

Facilitators' Guide

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What is Facilitation?

It is a tool to help people be active, contributing members of a group, network, board, or committee! Your job is to set them up for success!

Do with, not for.
Presume
competence.



Facilitator Tasks

It all depends on the support the person needs! ASK! Your tasks might include some or all of these:

- Help the person understand information and materials.
- Breakdown important issues without taking sides.
- Help the person find the information needed to make informed decisions and to vote on issues.
- Help with problem-solving.
- Help the person get their thoughts together to speak up or ask questions
- Take care of other tasks like making travel arrangements, schedule other meetings, write a report and keep a calendar to stay on track.



Attendant/Personal Care Services

Assistance with day-to-day activities.
Hygiene, eating, mobility,
NOT the same as facilitation

When the person becomes a board member

You may have to educate yourself:

- How does this board or committee function? Robert's Rules?
- What is the purpose of this body?
- How do they accommodate self-advocates?

You may assist the person to:

- Understand the purpose of the board or committee and how it functions
- Understand their role on the board or committee
- Attend board trainings and assist them to understand and apply the information

Before the Meeting

- Go over the agenda, handouts, packets, and presentations.
- Review materials with the person; help them understand and formulate questions.
- Assist them to write down questions, comments
- Help them prepare to engage meaningfully in the meeting
- As you provide explanation, avoid sharing your opinions or biases



During the Meeting

- Be like the off-stage hand, not the actor or director.
- If needed, remind the person to ask the questions and comments they want to make.
- Explain information in a better way if needed.
- Stay neutral and respectful.

After the Meeting

- Go over any notes from the meeting with the person.
- Help them make a plan to follow up on anything from the meeting.
- Schedule your next meeting

DOs and DON'Ts

DO help the person find their power!

- Support problem solving skills
- Support self advocacy skills
- Support engaged participation
- Always be respectful
- Honor confidentiality
- LISTEN to the person on how they want to be supported
- Meet the person where they are and don't push them to where you think they should be
- Be anti-ableist

- DON'T take away their power by...
- NOT listening or acting on what they tell you....or act in a way that isn't respectful
- NOT thinking the person is not ABLE enough to participate in a meeting
- Deciding "I know best" and speak for the person or for yourself!
- Deciding "I have the power" and disregard the person's role in a meeting
- Say one thing but do something different
- NOT maintaining confidentiality
- Using ableist language or having ableist attitudes

Resources

Fantastic Facilitation – Autistic Self-Advocacy Network

<https://autisticadvocacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/FantasticFacilitation.pdf>

Owning Your Organization - Autistic Self-Advocacy Network

<https://autisticadvocacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/PADSA-owning-your-organization.pdf>

Facilitation: Purpose – Planning – Practice – Board Resource Center

A guide to provide background and planning tools that lead to more effective participation. (2011)

http://brcenter.org/lib/lib_pdf/CN_FacilitationGuide.pdf

More Resources

Plain Language Action & Information Network

Promotes plain language for all government communications.

<http://www.plainlanguage.gov>

Inclusive and Accessible Boardsmanship

[*https://www.dds.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/CC_Boardsmanship_Eng.pdf](https://www.dds.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/CC_Boardsmanship_Eng.pdf)

Get on Board and Make a Difference: Effective Practices for Including People with Developmental Disabilities and New Members on Boards and Committees. Green Mountain Self-Advocates and the Arc of Vermont

<https://gmsavt.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Get-On-Board-And-Make-A-Difference-Effective-Practices.pdf>

THANK YOU!

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