

The Challenge of Facilitating Well

MANY PEOPLE WHO have only a cursory knowledge of facilitation incorrectly assess themselves as being capable process leaders simply because they attend a lot of meetings. This is complicated by the fact that, in many organizations, anyone who records ideas on a flip chart is said to be facilitating.

When a person is facilitating effectively, he or she is doing much, much more than simply recording ideas. Facilitation is actually a complex and challenging role that requires considerable study and practice to master. A number of factors contribute to this complexity.

First, there are numerous core practices to be learned and consistently applied. Then, there are scores of process tools that have to be understood so that they can be appropriately matched to specific situations. In addition, there are complicated group dynamics to be assessed and managed. And finally, facilitators need to consistently exhibit specific behaviors that are an integral part of the process role. While the *Facilitation Skills Inventory (FSI)* does not specifically address tools and group dynamics, it does cover practices and behaviors required to facilitate well. These will be described later in this Guide.

To remedy this problem of erroneous self-assessment and to provide organizations with a means for measuring actual competence, the *FSI* can be used to assess the specific skills that skillful facilitators demonstrate in their work.

