

Group Facilitation Strategies for Career Programs

Course Outline

Course Developer(s)

Dr. Roberta Borgen (Neault), CCC, CCDP, GCDF-i
Dr. Deirdre Pickerell, CPHR, GCDF-i

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. The course is aligned to the [Canadian Standards & Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners](#).

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

https://ualr.edu/publicaffairs/files/2017/08/DevelopingFacilitationSkills_2008.pdf



Additional Readings

Throughout the course, relevant readings will be posted on our website.

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	20%
Group Facilitation and Reflection	25%
Group Participation and Reflection	30%

Online Instruction Overview

This online course will be hosted on Life Strategies' [LearnOnline](#) e-learning platform which uses a Moodle-based learning management system. The system organizes a variety of learning activities (e.g., assigned readings, resources, videos, discussions, assignments) into several topical modules which students will progress through on a set schedule as described in the *Course Syllabus*. A course instructor will facilitate the discussions and review the assignments providing feedback and insights throughout the course. Although discussions are asynchronous (i.e., students are required to make a minimum of two posts, at their convenience, over at least 2 days that the topic is active), from time to time, the instructor may schedule live "sessions" or "office hours" using a web conferencing application (e.g., Zoom). Any "live" components will be communicated to students via the News forum; however, we recognize our students come from different time zones and are balancing many other work/life commitments that can impede attending in real time. As such, live elements will be recorded and/or optional.

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 discussions enriches learning and is required for successful course completion. Students are encouraged not to delay jumping into the discussions. Although discussions are related to the assigned readings, resources, and/or videos, it is not necessary to wait until all of the readings/videos have been reviewed before jumping into the discussion forums – in fact, posting early and often contributes to richer discussions. Being inactive within the discussions for several days will impact a student's overall grade and may result in being unenrolled from the course.

Registered students will be enrolled and receive log-in instructions by email (noreply@learnonline.lifestrategies.ca) 1 week prior to the course start date. This provides a few days for students to orient themselves within the e-learning environment, review course expectations, and troubleshoot any technical concerns. If you require additional support or a course extension, please contact our team (studentadvisor@lifestrategies.ca) and we'll do our best to accommodate your needs.

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.



Within each course, topics open and close on specific days facilitating learning as a cohort. Although there is flexibility in times of day to post, students will be expected to adhere to the course schedule and spend a similar amount of time on this course as they would in a classroom-based environment of 20 hours to achieve course mastery (i.e., 80%).

Documents will be posted in Word, PowerPoint, and PDF — students must be able to download these documents and also upload similar documents. Web conferencing software (e.g., Zoom) may also be utilized.

Accommodation

Students who have a disability that needs accommodation should let us know prior to the course start so that we can work collaboratively to more effectively meet learning needs.