

Washington University School of Medicine

Diversity and Inclusion

Developing Facilitation Skills for Group Discussion



Enjoy leading your discussion group.

Remember to breathe!

Thank you!

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Leading Facilitated Discussions

What is my role?
How do I facilitate the discussion?

- Guide the discussion
- Model constructive conversation/dialogue
- Encourage all voices to be heard
- Keep the Conversation focused on topic
- Summarize Ideas
- Connect the Dots

What Do We Mean by engaging in ... Constructive Conversation (Dialogue)?

DEBATE

All About Winning -
Closed-minded
Combative
Critical of other points of view
Seeks closure
There is only One Right Answer

VS.

DIALOGUE

All About Learning +
Collaborative
Finds strengths in other points of view
Open-minded
Seeks new options
Works toward a solution together

DEBATE

All About Winning
Closed-minded
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There is only One Right Answer

Facilitator To Do's:
Most important: Step 1
Establish Ground Rules

V

DIALOGUE

All About Learning

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Finds strengths in other points of view

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Facilitator To Do's:

Most important: Step 1

- **Establish Ground Rules**

Ground Rules

Respect, responsibility
Openness, Oops, Ouch
Participate, Pass, Patience
Escuchar, Escouter
Sensitivity, Said Here - Stays Here

Ground Rules

Respect, responsibility

Openness, Oops, Ouch

Participate, Pass, Patience

Escuchar, Ecouter

Sensitivity, Said Here - Stays Here

Facilitator To Do's:

- Summarize key points by connecting the dots
-
- Provide Facts/Data when appropriate
-
- Establish Ground Rules
-
- Actively Look for ways to hear all voices in space
-
- Keep the Group Focused
-
- Ensure that one person speaks at a time
-
- Remain Neutral

Facilitator Don'ts:

- Participate in the discussion
-
- Be Critical of comments made
-
- Interject after every comment/Question
-
- Ask Yes or No Questions
-
- Show Bias (body language, equal attention to whoever is speaking)
-
- Be afraid of now knowing an answer (Saying I don't know is acceptable and very common)

Questions to Assist in Effective Facilitation

Some very interesting points have been made.
Are there any different perspectives in the room?

What I heard you say is "x", and a few other people are saying "y", what may be the differences in reactions?

The thinking in the room is "x", is everyone holding up this perspective? If not, what are your thoughts?

Have you ever wondered why ... (oppositional viewpoint)?

An Effective Tool to Prepare
for Participant Group Discussion:

Listening Pairs

What is the
Art of
Active
Listening?



**What is the
Art of
Active
Listening?**

Active listening involves listening with all senses. As well as giving full attention to the speaker, it is important that the 'active listener' is also 'seen' to be listening - otherwise the speaker may conclude that what they are talking about is uninteresting to the listener.

Interest can be conveyed to the speaker by using both verbal and non-verbal messages such as:

- maintaining eye contact
- nodding your head and smiling
- agreeing by saying 'Yes' or simply 'Mmm hmm' to encourage them to continue.

By providing this 'feedback' the person speaking will usually feel more at ease and therefore communicate more easily, openly and honestly.

Active listening is also about patience - pauses and short periods of silence should be accepted. Listeners should not be tempted to jump in with questions or comments every time there are a few seconds of silence.

Active listening involves giving the other person time to explore their thoughts and feelings, they should, therefore, be given adequate time for that.

In leading Discussion

Be warm and welcoming
Share vulnerability by sharing a relevant story

Ask participants to be fully "present" and engaged in the discussion.

Thank them for their participation in sharing their thoughts.

Parking Lot

To be used for questions that have not been answered yet or questions that someone is afraid to ask out loud?

Response 1

Facilitators are not necessarily experts on the subject - and more importantly - sometimes the best responses come from the group discussion around the question.

Generate response by asking the question of the audience.

Response 2

If you don't have an answer, let participants know you will provide information later by mail or email.

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