Facilitating Adult Learning Handbook
THE GUIDELINES TO EFFECTIVE FACILITATION

Learning Facilitators guide an individual or group to learn through interactive activities by using a range of processing skills and methods to achieve measurable learning outcomes. It is important that they become knowledgeable about Girl Scouts, including history, vision, mission and the Girl Scout Leadership Experience.

BEFORE
Needs Assessment: Find out who needs what in the workshop you are facilitating. This can be done with a show of hands to self-identify who needs help and what they need, or as a checklist or a pre-workshop survey.

Learning Objectives
- Need to be S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timely).
- Need to be reviewed and understood.
- Need to keep participants woven into the content of the workshop from beginning to end.

DURING
Facilitation Skills
- Follow the 30/70 rule (facilitator-focused 30% of the time and learner-focused 70% of the time)
- Use the Socratic Method: Develop open-ended questions, rather than give answers. Do this by decreasing the time information is being given and increasing the time learners are actively doing something.
- Draw on the life experience of the learners. Avoid making yourself the “star” by oversharing your own stories.
- Develop a comprehension for different learning styles and vary your facilitation methods.
- Have a “quick start” and a “big finish.”
- Use the art of reflection throughout the session
- Don’t over inform (remember 30/70 rule).
- Create a positive and warm atmosphere.
- Quality not quantity, less is more—strive for deep learning of a few principles rather than skimming the surface of the subject matter.
- Avoid Power Point Poisoning (excessive use of Power Point).
- Ask the learners to demonstrate meaningful application of the knowledge and skills they just acquired.
- Leave your ego at the door (don’t be the sage on the stage, be the guide on the side).

AFTER
Evaluate and use the art of reflective learning yourself to prepare for your next workshop! Learning involves addition of new knowledge and skills and replacement of old knowledge and skills. Be honest, authentic and passionate about the subject matter.
Facilitating Adult Learning Handbook

Contents

- **Guidelines to Effective Facilitation**: Basic guidelines for facilitators to follow before, during and after a session.

- **Six Principles of Adult Learning**: These basic principles remind us of characteristics of adult learners. Implications for practice are suggested.

- **Engage, Debrief, Summarize/Apply model**: This simple three-step process can serve as a model to design as well as deliver learning session to adults. Each step is described.

- **The Value of Reflection**: Reflection is sometimes dismissed, yet it is a critical part of learning.

- **The Art of Reflection**: Facilitators are provided tips on ways to make reflection happen.

- **Ways to Create an Empowering Learning Environment**: 20 tips on establish a learning climate.

- **Who are My Learners and How Will I Engage Them**: A review of basic learning preferences and implications for facilitation.

- **Questioning**
  - Types of questions—a review of 7 types of questions
  - Suggestions for each type of question
  - Default Pitfalls—common mistakes facilitators make
  - What ifs—suggestions for handling situations while questioning.

- **Facilitation Skills Checklist**: A checklist for facilitators to refer to frequently to assess everything from how they create a positive learning environment to platform skills.

- **10 Tips for Managing Difficult Participants**: Some practical tips for dealing with difficult participants.

- **10 Top Facilitation Mistakes & How to Avoid Them**: Practice these tips and enhance your effectiveness.

- **Time Management Tips for Facilitators**: Helpful suggestions for managing the time.

- **24 Ways to Choose a Group Leader**: Help to prevent overusing any one technique.

- **Audiovisual & Visual Aid Tips**: Don’t be caught short; these tips will help.
Six Principles of Adult Learning

Malcolm Knowles, known as the Father of Modern Adult Education, identified six key characteristics about adult learners that impact how we design and facilitate learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of Adult Learners</th>
<th>Implications for Facilitators</th>
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| Motivated to learn when they experience a need. | o Ask what learners’ needs and expectations are.  
  o Involve them in discovering the value and relevance for themselves—WIIFM (what’s in it for me?).  
  o Help them identify gaps in knowledge and skills (include assessments). |
| Come to workshops with a task-oriented problem-solving approach to learning. | o Include problem-solving activities (case studies or simulations).  
  o Build in time for application and practice.  
  o Structure the workshop around tasks concerning problems or real life application. |
| Bring life experiences into the workshop. | o Use participants as resources.  
  o Create a variety of opportunities for discussion and idea-sharing.  
  o Provide a mix of different forums that encourage cooperative learning (dyads, triads, etc.). |
| Motivated to learn by internal and external factors. | o Ask what motivates them  
  o Recognize the need for achievement and self-esteem. |
| Need to see themselves as self-directed learners. | o Include experiential activities.  
  o Invite and respond to questions. |
| Need to know why they are being asked or required to learn something. | o Ask them to state the WIIFM and the consequences of not knowing.  
  o Ask them to clarify what they will be able to do or do better as a result of the workshop. |
Engage, Debrief, Summarize/Apply

A design and delivery model to ensure completion of the learning cycle.

E= Engage
Engage people as soon as they walk in the door, through visual, auditory and even kinesthetic means. Then continually re-engage the participants as you cover the learning objectives. Example: an opening activity related to the purpose of the session or an attention-getting visual.

D=Debrief
Debriefing is the process we use to elicit from the learners their reaction to what they just engaged in, what it means and implications for application.
One of the most common ways to debrief is through questioning. Asking the right questions will guide the participants to the point of knowing what they learned and how they will use it.

S/A=Summarize or Apply
Never let participants walk out the door not knowing what they have learned and how they will apply it. Summarizing can be done a variety of learner-focused ways. For example, don’t tell them what they learned. Let it be their summary. Examples include small group summations, learning logs and graphic summaries.

Even within a short session, this three-step process may be repeated a number of times. Here are a couple of variations to consider:
1. Engage the participants in a couple of related learning activities, then debrief and summarize both of them.
2. Engage and debrief the participants in more than one learning and then summarize/apply both of them.
3. Engage, debrief, summarize each learning activity and then conclude by helping them determine how they are going to apply what they have learned.

By following this simple three-step model and having clear S.M.A.R.T. learning objectives to guide you, your facilitation will stay on track and result in meeting the learning objectives for the participants.
The Value of Reflection

For more than a century, educators, philosophers, trainers, facilitators and other practitioners have promoted debriefing (and the other prominent expressions for it, such as processing, reviewing and reflection) as an essential part of learning. John Dewey, Bacon (1983), Gass (1993), Nadler and Luckner (1992) and other professionals (Smith, Knapp, Greenway) have written considerable content on the value of internally processing experience. Yet even with this level of support and recognition, the practice of reflection is too often discounted or neglected.

In modern society, people are not taught to be reflective learners. Adults are bombarded with endless items on their “to do” lists. Children are programmed in 50-minute increments throughout their school day, followed by structured activities after school and homework in the evening. How often do people just sit, rest, refresh, reflect, think, draw or journal? In this century, we live with a considerable amount of background noise, schedules and other factors that consume nearly all of our waking time, leaving little time for what we perceive as the luxury of reflection.

The challenge for learning facilitators is to swim against the current. Take participants and group members who live in a world without time for reflection and help them learn how to learn using reflection. Help adults become disciplined in practicing reflection by setting aside time and not just checking it off a “to do” list.

When John Dewey wrote about experiential education in the last century, he put forth the idea that people do not learn solely from being included in the experience. He believed that there must be some time for reflection in order to truly learn from an experience. Recent information on brain mapping and brain-based learning gives us scientific proof that time for reflection and the use of a variety of reflective techniques facilitates learning.

In Eric Jensen’s book Teaching with the Brain in Mind, he shares research that shows this type of reflection is not just beneficial, but necessary. Jensen shares scientific work with regard to creating the most enriching learning environments: he cites work by William Greenough who in his research over the past twenty years has found that two critical ingredients are necessary for an enriched learning environment: challenge and feedback. Challenge and novelty are important according to Greenough, who emphasizes the value of problem solving, critical thinking, relevant projects and complex activities (Jensen, 1998). Maximizing learner feedback is the other integral piece of learning he emphasizes. This scientific evidence for the experiential methods of balancing action and reflection not only supports the whole philosophy of experiential education, but emphasizes the value of creating a variety of ways to help learners reflect on experiences for maximum outcomes.

-Adapted from A Teachable Moment, A Facilitator’s Guide to Activities for Processing, Debriefing, Reviewing, and Reflecting by M. Cummings, J. Cain & J. Stanchfield
The Art of Reflection–Facilitator Tips

Allowing group members to “pass” during processing discussions empowers participants to have control over their own learning and to practice reflective feedback at their own pace. Keep in mind that participants may be experiencing valuable reflection even if they don’t share it with the group. Some quieter participants may also be more willing to share reflective statements in a small group rather than in a large one. So vary the way processing is handled between small groups of 4-6 and the entire group.

It is critical to create a safe and positive learning environment in order for people to share their ideas, reactions and opinions. One way to establish this, in the beginning, is to have the group create a group agreement that establishes the group norms.

Sequence processing activities by beginning with simple conversational prompts. Then follow with more thought-provoking questions. Reflection takes practice by both the learner and the facilitator. The facilitator makes the practice of individual and public reflection more intentional by asking the “right” questions.

Allow for some superficial answers and comments during reflection activities. Remember that people may start with surface-level comments and observations. Persevere! Give people time to think. Groups will increase their level of sharing and reflection as they develop through participation.

Accept silence. Become comfortable with it. People need time if we want to dig below surface thinking.

Structured reflection doesn’t have to happen with every activity. It can be a very effective practice at different times, depending on the group and the situation. Look for the “ah ha” moments. Don’t hesitate stopping during a learning activity and ask “what’s happening?”

Mix up your methods. Varying the methods will keep all of the learners engaged and is supported by brain research.

Treat the debriefing of the learning as meaningful and fun, not just something you do after the engaging activity is over! Treat reflective activities as an initiative in itself, not just something that is done after the event.

Empower participants, and be careful not to force your own agenda on them. Go with the flow; be flexible. Let them take responsibility for their learning.

-Adapted from A Teachable Moment, A Facilitator’s Guide to Activities for Processing, Debriefing, Reviewing, and Reflecting by M. Cummings, J. Cain & J. Stanchfield
Ways to Create an Empowering Learning Environment

1. Introduce yourself to everyone as s/he enters the room.

2. Engage their “brains” the moment they walk in the door in visual, auditory and/or kinesthetic ways.

3. Create participant networking opportunities early.

4. Provide a warm-up activity that links to the purpose of the session.

5. Make sure everything appears, and is, in order.

6. Be an awesome host.

7. Learn and use your participants’ names.

8. Uncover their expectations.

9. Let them create the session ground rules and call these rules “group agreement.”

10. Assess their readiness.

11. Appear excited and enthusiastic yourself.

12. Make them feel important and do it sincerely.

13. Check visibility of all visuals.

14. Use color.

15. Use appropriate music.

16. Provide surprises.

17. Work the room. Do not stay in one spot.

18. SMILE.

19. Win the technology battle. Say “no” to cell phones and anything else that has an on/off button.

20. Give yourself a positive pep talk before starting the session.
Who are My Learners
And
How Will I Engage Them?

Most people have similar preferences for acquiring and processing new information, preferring to learn through one of the following three ways:

- Seeing: the visual learner
- Hearing: the auditory learner
- Touching/doing: the kinesthetic learner

Although we actually use all three methods, most learners have a preference. A skilled facilitator will engage all three types by using a variety of approaches.

Following are some clues, as well as some tips, for engaging each type of learner.

Visual Learners
Visual learners learn best by seeing new information. Visual learners prefer to read or see the information in a written format or in graphics or pictures that represent the information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning style clues</th>
<th>Learning style facilitation tips</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Need to see something to truly understand it.</td>
<td>• Use graphics to help reinforce concepts.</td>
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<td>• May have trouble following lectures or spoken directions.</td>
<td>• Color code sections to help organize content.</td>
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<td>• Often misinterpret words.</td>
<td>• Provide written directions.</td>
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<td>• Have strong sense of color.</td>
<td>• Use graphics whenever possible.</td>
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<td>• May have artistic abilities.</td>
<td>• Use metaphors that create a visual image.</td>
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<td>• May say “it looks good to me” or “I see what you are saying.”</td>
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**Auditory Learners**

Auditory learners learn best by listening to new information.

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<tr>
<th>Learning style clues</th>
<th>Learning style facilitation tips</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Prefer to get information by listening; need to hear it to understand it.</td>
<td>• Explain information orally rather than relying on learners to read and synthesize directions or charts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Sometimes have difficulty understanding written information and expressing themselves through writing.</td>
<td>• Process activities that will engage them in discussions where they may freely express their reactions and ideas.</td>
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<td>• Sometimes unable to read body language and facial expressions well.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• May have trouble following written directions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• May say “It sounds good to me” or I hear what you are saying.”</td>
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**Kinesthetic Learners**

Kinesthetic learners prefer hands-on experience to learn and acquire new skills or information.

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<tr>
<th>Learning style clues</th>
<th>Learning style facilitation tips</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Prefer hands-on learning.</td>
<td>• Engage in active learning, making models, movement activities.</td>
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<td>• Often don’t need to read directions to perform an experiential activity.</td>
<td>• Take frequent breaks</td>
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<td>• May have difficulty sitting still and focusing.</td>
<td>• Allow doodling or other “hand” activity that does not distract from the rest of the group.</td>
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<td>• Learn better when physical activity is involved.</td>
<td>• Use computer or models to reinforce learning through the sense of touch.</td>
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<td>• Incorporate activity to demonstrate ability.</td>
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## Facilitation Skills Checklist

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<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>How</th>
<th>Yes/No/ Improve</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Learning Environment</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Create and maintain an inclusive learning</td>
<td>Set up the room so it is appealing to visual, auditory</td>
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<tr>
<td>environment.</td>
<td>and kinesthetic learners; visuals, music playing and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>space around the clusters for movement.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Welcome attendees.</td>
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<td>Treat them like adults, not children.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Conduct some sort of “check-in” so that everyone’s voice is heard.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Provide time at the beginning or throughout the course for</td>
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<td></td>
<td>attendees to get to know one another.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Deal with difficult behaviors.</td>
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<td><strong>Observation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Studies show that communication is only</td>
<td>Be aware of and sensitive to all that is going on in</td>
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<td>7% verbal; it’s also 38% tone and 55%</td>
<td>the room. Watch carefully for the non-verbal signals</td>
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<td>body language.</td>
<td>as well as the verbal.</td>
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<td>When a “red flag” goes up, address it; don’t ignore</td>
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<td>situations because they may get away from you.</td>
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<td>Be ready to make changes based on your observations.</td>
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<td><strong>Feedback</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>One of the best ways to help people</td>
<td>Listen carefully to what is being said so you can</td>
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<td>develop is to provide feedback in a</td>
<td>make an appropriate growth-oriented comment.</td>
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<td>way that builds on their existing</td>
<td>Be specific. The more specific feedback is, the more</td>
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<td>strengths.</td>
<td>meaning and usability it has.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Try asking permission from the person to provide feedback. (i.e.,</td>
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<td>start with “May I give you some feedback?”)</td>
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<td><strong>Conflict Handling</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Groups go through anticipated stages of</td>
<td>Include get-acquainted activities that encourage the</td>
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<td>development from forming, norming,</td>
<td>group to “form.”</td>
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<td>storming and performing.</td>
<td>Don’t be shocked if there are strong differences of opinions which</td>
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<td>may lead to storming. Remind yourself that this is natural and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>that you actually want to encourage differences in order to</td>
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<td>surface multiple perspectives and challenge people’s</td>
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<td>thinking. Remind yourself that conflict is not</td>
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<td>necessarily bad.</td>
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<tr>
<td>What</td>
<td>How</td>
<td>Yes/No/Improve</td>
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<tr>
<td>Draw the participant’s attention back to your “group agreement.” Hopefully your group has included something about honoring or respecting different opinions. If the discussion turns negative, encourage the dialogue to be healthy by suggesting that participants use “from my experience” or some language that does not make assumptions. And lastly…. deal with it.</td>
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<td>Facilitating Experiential Learning Activities</td>
<td>With a movement activity, start by saying “in a moment I am going to ask you to move…..” Then tell them the directions and then say, &quot;now you may move to xyz. “ And make the directions clear. Give directions both verbally and visually. Remember not all learners like to process information audibly. Either put the directions on a PowerPoint slide, in a handout or on a flipchart as well as “say” them. Before they start the learning activity ask them if there are any questions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Setting up an activity and giving directions for an activity require practice. Not all learners hear or see the same thing. Confusion may occur, resulting in pandemonium, especially if it is a movement activity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Questioning</td>
<td>Know where you want to end up so you know the question to ask. Ask a variety of questions. If the goal is to generate a discussion, ask open-ended questions that have more than one possible response. Try using one- to two-word prompts to encourage more responses. Examples: And… What else? Why? So????</td>
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<tr>
<td>Active listening does not</td>
<td>Listen for understanding. If you do not understand, ask questions to clarify your understanding.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>What</strong></td>
<td><strong>How</strong></td>
<td><strong>Yes/No/Improve</strong></td>
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<td>just happen. It requires a conscious effort on the facilitator’s part.</td>
<td>Although you need to be aware of what is going on in the room, listen and focus on the person who is speaking. You can still sense what is happening. Try not to take up space in your brain by planning what you are going to say next. You may miss a wonderful opportunity to expand on what the individual is saying.</td>
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<td>Managing Time</td>
<td>When planning your session, allot ample time for processing. Start and end on time. Participants will appreciate you for this. If you ask them if you can go over by 15 minutes or so, they may say “yes,” but it will pop up on the session evaluations. If co-facilitating, be very sensitive to staying within time frames for each section so each person has the time agreed upon. If this needs to change, have a “time out” and discuss it with the co-facilitator. Manage the break times. Enlist the help of the group. Give a table cluster the responsibility to get everyone back from break on time. Rotate this if there are multiple breaks within the session. Give an uncommon number of minutes for the break. Example: “14 minutes from whatever it says on your watch.”</td>
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<td>Platform Skills for Facilitators</td>
<td>Remember that it takes only 4 seconds to create a first impression. Make it positive. Begin in a warm, enthusiastic, yet sincere manner. Be energetic, but don’t pace back and forth across or around the room like a race horse. If you have a tendency to move too much, try anchoring yourself as if you were an oak tree that has roots extending far into the ground. Speak clearly to be understood and be aware of your pace. If people say you speak too fast, slow down. Don’t be afraid to pause and let participants’ brains catch up.</td>
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<tr>
<td>What</td>
<td>How</td>
<td>Yes/No/Improve</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hands, hands, hands. Gestures need to be purposeful. Become conscious of repetitive gestures which may become distracting. Examples: tugging on one's ear, pushing hair out of one's eyes.</td>
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<td>Use note cards with your sample questions or as a cheat sheet.</td>
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Types of Questions

**Closed-ended questions**: One-or two-word answers; can powerfully set direction or make commitment, but frequently can be shallow with little value.

**Open-ended questions**: Extended discussion, exploration and sharing of thoughts.

**Factual questions**: Based on fact; usually have a definite right or wrong answer.

**Cognitive questions**—Demand more thinking, analyzing, comparing, contrasting, and exploring possibilities than factual questions; may have multiple correct answers.

**Value questions**: Based on personal preference, opinion or values; should be respected for contributor’s sincerity, ownership and sometimes risk-taking to share.

**Application questions**: Move from concept to action; real-life use of the content.

**Evaluation questions**: Assess activities or behavior with expressed or unexpressed purpose to make improvements.
Suggested Answers to Types of Questions

Note: For each type of question, several examples (or suggested answers) are given below.

Factual
- When did Juliette Low hold the first Girl Scout meeting?
- How do you set up a Girl Scout bank account in this council?
- What is required for membership in Girl Scouts?

Cognitive
- Why do girls need what Girl Scouting can offer?
- How is Girl Scouting the same from one grade level to another?
- What is the difference between training and facilitating?
- How do you envision a girl of courage, confidence and character?
- How can Girl Scouts improve their image?
- If there were no limits, what would be your dream for Girl Scouting?
- How would you summarize our discussion?
- What plans should we make to organize a successful event?

Value
- What does the Girl Scout Promise mean to you?
- Why are you volunteering in Girl Scouting?
- What value do you place on diversity?

Application
- How can you incorporate the Girl Scout Leadership Experience into your current program?
- How can you help girls live the Girl Scout Promise?
- What will you do to improve your facilitation of questioning and ensuring discussion?

Evaluation
- What could we have changed in this learning experience to better meet the needs of our participants?
- What outcomes have the girls demonstrated this year?
- What do you want to do differently next time?
Default Pitfalls

Default pitfalls are common mistakes facilitators make when asking questions. You can turn them into positive facilitation skills.

1. When you ask a question that might have multiple correct answers, resist the temptation to accept the first answer as the only correct answer.

2. When you ask a question that might have multiple correct answers, resist the temptation to “fish” for what you think is the correct or best answer.

3. When you ask a question, allow participants enough time to think before they answer. Resist the temptation to answer for them.

4. When you ask a question, feel comfortable asking follow-up or probing questions to help the participant more fully explain his/her thinking.

5. When you ask a question that requires a one- or two-word answer, be sure it is not a shallow question of little value.

6. When you ask a question, be sure it is not too simple or too difficult for your audience.
Possible Remedies for the "What Ifs"

1. One person dominates the discussion.
   - Set expectations at the beginning in the "ground rules/group agreement" that everyone participates.
   - Interrupt the person. Thank the person and indicate you are stopping h/her so everyone has an opportunity to share.
   - Switch to small groups, so more people are encouraged to talk.

2. Only one point of view is offered and you want multiple ideas.
   - Ask "What do others think?"
   - You say, "Some people think…" or "I have heard it said…." or “in my experience…."

3. You ask a question and no one responds.
   - Give people a few seconds to think. Do not expect them to respond immediately. Pause. Give them "think time."
   - Build "think time" in by saying "in a moment I am going to ask you……”
   - Ask, "Was my question understood, or clear?" If they indicate that it was not, try rephrasing it.
   - Avoid asking multiple questions, as it leaves people wondering which question to answer.

4. One person does not respond or participate in any of the discussion.
   - Remember, some people learn best by observing and doing their own reflection.
   - Try small groups.
   - Try a whip. Go around and ask for quick responses from everyone, with the option of passing built in.

5. Sidebars are occurring around the room when someone is responding to a question.
   - Stop. Ask the speaker to hold their response because they are not being heard. Wait for those talking to stop and then continue.
   - If the sidebar conversationalists do not get the hint, go over to them and stand next to them. They will catch on.
   - Remind everyone of the group agreement that we would have one person speak at a time
Possible Remedies for the "What Ifs," con’t

6. The responses have led to a disagreement.
   ▪ Freeze the moment. Help people step back and look at what is happening.
   ▪ If the conflict is between two people, you may want to take it out of the session.
   ▪ Remember that conflict can be very productive in terms of examining all sides of an issue. Don't back away from it and see all conflict as negative. Remind them of their group agreement.

7. Misinformation is presented.
   ▪ Ask, "Does everyone agree with that?"
   ▪ Don't let misinformation stand. Handle it tactfully. If you don't know the correct answer, say so, and try to find the correct information to provide later.

8. No one responds to your question.
   ▪ Ask yourself what is happening?
   ▪ Be flexible and creative. If they indicate they don't understand your question, rephrase it.
   ▪ Try breaking them in to smaller groups, if there is resistance in the larger group.

9. You are running out of time and you want to move on to another question, but the group is engaged in a lively discussion.
   ▪ If the discussion is tangential, politely ask them to hold this discussion for another forum.
   ▪ Give a 2-minute warning.
   ▪ Be flexible. If the discussion is of value, you may want to stay with it. Remember, this needs to be "learner-centered."

10. The discussion never takes off.
    ▪ Be flexible. Ask yourself, what's happening here?
    ▪ Ask the group to come up with questions that they would like to have discussed.
10 Top Facilitation Mistakes & How to Avoid Them

1. Not opening the session in a strong, memorable way.
   - Avoid waiting for people and start on time.
   - Open with energy.
   - Review the objectives so participants know what to expect and what not to expect.

2. Using inappropriate humor.
   - If you are not naturally funny, don’t try to be.
   - Be yourself; no one can do it better.
   - Don’t tell jokes; someone in your group may become offended.

3. Repeatedly calling on the same people during the session.
   - Direct some questions to table groups who haven’t participated very much.
   - Rotate group leaders.
   - During breaks, speak to someone who has not participated to determine if there is an issue.

4. Going off on a tangent or keeping the focus on oneself, instead of on the learner.
   - Stay on point and focused on the participants.
   - Ask other participants to answer “the” question before you do.
   - Provide one short answer and then invite participants to add or elaborate.

5. Distributing handouts well before you’re going to use them.
   - Provide materials when you want them to read/review them.
   - Try placing handouts upside down in the center of a cluster and ask them to leave them alone until we are ready for them.
   - Ask for a volunteer to distribute handouts/supporting material.

6. Facilitating/talking during distractions.
   - Deal with it. Do not ignore distractions and hope they will stop.
   - Stop talking. Remain calm. Don’t raise your voice.
   - For “sidebars” stand in close proximity to the “talkers.”

7. Facilitating only from the front of the room.
   - Purposefully move around the room periodically.
   - Try initiating the session from the back of the room or start up after a break at this location to regain their attention.
   - At some point every participant should feel as though s/he is at the front of the room.
8. Not tapping into different learning styles.
   - Try to engage all of the senses.
   - Try placing kinesthetic “toys” in the middle of the tables.
   - Vary the learning methods, including some that require quiet reflection, discussion, writing and creating.

9. Too much telling, not enough asking.
   - Develop your questioning skills and use a variety of open and closed questions.
   - Too much telling creates passive learners and only a small percentage of content is retained.
   - Develop a level of comfort in facilitating discussions.

10. Not ending on time.
    - To end on time, let participants know you will be available following the session for additional questions.
    - Allow ample time for questions.
    - Pay attention to your participants' non-verbals and energy levels.
Time Management Tips for Facilitators

**General**
Start and stop on time.
When participants arrive late, acknowledge them, let them know quickly where you are and that you will meet with them at the break to cover what s/he missed.

**Breaks**
Send them….
Choose an unusual number of minutes for the break. Example: 13 minutes. Delegate a table cluster with the responsibility for bringing everyone back on time. Offer special content during the break. If time is tight, have a working break. Preview what’s happening next. Use music. Either play music during the break and stop it when you are ready to start, or delegate someone as the pied piper to use a pleasant musical instrument to gather the group back.

Get them…
Start on time.
Create friendly competition to see which can be the first table cluster to return. Make them happy they returned by your energy and enthusiasm. Honor those who returned promptly.

**Session Delivery**
Processing Time.
Build this in to the session. Allow ample time to debrief an activity. If you have a co-facilitator, help each other keep track of time. Agree on a signal in advance. If you have no co-facilitator, ask one of the participants to give you a time signal at a designated time.

Pacing.
Be mindful of cues from your participants. Watch their body language. If the pace is too slow, they will lose interest and either mentally check out or engage in a side activity that may become a distraction.

Be ready to adjust the pace. Tip; Place green, yellow, and red plastic cups in the center of the cluster. Encourage each small group to place a green cup on the top when they have completed an activity. The yellow would designate more time, and the red might indicate they were experiencing difficulty and were at a standstill. Give each participant small squares of red, yellow and green paper. Each individual could indicate a need to stop, slow down or speed up the pace.
24 Ways to Choose a Group Leader

1. Most living legs in the house (i.e., people and pets).
2. Most letters in first, middle or last name.
3. Newest, oldest car.
5. Newest, oldest briefcase.
6. Most, least siblings.
7. Most, least plants in the house.
8. Most books read in the last week.
9. Most, least telephones, including cell phones, in the family.
10. Most recent visit to the dentist.
11. Most recent text message.
12. Most friends on Facebook.
13. Oldest, youngest family member.
14. Most movies seen in the last 3 months.
15. Most, least remote controls.
16. Longest, shortest tenure with the organization.
17. Most, least vacation days taken this year.
18. Most change in pocket.
19. Wearing the most jewelry.
20. Wearing the most colors.
21. Speaks the most languages.
22. Traveled to the most cities outside the USA.
23. Most, least pairs of shoes.
24. Longest, shortest hair.
Audiovisual & Visual Aid Tips

Remember the most important visual aid is you! You can have a spectacular PowerPoint presentation and still have the session fail.

Check and test your AV equipment before the session begins.

Always have a backup in case the equipment doesn’t work.

Prepare your flipcharts before the beginning of the session. Either write a title on the paper or pencil it in lightly so you can easily go over it.

Create and attach little masking tape tabs to your flipchart sheets to make them easy to find and to turn over during your session.

Consider hanging sheets of prepared flipcharts in the room and gently folding them up and securing the sheets gently with masking tape. When you are ready to reveal each sheet, simply release it by gently pulling away the masking tape.

Speak to the audience and not to the screen or the flipchart.

When writing on flipchart paper during a session, stand in a way that does not block the participants’ view of the paper while you are writing. Right-handed people stand to the left of the chart. Left-handed people stand to the right.

Keep text to a minimum on a slide and no small than 2-point.

Flipcharts are really not suitable for groups over 45 people.

Cue your music or video to the appropriate spot in advance.

Adjust the volume before pushing the “start” button.

Avoid light colors for text, including yellow, red, orange, light green, and light blue.