

Tips for PD facilitation

Setting up the climate

1. Choose an informal or familiar setting for participants
2. Create a congenial atmosphere by using jokes, casual conversation and small talk to make people feel comfortable
3. Introduction: Make sure everybody knows everybody
4. Be relaxed, direct and confident

Explaining the purpose of the meeting/activity

Sample statements such as:

“We are here together because of our common concern about.....”. “ We, facilitators, are here to learn from you about your experience with (issue/problem)..... so that TOGETHER we can address it”.

Present the PD Concept in the context of a specific problem: *“We would like to invite you to address this problem by looking and discovering solutions from within our own (organization, s, department, units, etc...).*

Facilitator non-verbal behavior

- Maintain eye contact with everyone as you speak
- **PRACTICE ACTIVE LISTENING: nodding, smiling, showing interest.** Listen carefully and show interest in participants’ responses and exchange
- Be observant and notice participants’ level of comfort or discomfort
- **Sit in the group**, not higher or away from the group
- **USE SILENCE: 2 minutes silent pose after asking a question** to let participants fill the space.

Facilitator verbal behavior

- Be sure participants talk more than you do and exchange among themselves
- Refrain for answering questions that have not been asked
- Refrain from making suggestions, giving advice unless specifically asked
- Ask open-ended questions with “What, how, what if, “
- Invite participants to tell their story or share their experience with the issue at hand
- Share relevant personal experience with participants to make them feel comfortable and develop trust by evoking feelings, beliefs, needs and own vulnerability
- Let the conversation guide the group
- Use humor or generate laughter to create an atmosphere of trust

Encourage everyone to participate in the discussion by:

- Acknowledging individual's willingness to talk, even if the statement is incorrect, beside the point, by saying: "this is interesting....that's a good question, I never thought of it this way..."
- Not answering questions from the group yourself, but asking other participants to answer them
- Ensuring that everyone can voice their ideas or opinion
- No letting one person dominate the discussion : acknowledging that person's contribution to the group but stressing the need to learn and hear from EVERYONE

Quote participants ideas, remarks and opinion to:

- Single out ideas from participants
- Summarize ideas, suggested solutions, and opinion from the group
- Broaden the discussion
- Let people know that you listened carefully to what they said

Closure

Summarize what has been said, next steps or action agreed upon including tasks and who is responsible for them.

Emphasize contribution from the group

Thanks & relate the activity to the larger PD project