Skilled Group Leader: Tools for Advisory Council Members
What is a facilitator?

- A facilitator is a person responsible for structuring groups and group activities in a manner that supports and encourages the participation of all members and allows the group to attain its goals and objectives.

Note: In Advisory Councils this role is usually assumed by the leader.
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Characteristics of an Effective Facilitator/Group Leader:

- Creates a positive environment
- Solicits participation from all members
- Values contributions of each member
- Varies techniques for group decision-making
- Skilled in asking questions
Characteristics of an Effective Facilitator/Group Leader:

- Captures contributions of each member
- Skilled in writing on flip charts
- Uses body language effectively
- Manages structure – not content
- Helps groups work through conflict
Structure = "How" The Process Works

- "How" Includes:
  - Supplies
  - Agenda
  - Meeting Environment
  - Process
Content = "What" is shared

- Comes from participants
  - Agreed upon objectives
  - Problems identifies
  - Personal experiences
  - Data and ideas
Elements for "Setting the Stage"

- Room arrangements
- Meeting Room Environment
- Good Beginnings
Room Arrangements

- Determined by
  - Size of group
  - Size of meeting room
  - Purpose of meeting
- Should be intentionally planned and arranged
- Should be varied from meeting to meeting
Theater Style
Classroom Style
Chevron
U-Shaped
Hollow-Square/Solid Square
Half-Circle
Meeting Room Environment

- Windows
- Temperature
- Atmosphere
- Food and Beverages
Good Beginnings

- Name Tags
- Name Tents
- Introductions/Get Acquainted
Asking Non-Threatening Questions

- Announce questions to entire group
- Pause
- Write the question
- Acknowledge contributions
- Encourage Responses
Asking Non-Threatening Questions (cont.)

- During silence look for non-verbal cues indicating ideas
- Rephrase the question
- Avoid "yes" or "no" questions
- Avoid creating defensive responses
- Ask "single issues" questions
Paraphrasing:

- “It sounds like you’re saying…”
- “I hear you saying…,”
- “Let me see if I understand you…”
Explore Further

- “I understand so far, now tell me more.”

- “I hear you saying…, now can you tell me more?”

- “What do you mean by…?”

- “How so?” “You said…, because…?”
Mirroring:

- **Speaker:** "*I like giving two book awards.*"
- **Facilitator:** "*You like giving two book awards.*"
Stacking:

 VARIANT: “Bill you are first, Nancy second, Tom you’re third…”:
Encouraging

 “Who else has an idea?
 “Is there a student’s perspective on this topic?”
 “The women (men) have been quiet. Do you have any comments?”
 “What was said at table two?”
 “Let’s hear from someone who hasn’t spoken for awhile.”
Balancing

“Okay, now we know their position, does anyone have a different position?”

“Are there other positions?”

“What does someone else think?”

“Is there another way to look at this?”
Making Space

- “Would you like to speak to this?”
- “What are your ideas?”
- “Did you want to add anything?”
- “You looked like you wanted to say something.”
Intentional Silence

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Listen for Common Ground

- "We agree on these points... and disagree on these..."
Techniques For Setting Priorities

- 100 Votes
- Multivoting
- Nominal Group Technique
Brainstorming

- Open-ended question
- Do not make judgments about ideas
- List all ideas on a flip chart sheet
- Encourage hitchhiking
- Focus on quantity
- Stay loose
- The best comes last
100 Votes

- Brainstorm a list of options
- Review the list – clarify, merge ideas
- Participants cast 100 votes each
  - Vote for any number of items
  - Votes cast total 100 for each person
- Total votes for each item
- Review votes
- Identify top priority items
Multivoting

- Brainstorm a list of options
- Review the list – clarify, merge ideas
- Participants vote for ideas worthy of further discussion
- Identify items for next round of voting
- Vote again
- Repeat steps 4 and 5
- Discuss remaining ideas
- Proceed with appropriate action
Nominal Group Technique

- Silently brainstorm ideas
- Share ideas-round-robin fashion and record on flip chart
- Discuss and clarify all ideas
- Each person ranks their top ten ideas
- Average the rank for each item
Nominal Group Technique (cont.)

- Discuss ranked items
- From items ranked the first time, each participant ranks their top five items
- 2nd Rankings are averaged
- Final rankings are discussed.