

# **BASIC FACILITATION**



**Missouri Department of  
Health and Senior Services**

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# INTRODUCTION

**Purpose:** To improve colleague facilitation skills so that they will be able to increase meeting effectiveness and achieve desired outcomes.

**Expectations:** Please list one to three things you want to learn from this course.

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**Facilitation skill assessment:** Please place an x next to the facilitation skills listed below in which you feel competent.

- Planning a meeting.
- Conducting a meeting.
- Evaluating a meeting.
- Developing meeting rules.
- Leading a group in consensus decision-making.
- Handling conflict while staying in control.
- Using three or more facilitator tools such as brainstorming.
- Dealing with challenging people.

Facilitation is the most noble, selfless and giving form of leadership that gains little attention but accomplishes much.

“You can accomplish anything, if you don’t care who gets the credit.”

Forbes

## What Is Facilitation?

**"Facilitation Is Fast Becoming a Core Competency for Anyone Who's on a Team, Leading a Task Force, Heading up a Committee or Managing a Department."**

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## Definitions

**Facilitator**  
**Content**  
**Process**  
**Ground Rules or Norms**

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## Definitions

- Facilitator**
- **Contributes structure and process**
  - **Helper and enabler**
  - **Support others**

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## Definitions

Facilitator

### Content

- **Topics or subjects under discussion at any meeting**
- **Task, the decision made, or issues explored**

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## Definitions

Facilitator

Content

### Process

- **Structure, framework, methods and tools**
- **Climate or spirit established**
- **Facilitator style**

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## Definitions

Facilitator

Content

Process

### Ground Rules or Norms

- **Mutually agreed rules created by the group members used to govern themselves (Page 9)**

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## What Does a Facilitator Do?

Facilitation is a way of providing leadership without taking the reins.

A facilitator's job is to get others to assume responsibility and to take the lead.

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## When Facilitating

- Participants are members of teams whose mission is to improve performance.
- ◆ Meeting objectives are based on process improvements.
- ◆ An agenda is used to structure the meeting effectiveness.
- ◆ Questions are used to develop individuals involvement.

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## When Facilitating

- Flip Chart is used to record team members inputs and ideas.
- ◆ Facilitator teaches members to use tools for team problem solving.
- ◆ Facilitator works to build consensus in group decision making.
- ◆ Facilitator manages the meeting process, not content.

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## Differentiating Between Content and Process

### Content

- Subjects for discussion
- Tasks
- Problem being solved
- Decisions made
- Agenda Items
- Goals

### Process

- Methods and procedures
- Maintaining relations
- Tools being used
- Setting rules
- Group dynamics

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## Content vs. Process Leadership

- Offering an opinion with the intent of influencing the outcome of discussions is acting as the 'content leader.'
- ◆ 'Process leader' or facilitator, is neutral on the content and actively orchestrates the action.

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**A facilitator's job is to manage the process and leave content to the participants.**

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### Facilitation as Coaching

| Authoritarian Style   | Coaching Style  |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task oriented</li> <li>• One-way communicator</li> <li>• Makes all decisions</li> <br/> <li>• Pushes change directed from the top</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality oriented</li> <li>• Encourages colleague empowerment</li> <li>• Works for consensus from teams</li> <li>• Works to initiate change through groups/teams</li> </ul> |

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### Facilitation Behaviors and Tools

- **Core Practices**  
 Define the manner, style and behaviors of the facilitator
  
- **Process Tools**  
 Structured activities that provide a clear sequence of steps

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### Facilitation Behaviors and Tools

- **Core Practices**  
 Define the manner, style and behaviors of the facilitator  
 Experienced Facilitators:
  - stay neutral
  - listen actively
  - ask questions
  - paraphrase
  - ◆ synthesize ideas
  - ◆ manage digression
  - ◆ offer clear summaries
  - ◆ give and receive feedback
  
- **Process Tools**

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## Facilitation Behaviors and Tools

### Core Practices

#### Process Tools

Structured activities that provide a clear sequence of steps

Process Tools such as:

- ◆ Brainstorming
- ◆ Nominal Group Technique
- ◆ Force Field Analysis (page10)
- ◆ Multi-Voting

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## Core Practices Overview

- Stay neutral on content
- Listen actively
- Paraphrase to clarify
- Ask questions
- Use the flip chart
- Keep time
- Play Ping-Pong
- Test Assumptions
- Synthesize
- Summarize periodically
- Park It
- Use spell-check button

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## Focus on Questioning

Effective questioning, asking the right question at the right time, is the key facilitative technique.

If you want to...  
Stimulate everyone's thinking

Allow people to respond voluntarily or avoid putting an individual on the spot



Then...  
Direct questions to the group

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

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## Focus on Questioning

Effective questioning, asking the right question at the right time, is the key facilitative technique.

If you want to...

Stimulate one person to think and respond

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



Then...

Direct the question to the individual

Direct the question to that person "Mary, you have a lot of experience... What would you do?"

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## The "B's" of Facilitator Behavior

- Be Alert
- Be Consensual
  - Be Firm
  - Be Flexible
- Be Informed
- Be Optimistic
- Be Understanding
- Be Unobtrusive

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## Facilitating Should Be an Ego less Activity

The purpose is to make the group succeed, not to make you look really important and clever.

An effective facilitator will leave a group convinced that "We did it ourselves!"

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## **5 Principles for Today's Facilitators**

- 1. Practice "Field Awareness"**
- 2. Be a Mirror, Not a Magnet**
- 3. Create Safety**
- 4. Practice Non-Attachment**
- 5. Focus on the Outcome**

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## **EXERCISE**

Complete the  
Argumentativeness Scale  
Instrument Page 10a

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# Ground Rules

Ground Rules are what the group agrees to abide by. These rules will govern how the meeting will be run, how members interact, and what kind of behavior is acceptable.

## Developing Ground Rules:

- Team members brainstorm a list of problems that have arisen during previous staff meetings.
- They discuss the problems and for those they feel are important a rule is developed to prevent or reduce each of the problems.
- The ground rules are then, listed, numbered and written on a flip chart sheet and posted at each meeting.
- Team members can sign the bottom of the ground rules sheet to show their support for the rules.

## Common Ground Rules Are:

- Enter into discussions enthusiastically.
- Give freely of your experience.
- Confine your discussion to the current topic.
- Say what you think.
- Only one person speaks at a time.
- Avoid side conversations while someone else is talking.
- Appreciate the other person's point of view.
- Ensure the success of the outcomes.
- Be on time.
- Respect each other.

# Force Field Analysis

## What it is:

Force field analysis is a technique that helps you identify and visualize the relationships of the significant forces that influence a problem or goal. You can use it to:

- Identify key factors (forces) that promote or hinder the solution of a problem or the achievement of a goal.
- Identify improvement opportunities.

## How to do it:

**Define the objective.** Clearly identify the problem or goal to be analyzed.

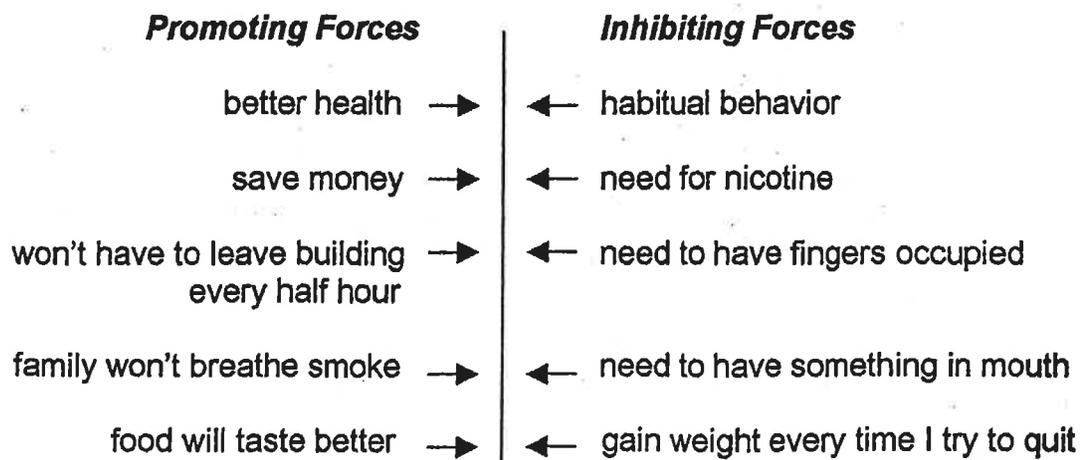
**List the forces.** List the key factors that promote or hinder the achievement of your goal or the resolution of your problem. Groups should use an idea-generation technique from the previous section to do this. Use two lists: one for promoting forces and one for hindering forces.

**Prioritize.** Prioritize the forces in each list according to their relative impact on the problem or goal. You can use nominal group technique or some other decision-making tool.

**Implement.** Minimize or weaken the hindering forces and maximize or strengthen the promoting ones.

## Force Field Analysis Example

**Goal: Quit Smoking**



## ARGUMENTATIVENESS SCALE

**DIRECTIONS:** This questionnaire contains statements about arguing controversial issues. Indicate how often each statement is true for you personally by placing the appropriate number in the blank. Use the following ratings to respond to each statement:

- 1 = almost never true
- 2 = rarely true
- 3 = occasionally true
- 4 = often true
- 5 = almost always true

1. \_\_\_\_\_ While in an argument I worry that the person I am arguing with will form a negative impression of me.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Arguing over controversial issues improves my intelligence.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ I enjoy avoiding arguments.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ I am energetic and enthusiastic when I argue.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Once I finish an argument, I promise myself that I will not get into another.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Arguing with a person creates more problems for me than it solves.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ I have a pleasant, good feeling when I win a point in an argument.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ When I finish arguing with someone, I feel nervous and upset.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ I enjoy a good argument over a controversial issue.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ I get an unpleasant feeling when I realize I am about to get into an argument.
11. \_\_\_\_\_ I enjoy defending my point of view on an issue.
12. \_\_\_\_\_ I am happy when I keep an argument from happening.
13. \_\_\_\_\_ I do not like to miss the opportunity to argue a controversial issue.
14. \_\_\_\_\_ I prefer being with people who rarely disagree with me.
15. \_\_\_\_\_ I consider an argument an exciting intellectual exchange.
16. \_\_\_\_\_ I find myself unable to think of effective points during an argument.
17. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel refreshed after an argument on a controversial issue.
18. \_\_\_\_\_ I have the ability to do well in an argument.
19. \_\_\_\_\_ I try to avoid getting into arguments.
20. \_\_\_\_\_ I feel excitement when I expect that a conversation I am in is leading to an argument.

### Scoring Instructions:

1. Add your scores on items: 2 4 7 9 11 13 15 17 18 20
2. Add 60 to the sum obtained in step 1.
3. Add your scores on items: 1,3,5,6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 19.
4. To compute your argumentativeness score, subtract the total obtained in step 3 from the total obtained in step 2.

### Interpretation

- 73-100 = High in Argumentativeness
- 56-72 = Moderate in Argumentativeness
- 20-55 = Low in Argumentativeness