

EFFECTIVE FACILITATION TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

Program/Learning Experience Tools and Strategies are for making the **learning experience in a program/course as powerful and effective as possible**, even to the point of a transformation. Using the words learning experience rather than program or course communicates something worthwhile to participants and focuses program development on producing learning.

Having an optimal, transformative learning experience **assists with the necessary, crucial new learning application and support** by creating transfer and lasting learning right there in the classroom. If participants experience a transformation/ transformative learning experience such as "a-has", insights or paradigm shifts, they can't help but see and experience their job, performance and/or workplace in a new way. "It won't ever be the same again". Andersen Consulting's educational vision/mission is Not Mere Change, But Transformation.

1. Take care of **basic adult learning needs** and provide a **supportive learning environment**. For example:

Avoid an "information dump"

Open up with a challenging, thought provoking problem, question, mystery, unresolved incident or situation Similar to the beginning of an excellent newspaper story or magazine article, it makes a good first impression, grabs attention, creates interest and makes you want to know more.

Be prepared with several lessons plans in case plan A doesn't work.

Acknowledge and be responsive to participant needs, issues and questions as they arise.

Be sensitive to the energy, mood, level of participation and take appropriate action to maintain them.

2. Think **Needs Assessment and Fulfillment** and "**WIFM, What's In It for me**". Consider yourself a consultant and treat participants as customers. Serve the client, find out and relate/connect learning to:

Expectations, needs, priorities, interests

Vision, mission, goals.

Critical, pressing concerns, issues, challenges or questions.

Business trends, latest developments in the field, news, current events

Basic skills/competencies like decision making, problem solving, goal setting,

EFFECTIVE FACILITATION TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

communication and teamwork

Life/career, adult development stages or tasks

Corporate culture and realities

Social, cultural forces, factors

3. Have **definite goals, objectives, results/outcomes or reasons** for what happens in the actual program/course. Clearly know what the learning experience is for and why. Be able to answer the so what, what difference does it make question.

Establish a **program/course action plan** with goals, actions steps, closure, next steps; have a beginning, middle and end to the learning experience. Set up professional and personal development plans or "learning contracts" with participants.

4. Use **gap/need analysis** to bring out vision, "true" need and motivation to learn and change. Identify Optimal--vision/mission or where you want to be; the Actual--where you are and the gap in between which is the need or performance gap.

5. Facilitate **two main ways of learning and changing:**

Behavioral (overt) such as using measurable, observable skill behavior checklists or performance standards and performance/gap analysis

Cognitive (covert behavior)---insight, aha, "eureka", paradigm shift, such as questioning, problem solving.

6. Cover the different **learning styles or preferences**---seeing, hearing, doing, etc. For example:

Performance or informational aids such as checklists, tables, reference, manuals, flow charts.

Visual aids such as video tapes, charts, overheads, cartoons, drawings

7. Have a **rich variety of learning experiences, using multiple methods or approaches**. For example:

EFFECTIVE FACILITATION TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

Personal presentation---body movement, body language, voice, pauses, eye contact

Learning materials---videos, books, tapes, overheads

Instructional methods---discussing, showing a video, doing a simulation, reviewing a case study.

8. Have **experiential, hands on, learn by doing** activities. Involve participants; immerse them in the learning experience. For example:

"Active learning situations"

Simulations, role playing, games, team projects, group research projects, simulations, modeling, demonstrating, rehearsals, field trips

"Active investigation methods"

Case studies, problem solving, experiments, discussion of critical incidents, question answering.

Observation and recording information, evaluations or insights while watching or observing.

"Physical methods of instruction"

Construction of models, displays, artwork.

9. Utilize **teamwork and group learning**; draw out/draw upon the knowledge, experience, wisdom of the class; have participants bring in information and resources; teach parts of the class; encourage everyone to participate. Present the image that participants are a team like the Bulls or the Blackhawks only the jerseys they are wearing have the name of the program/course on it.

10. **Questioning**. Raise challenging, thought provoking questions. Facilitate questioning and critical thinking of underlying assumptions, beliefs, paradigms. Before answering a question or solving a problem, give the class a chance to address it first.

Different types of questions or questioning include:

Provocative questions like how many have ever...; who/what do you think it is...; when was the last time...;

EFFECTIVE FACILITATION TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

Probe questions such as how did you arrive at that conclusion; what are other possibilities; explain a bit further.

Socratic method---questioning and asking why.

Questions and tasks based on Bloom's taxonomy of learning

Knowledge and comprehension

Define, identify, recall, recognize, describe, compare, illustrate, interpret, explain, rephrase, reorder, contrast, differentiate.

Analysis

Analyze, conclude, infer, distinguish, deduce; detect why and give motives, causes, reasons

Application

Apply, solve (problem), classify, choose, select, use, employ

Synthesis

Predict, draw, construct, produce, originate, propose, plan, design, combine, develop, create and solve (more than 1 answer)

Evaluation

Judge, argue, decide, appraise, evaluate.

- 11. Use **examples, illustrations, anecdotes, stories, metaphors, analogies**, especially those from the facilitator's own experience. Set an example, be a role model. What the facilitator expects from participants, s/he has "done it", "been there".

- 12. Bring in **contrasts, opposites**, other perspectives or points of view, what's right and what's wrong, what to do and not to do.

Reframing experiences or perceptions; changing the paradigm, looking at the same situation from multiple perspectives, contrasting points of view.

Play the "devil's advocate"; take the other side or opposite point of view. The class does it as well.

EFFECTIVE FACILITATION TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

13. Work out with participants about how to **gain support, apply new learning and make it a permanent** part of job performance/workplace. See NEW LEARNING APPLICATIONS.

14. Other _____

