

Our #Top10 tips for **Great Facilitation**



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Tip #1

Stay Neutral, Always

A facilitator's role is to guide the process, not push a personal agenda. Strive to remain impartial and create space for diverse viewpoints.



Pro Tip

Acknowledge all contributions without assigning value. Instead of saying "That's a good idea" or "I disagree," use neutral phrases like "Thank you for sharing," or "That's an interesting perspective". This acknowledges the contribution without indicating your personal judgement.

Tip #2

Psychological Safety

Create an environment where participants feel comfortable sharing ideas without fear of judgement. This encourages open communication and collaboration.



Pro Tip

Start with a "check-in" question. Begin the session with a simple, non-threatening question like, "What's one thing you're hoping to get out of today's session?" This sets a tone of openness and inclusion.

Tip #3

Active Listening

Pay close attention to what participants say, both verbally and non-verbally. Demonstrate that you value their contributions.



Pro Tip

Use "reflective listening" with brief summaries. After someone speaks, quickly paraphrase their main point: "So, what I'm hearing is...". This confirms understanding and encourages further elaboration.

Tip #4

Clear Objectives and Structure

Establish clear goals for the session and create a structured agenda to keep everyone on track. This provides direction and focus.



Pro Tip

Visibly display the agenda and objectives. Write them on a whiteboard, flip chart, or share them on a screen. Refer back to them regularly to maintain focus.

Tip #5

Effective Time Management

Respect participants time by adhering to the agenda and keeping discussions focused. Learn to redirect conversations that stray off-topic.



Pro Tip

Use a "timekeeper" or visual timer. Designate someone (or use an online timer) to keep track of time and give gentle reminders when time is running short.

Tip #6

Ask Powerful Questions

Use open-ended questions to stimulate discussion, encourage critical thinking, and draw out diverse perspectives.



Pro Tip

Employ the "5 Whys" technique. When exploring a problem, ask "Why?" repeatedly (up to five times) to dig deeper and uncover root causes.

Tip #7

Manage Participation

Ensure that everyone has an opportunity to contribute, while preventing any one individual from dominating the conversation.



Pro Tip

Use "round-robin" or "popcorn" techniques. For round-robin, go around the room and give everyone a chance to speak. For popcorn, allow anyone to jump in, but encourage variety.

Tip #8

Adaptability and Flexibility

Be prepared to adjust your approach based on the group's dynamics and the flow of the discussion.



Pro Tip

Have a "parking lot" for off-topic ideas. When a discussion veers off course, write the topic on a "parking lot" (a visible list) to address later.

Tip #9

Summarise and Clarify

Regularly summarise key points and decisions to ensure that everyone is on the same page. This helps to maintain clarity and alignment.



Pro Tip

Use "chunking" to summarise in sections. After each major discussion point, provide a brief summary of the key takeaways before moving on.

Tip #10

Document and Follow Up

Record key decisions, action items, and next steps. Distribute this information to participants after the session to ensure accountability.



Pro Tip

Create a simple "action grid" during the session. On a whiteboard or shared document, create columns for "Action," "Who," and "When" to capture action items in real-time.

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