
Skills for collaboration

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Facilitation Essentials: Engaging People in Groups

An introduction to the craft of facilitation



make**stuff**happen



" Good design begins with honesty, asks tough questions, comes from collaboration and from trusting your intuition. "
~ Freeman Thomas

The Program

This one day workshop offers an introduction to facilitation in face-to-face group events (team meetings, stakeholder consultations, project workshops). It is for leaders (project managers, team leaders, chairpeople) who want to develop their skills in engaging and motivating people's involvement in projects and events.

Participants will learn how to design a session that engages participants, gets their 'buy-in' to a shared purpose and creates alignment between diverse stakeholders. The course will develop your skills to:

- Design for purpose
- Generate spirited interaction and robust conversation
- Build dialogue between participants – finding common ground
- Deal with the 'unknown'
- Manage negativity and cynicism

The program content will be built around interests and needs of participants, with pre course online survey to identify specific facilitation challenges that will be addressed in the workshop.

Matching your needs

The sessions are customised to meet specific interests and challenges of participants. The course encourage participants to design and then practice a facilitation session that is relevant to their specific circumstances.

Participants are invited to do a short online survey before the course, to provide the trainer with a fair understanding of their current facilitation skills and challenges.

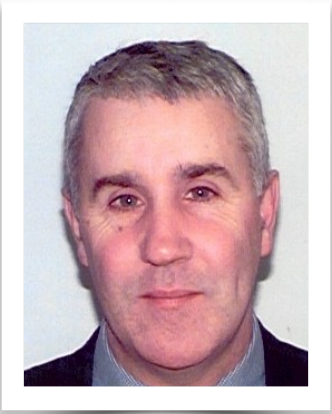
You will get

An eighty page workbook is provided as part of the training.

The Workshop can be provided on site. An ideal number of participants for the workshop would be between 8 and 18.

About the trainer - Ian Colley

MA (Qual), BA, GCCM, Dip Mgmt, Cert IV Training and Assessment, Certified Professional Facilitator (International Association of Facilitators)



I lead change and learning projects and my core skill is facilitation. I often deal with 'tricky' issues – building common ground between diverse interests, solving difficult problems, creating clarity about uncertain futures. Much of the work culminates in events, meetings and workshops that I lead as facilitator.

This takes careful and creative planning. So the heart of my work is design. I take time to craft questions that will provoke significant insights and build trust. People change for reasons of heart rather than logic. Variety is important - high energy and light-hearted interaction, then quiet reflection and deeper dialogue.

In recent years, I have been invited to chair a number of stakeholder liaison committees – for Barangaroo Development Authority, Sydney Water, NSW Ports, Orica at Botany, Taralga Wind Farm. I have learned a lot from chairing about the challenge of getting the right balance between assertion and listening.

Some of the most valuable lessons have come from teaching – testing out new approaches with motivated professional at the University of Technology, Sydney (where I have taught since 2005) and my own courses with other agencies (NSW Department of Premiers and Cabinet, NSW Planning and Environment, Legal Aid, Sydney Water, SA Department of Primary Industries). Over almost 30 years as a full-time professional Facilitator, I have developed a broad and deep repertoire of approaches and tools for generating high engagement and getting practical results. I am keen to share this experience with others who have an interest in collaborative approaches to shaping our futures.

What participants said

“Practical, experiential, active, purposeful, professional, well balanced” Carli Leimbach

“Simple, short and straight!!!” Catherine Colbran, TAFE NSW

“High level of participation and interaction” Jennene Griffiths, FACS NSW

“Excellent, well done” Raquel Carvajal, FACS NSW

“Structured, yet practical, a fun way to learn” Angela The, Cochlear

Topics and skills

All the topics are addressed through highly experiential processes, giving continuous opportunity for participants to practice the relevant skills.

The basics of facilitation

- What is facilitation?
- The power of the group
- Distinguishing Between Content & Process

Design – planning and preparation

- The 3 P's of Planning
- Creating a powerful Purpose
- Designing a Process that will deliver the Purpose
- Creating 'grounded' questions
- Shaping high engagement activities
- A planning template

Doing it - on the day

- Building the right culture in the first hour (indeed, the first five minutes)
- Generating ideas, sorting multiple ideas, and prioritising choices
- Clarifying and tracking issues
- Generating interaction
- Observing and responding to the group
- Managing the time

Going deeper

- Group dynamics
- Assertiveness
- 'Disagreeing well' – using difference and disagreement as a trigger for creative dialogue
- Decision-Making
- Dealing with difficult people
- Creating group meaning - Synthesising and summarising
- Power and self-protection

Following up and following through

- Getting traction from your events

Please note that the topics may vary depending on the needs and interests of participants. More detail on possible agendas is available on request.