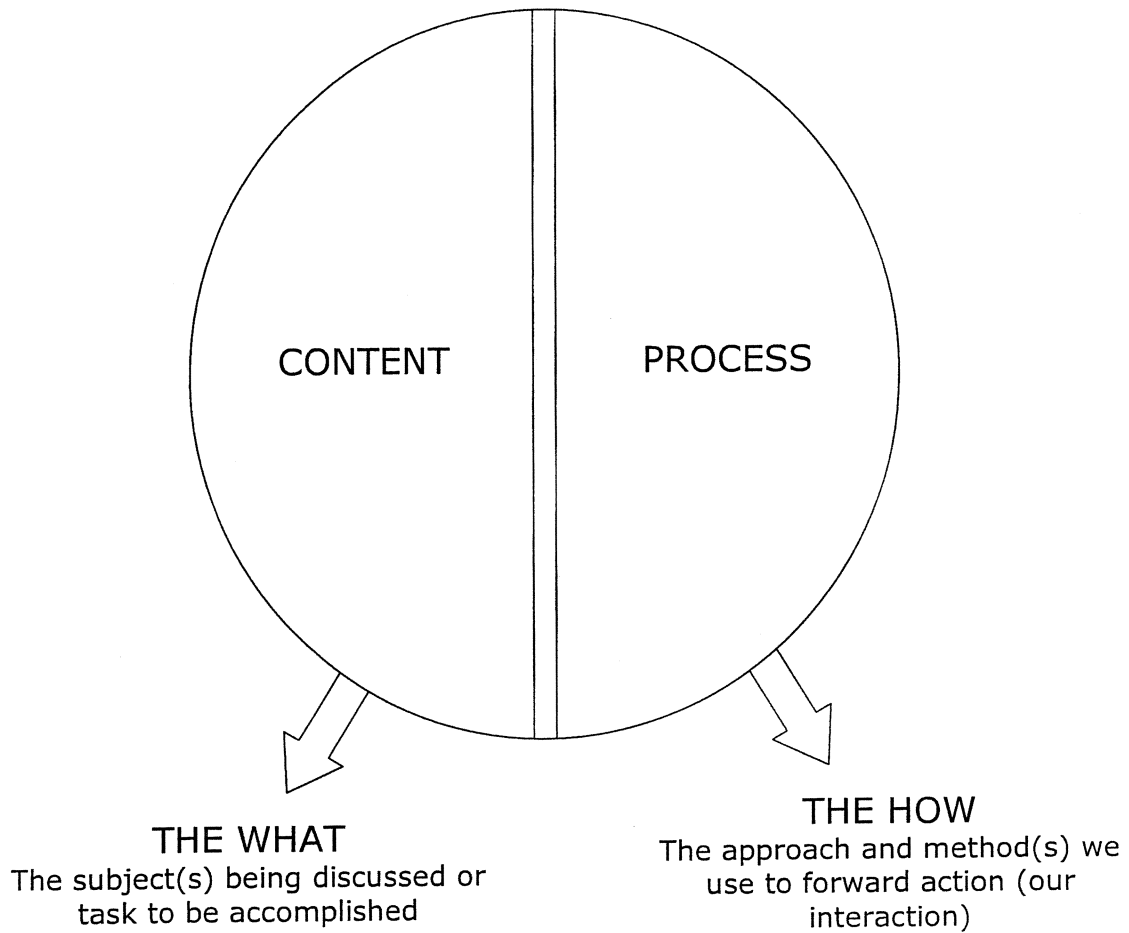
- Be sensitive to group needs
- Help the group reach its desired outcomes
- Be aware of time and manage the discussion accordingly

STRENGTHENING PERSONAL TRAITS

- Adapt to the groups needs and remain neutral
- Listen and doesn't answer group questions, restates them
- Suppress personal ego or agenda
- Function as a catalyst for learning

Two Areas of Team Focus

A FACILITATOR HELPS THE TEAM MANAGE ITS PROCESS SO IT CAN EFFECTIVELY ACHIEVE THE CONTENT OBJECTIVES



Facilitator's Tip Sheet

Tips for Starting Up

1. **Explain the roles** of facilitator, recorder and group members.
2. Clearly **define the goal**, check for understanding and post it.
3. Define the **time frame** for achieving the goal.
4. Explain the **process and group structure** for the session.
5. Set **ground rules** for the process with the group.

Show you are paying attention

DO

- Position your body to face the group
- Smile, look pleasant
- Listen carefully while they talk
- Keep eye contact
- Nod affirmatively
- Talk with all group members
- Look around the group

DON'T

- Turn your back on group
- Frown or look judgmental
- Be distracted
- Avoid eye contact or stare
- Remain impassive
- Talk to only a few people
- Look at only a few people

Facilitator's Tip Sheet - Asking Effective Questions

DO

Ask clear, concise questions covering a single issue.

Ask challenging questions which will provoke thought.

Ask reasonable questions based on what they know.

Ask honest and relevant questions.

DON'T

Ask rambling, ambiguous questions covering multiple issues.

Ask questions that don't provide an opportunity for thought.

Ask questions that most of them don't know.

Ask "trick" questions designed to fool them.

As a facilitator you need to think about how to direct questions toward group members; either to everyone in the group or to an individual. These are helpful guidelines:

IF YOU WANT TO...

Stimulate everyone's thinking

Allow them to respond voluntarily

Stimulate one person to respond

Tap the known resources of an "expert" in the group

THEN...

Direction question to the group

Ask a question such as: "What experiences have any of you had with this problem?"

Direct the question to that person

Direct the question: "Mary, you have a lot of experience in this area, what would you do?"

STAGES OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT AND RANGE OF THE FACILITATOR BEHAVIOR

	STAGES OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT	ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR
Developing a positive working environment	INCLUSION/FORMING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - becoming oriented - developing commitment - needing direction - wanting to be accepted 	DIRECTING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - climate setting - clarifying roles, expectations - defining goals & providing structure - group-building
Dealing with issues of power & control	STORMING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - consolidating influence - confronting dependency on the leader - conflict among group members - low level of work 	COACHING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - surfacing issues, legitimizing concerns - facilitating communication - managing conflict - inviting input and feedback - expecting and accepting tension
Managing conflict establishing ground rules	NORMING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - resolving control concerns - establishing group agreement 	SUPPORTING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - offering own ideas, resources - sharing the leadership role - being available for consultation - smoothing the boundary between the group and the organization
Functioning as an effective group	PERFORMING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - working productively towards shared goals - problem-solving & decision making - open communication, trust - dealing with conflict 	DELEGATING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - supporting, letting go - helping group deal with termination
Terminating the group's work	ADJOURNING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - creates apprehension - regression in maturity level - need help to say "good-bye" 	

Facilitation: Values and Beliefs

Understanding Your “Hooks”

Please complete the following using adjectives or short phrases:

I AM

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

I AM NOT

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

When you have completed your lists, look over the descriptive words you have chosen. You are most likely to feel comfortable around people who have similar characteristics or values as your I AM list. People who display or act like the descriptors under your I AM NOT list are likely to “hook” you. You may feel you need to address their behavior only because it’s something you don’t value or it makes you uncomfortable. As a facilitator, be aware of your own lens when working with a group.



INTERVENTIONS

FACILITATION INTERVENTIONS

What are interventions?

Actions during the meeting to help get things back on track

Four questions to ask before intervening:

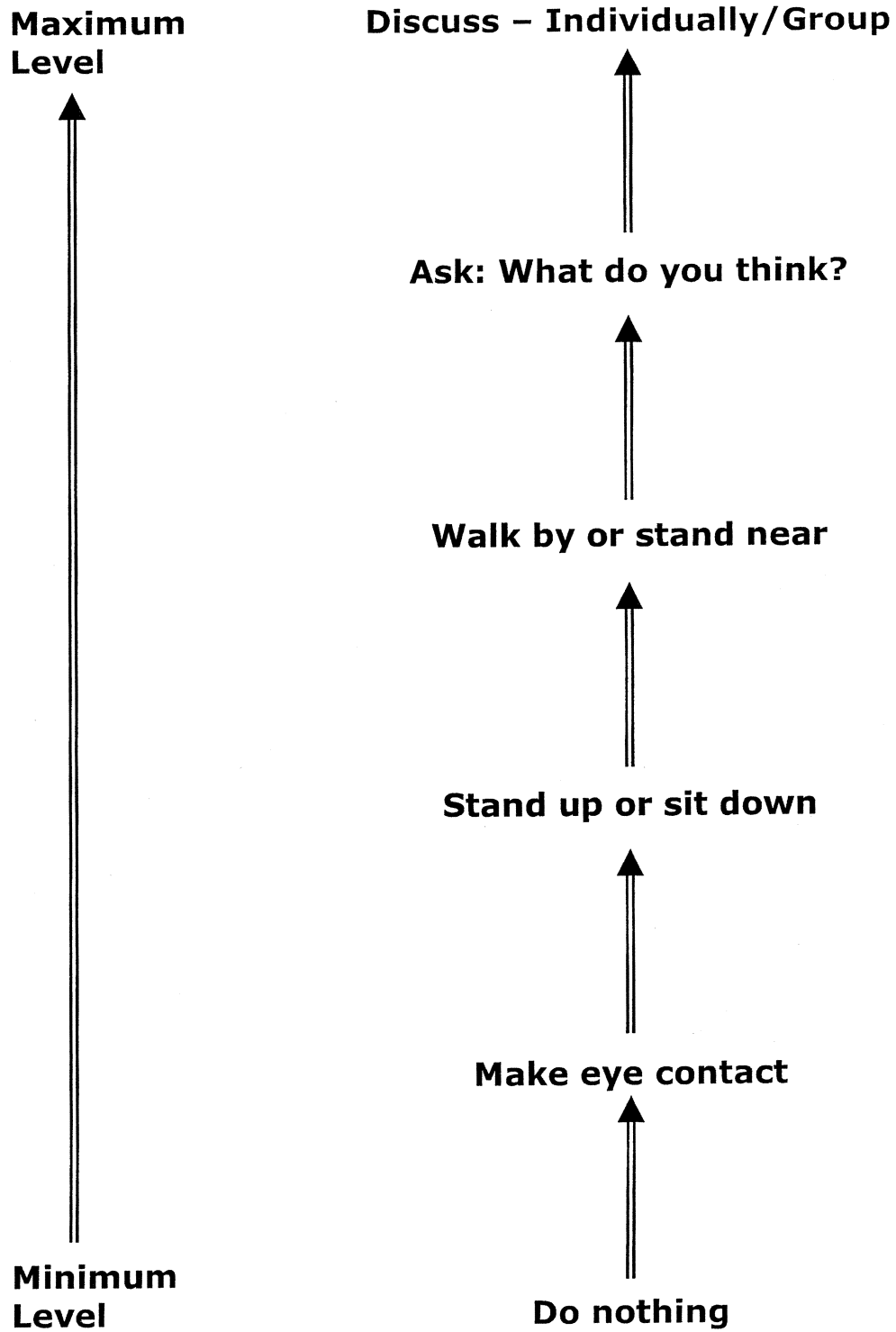
- What is my purpose for intervening?
- When is it an appropriate time for me to intervene?
- Where should I intervene?
- How should I intervene?

**Remember the “Golden Rule” of facilitation:
Only do for the group that which it cannot do for itself**

Some guidelines:

- Make sure as facilitator you are not “taking responsibility” for the teams actions
- Help the group stay focused and on track
- Name things that aren’t helping the group move forward
- Help enforce the operating agreements
- Stop any personal attacks

LEVELS OF INTERVENTION



INTERVENTION GUIDELINES: LOOK AND SOUND LIKE...

DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN WHAT YOU OBSERVE AND WHAT YOU INFER:

- Notice behaviors you can actually observe, then separate them from the interpretations you are making about the behaviors
- Label each when you respond to a person, i.e. check out your assumptions about others; internal thinking or feeling

Sounds like: "I heard you say..." or "My observation is..." or "My guess is..." or "I am assuming that..."

PAUSE BEFORE REACTING:

- Recognize your own personal response to others. Know when you are responding from a "hooked" position or to resistance instead of to the real behaviors and feelings of others.
- Listen with a third ear to unspoken concerns or feelings.

Looks like: Wait in silence for the participant to feel his/her own words and response. Paraphrase or give verbal acknowledgement. Recall the you do not have to do anything about peoples' responses...only understand them.

BE SELF AWARE of your own needs and body responses as a gauge on the group.

- Facilitators are often a "sponge" for undercurrents or unspoken feelings: confusion, boredom, frustration. Pay attention to your own reactions and look for cues from the group for similar feelings.
- Also, if you need a break (to go to the bathroom or to transition)...the group may need one too.

Sounds like: Ask questions such as, "I am sensing some confusion, is it just me?" "How are we all doing right now?"

GROUP INTERVENTION TECHNIQUES

- Boomerang (referring back a question to the sender or the group, especially when a rhetoric question or a leading one, "What do you think, what have you seen work?")
- Clarify specific words ("Describe for us what you mean by ____?")
- Refer to desired outcomes ("How does this comment relate to our desired outcomes?")
- Describe and question ("This is the second time you've started to evaluate the brainstorming ideas, do you want to end the brainstorming process?")
- Ensure process agreement ("We agreed we would brainstorm first, then go back to clarify ideas")
- Hold accountable to ground rules ("Remember our ground rule to respect others...we should only have one conversation going at a time.")
- Use body language and space (power of sitting on conversation vs. presentation, the impact of proximity, etc.)
- Use flip charts (the power of the visual: people feel heard and relax once their idea is recorded)
- Paraphrase/provide empathetic response ("So you believe that ____ is the best way to go because it____") This says, "*I heard you*".

GIVING FEEDBACK

WHEN GIVING FEEDBACK:

- **Focus on the behavior:**
 - “You talk rapidly and I am having trouble understanding what you are saying”
- **Describe your own reaction to the behavior:**
 - “I was reluctant to participate as I never understood what you wanted us to do”
- **Suggest alternative ways of behaving:**
 - “Slow down and take a breathe before you start talking” “After you ask a question wait for the answer...perhaps you could count to yourself before jumping in.”
- **Be specific:**
 - Tell when the behavior occurred and what the person did or said, “When you were starting up the meeting and referred to the desired outcomes...”

RECEIVING FEEDBACK

WHEN RECEIVING FEEDBACK:

- **Listen actively:**
 - Assume you will have to paraphrase it back to the sender. This encourages you to focus on what is being said.
- **Maintain eye contact**
 - this also encourages concentrating on what is being said and lets the sender know that he/she is being listened to.
- **Use verbal or non-verbal signs**
 - “I see”, “Um, hum,” head nods or a smile. This encourages the speaker to continue.
- **Seek clarification and specific examples**
 - “Tell me more about that”, “When did you see it?” etc.
- **Take in the data:**
 - focus on understanding and receiving; resist the temptation to explain or defend)

HANDLING DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Overly Talkative

Explanation: May be well-informed and overly eager; wants to direct discussion

- Avoid being sarcastic; his/her eagerness may become an asset
- Slow him/her down with a challenging question
- Let the group take care of him/her as much as possible
- Interrupt with, "That's an interesting point...now let's see how others feel."

Highly Argumentative

Explanation: Combative personality; feels strongly about the subject; is upset

- Keep your temper in check; try to find merit in what he/she is saying
- Try to get others to express an opinion and move on
- Suggest that it is OK if we all don't agree at this point in time
- Talk to him/her privately during a break; find out what the problem is and ask for his/her help

Quick and Overly Helpful

Explanation: Trying to help; trying to exclude others

- Cut off tactfully by directing questions to others
- Thank the participant and suggest "we put others to work"
- Use him/her to summarize (perhaps the flip chart)
- Use non-verbals to exclude

Personality Clash

Explanation: Two or more members clash; issue of control or past history

- Note points of disagreement and minimize if possible
- Draw attention to the agenda and objective
- Bring neutral member into the discussion; "Bill, what do you think is the issue here?"
- Remind participants of meeting ground rules (no personal attacks) and frankly ask the personalities be omitted from the discussion

HANDLING DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIORS

Rambling

Explanation: Doesn't focus on the subject; not able to summarize thoughts

- When an opening develops, thank the person and restate the relevant points and move on
- Smile, say the point is interesting, point to the flip chart and indicate that we are getting "a little off our agenda"
- Remind him/her that time is short and there is still considerable work to be done

Obstinate/Stubborn

Explanation: Combative personality; prejudiced; won't budge

- Throw participant's view to the group and let the group straighten the person out
- Offer to discuss the point with them in depth later
- Suggest the participant accept the group's viewpoint for the moment

Griper

Explanation: Has pet peeve; professional griper; has legitimate complaint

- Ask a member of the group to respond; "Becky, what's your reaction?"
- Reminder of time constraints; "I know you're concerned about. We do have a lot to finish before 5pm. Can we move on?"
- Indicate you'll discuss the issue with him/her privately, later.

Side Conversations

Explanation: May be related to the subject or personal; often a way of demonstrating dissatisfaction with the group process

- Call on one of the people by name and ask an easy question
- Call on one of the people, repeat the last opinion offered and ask for their reaction
- If you are in the habit of moving around the room, stand casually behind members who are talking; do not make this overly obvious to others

HANDLING DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Inarticulate

Explanation: Lacks ability to precisely express thoughts in words

- Don't say, "What you mean is..."
- Instead say, "Let me restate that for the group."; then put in more understandable terms for the group
- Change the original ideas as little as possible but have them make sense

Definitely Wrong Comment/Response

Explanation: Misunderstood topic or question

- Handle delicately; avoid embarrassing him/her
- Offer, "I see your point. Can we make it fit with..."
- Rephrase the question

Ask for Your Opinion

Explanation: Trying to put you on the spot; may honestly be seeking your advice

- Generally avoid solving problems yourself; rather, guide the group in reaching a solution
- Never take sides
- Select another member of the group to respond
- Say, "I do have an opinion, but would like to refrain from commenting until you all have decided what you want to do."; then offer your opinion trying to link it closely to what they have decided (tell them you are "changing hats")

Refuses to Participate (Is a "Drop-out")

Explanation: Bored; insecure; feels superior

- Arouse interest by asking for their opinion
- Draw out person next to him/her; then ask the quiet person to respond
- When person does speak, sincerely but subtly compliment him/her for the contribution



APPENDIX

BRAINSTORMING

Brainstorm & Clarify

WHAT: A technique to generate a large number of ideas or possibilities in a relatively short time frame.

WHY: You need the entire group's input, creativity and ideas

HOW:

- Clarify topic to be brainstormed
- Ideas are called out randomly
- All ideas are recorded using the exact words of the author and are visible (flip chart, white board, note cards, etc.)
- All ideas are welcomed and encouraged without constraint, critique or discussion



CLARIFY:

After you have all the ideas collected ask if anyone needs to clarify a particular item. If so, ask the originator of that idea to explain the thought. This is not about getting agreement – only making sure that the intent of the originator is clear.

VARIATIONS:

Can be done out loud as a whole group

Can be done to take ideas from people in rotation

NOMINAL GROUP TECHNIQUE

Include & Mediate

WHAT: An approach to ensure that all members of the group have an equal opportunity to have ideas, viewpoints and interests expressed.

WHY: May be used to balance out differences in power, position and personality styles.

- HOW:**
- Clarify the topic
 - Set a time limit where each person silently writes down his/her ideas or responses to the topic
 - Go around the group and take one idea from each person, record input on a flip chart or if they used sticky notes have each individual to post their idea
 - Continue to go around the group allowing people to "pass" if their ideas have all been stated



CONSENSUS TESTING (Fist-of-Five)

WHAT: A quick tool to check the degree to which the group is in consensus

WHY: Helps assess the degree of alignment and helps to surface issues and concerns so they can be worked through

HOW: On a scale of 0-5, simultaneously have each person hold up the number of fingers that indicate their level of support for the position being considered.

- 0 = I'll fight to prevent this (closed fist)
- 1 = Serious reservations
- 2 = A few reservations I need resolved
- 3 = Is acceptable/reasonable – I can support
- 4 = Very good – I am ready to act
- 5 = Absolutely great – I am convinced

For individuals with a fist or 1: Explore concerns fully. ASK:

“What would it take to get you on board with this?”
“What data would help you reconsider your point of view?”

For those with a 2 or 3:

ASK:
“What concerns do you have?” “What would it take to get you to a 4 or 5?”

For those with a 4 or 5:

Enough support exists to move to the next step toward action.

PLUS/DELTAS

Approach to gathering input:

A quick review of what worked well (plus) and what to do differently (delta) – usually done in the wrap-up of a meeting or before beginning a new phase when you want the pulse of the group.

- Individually call out input and facilitator writes under respective columns (plus or delta) on a flip chart OR
- Participants write individual comments on sticky notes (at least one +, one Δ) and post on flip chart upon leaving OR
- As a table, write group comments on two sticky notes (one +, one Δ) and post before departing

MULTI-VOTE

WHAT: A process to help groups move from a large number of options to a few key ones.

WHY: Assists in prioritizing and understanding what options most of the group supports. Best when used as a pooling tool rather than a deciding tool.

HOW:

1. Individuals silently rank or select their top items. (determine the number of votes based on the complexity of the list...usually 3-4 votes per person helps)
2. Next instruct the group to publicly cast their vote through "dot voting" or placing a check next to the items they chose.



NOTES
