

Group Facilitation Strategies for Career Programs

Course Outline

Course Developer(s)

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Course Format

Two weeks, 10 hours per week

Course Prerequisites

Current and/or past experience as a career and employment practitioner and/or in a related field.

Course Description

This course will introduce strategies for effective face-to-face group facilitation. Topics include: stages of group development, differences between facilitating small and large groups, and strategies for effectively managing challenging situations.

Note: To simulate face-to-face facilitation, students will use either a live or asynchronous digital technology to facilitate a group. In addition, they will participate in two groups facilitated by their peers. Group facilitation and participation is a mandatory component of this course; your assignments will require a reflection on your experiences.

Course Objectives

General:

Participants will develop/enhance their knowledge about group process and improve their face-to-face facilitation skills.

Learning Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify the stages of group development
- Create a “safe” group environment
- Discuss and demonstrate techniques for encouraging information sharing (e.g., brainstorming)
- Offer effective feedback
- Effectively divide groups into pairs and small breakout groups
- Demonstrate effective techniques for engaging disruptive/challenging participants
- Recognize external/internal influences that may result in inappropriate behaviours

Required Texts / Supplies

Prendiville, P. (2008). *Developing facilitation skills: A handbook for group facilitators*. Dublin, Ireland: Combat Poverty Agency. Available at http://www.cpa.ie/publications/DevelopingFacilitationSkills_2008.pdf



Additional Readings

Throughout the course, relevant readings will be posted on our website. Plan to spend a minimum of 2-3 hours per week on the readings.

Course Completion Requirements

Students must achieve an overall grade of at least 80% to successfully complete a course. If absent or offline for more than 48 consecutive hours, students are required to contact the instructor.

Participation	25%
Group Preparation and Topical Backgrounder	20%
Group Facilitation and Reflection	25%
Group Participation and Reflection	30%

Online Instruction Overview

This online course will be conducted using the “Moodle” course management system. Registered students will receive log-in instructions by email the Monday prior to the course start date. This system relies on asynchronous discussion forums (i.e., students post when it’s convenient for them, not during a scheduled time slot). However, from time to time, we may schedule live “chats” using online message/conferencing applications (e.g., Skype, GoToMeeting).

Facilitated e-learning offers amazing opportunities for shared learning. Many experts in the field believe that the best learning occurs in the discussion forums and that the posted course content may take on a secondary importance. Although this course will provide comprehensive content, students’ active participation in the discussion forums (i.e., checking in and briefly posting once or twice per day to each open discussion) enriches learning and is required for successful course completion.

Operational Requirements

As this course is offered entirely online, students must have reliable Internet access and be comfortable using Internet technology and participating in discussion forums.

Although there are no scheduled classes, students will be expected to spend a similar amount of time on this course as they would in a classroom-based environment of 20 hours.

Documents will be posted in Word, PowerPoint, and PDF — students must be able to download these documents and also upload similar documents.

Accommodation

If you have a disability that needs accommodation for this course, please let us know and we will work with you to more effectively meet your needs.