
FACILITATING TEAMS: FROM FORMING TO STORMING

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

About the Training Program

This training program is intended for people who facilitate short or long-term teams that work together on projects, planning and strategizing, process improvement, and so forth. Participants can be from within one organization or from several organizations. The program is based on the assumption that the facilitator's overall responsibility is to advance a team from *forming* to *storming* to *norming* and to *performing*.

Several strategies are discussed and experienced throughout the program. They focus on initial team building, discussion and dialogue, creative problem solving, conflict resolution, and building consensus.

Training Objectives

Participants will have the following opportunities:

- To examine the “team concept”;
- To understand the impact of team development stages on the facilitator's role;
- To experience and apply ways to help teams form successfully;
- To practice ways to stimulate discussion and dialogue;
- To practice ways to facilitate creative problem solving;
- To practice ways to manage controversy and conflict; and
- To consider effective strategies in building consensus.

PROGRAM OUTLINE

Activity	Time	Method	Forms Used
<i>I. Opening Activities</i>			
A. Getting Started	15 minutes	Icebreaker	
B. The Team Concept	30 minutes	Experiential Exercise	A and B
C. Stages of Team Development	20 minutes	Problem-Solving Activity	C
<i>II. "Forming" Teams</i>			
A. Helping Teams Form	10 minutes	Read and Discuss	D
B. Initial Team Building	15 minutes	Creative Exercise	E
C. Opening Up the Channels of Communication	10 minutes	Whip	F
D. Roles and Responsibilities	10 minutes	Checklist	G
E. Ground Rules	10 minutes	Brainstorming	
<i>III. Stimulating Discussion and Dialogue</i>			
A. Ten Ways to Facilitate Group Discussion	40 minutes	Skill Practice	H
B. Discussion Formats	10 minutes	Guided Teaching	I
<i>IV. Facilitating Creative Problem Solving</i>			
A. The Positives of Brainstorming	5 minutes	Lecturette	
B. Brainstorming Options	30 minutes	Guided Teaching	
C. Part Changing	20 minutes	Creative exercise	
<i>V. Managing Controversy and Conflict</i>			
A. Conflict Is Normal, Natural, and Necessary	10 minutes	Lecturette	
B. The Keys to Conflict Regulation	30 minutes	Experiential Exercise	
C. Breaking a Stalemate	15 minutes	Read and Discuss	J

Activity	Time	Method	Forms Used
VI. Building Consensus			
A. Watching Decision Making in Action	15 minutes	Observation	
B. The Value of Consensus	20 minutes	Read and Discuss	K
VII. Closing Activities			
A. Dress Rehearsal	40 minutes	Skill Practice	
B. I Hereby Resolve	5 minutes	Writing Task	

PROGRAM DIRECTIONS

■ I. Opening Activities

■ A. Getting Started (Icebreaker)

1. Form trios. Ask each trio to discuss the following question: *What kinds of teams do you facilitate?* (working on projects? planning and strategizing? process improvement? etc.) Give trios three minutes.
2. After three minutes, ask each trio to assign the numbers 0, 1, or 2 to members. Ask the 1's to move to the next trio clockwise in the room and the 2's to move to the second trio clockwise. Tell the 0's to remain where they are. Ask the trios just created to check to make sure they have all new members.
3. Ask the new trios to discuss the following question: *What are your goals for this workshop?* Again provide three minutes.
4. After three minutes, form new trios as before and ask them to discuss this question: *What do you think makes a team truly effective?*
5. Reconvene the entire group and briefly poll participants about the three questions.

■ B. The Team Concept (Experiential Activity; Materials: A Set of Broken Squares Pieces for Each Group [see Form A] and Form B)

1. State that a group becomes a team when its members think *we* rather than *me*. Individual egos are removed in favor of interdependent activity, cooperation, and mutual problem solving. In essence, individual members contribute to the team's success rather than advancing their own. A high-performing team develops common goals and has the skills and the desire to achieve them.

2. To illustrate the team concept, facilitate the classic exercise “Broken Squares.” The directions for creating materials for the exercise are found on Form A. Assign participants into one or more groups of five members and make sure they have an uncluttered work surface (even a floor space will do).
3. Distribute a set of five envelopes per team with parts of the broken squares inside them. [If you have any teams with more than or fewer than five members, you will need to make some modifications. See Step 4.]
4. Ask each group member to take one envelope so that one person each has the A, B, C, D, and E envelopes. If there are fewer than five participants in a group, ask some of the members to take two envelopes. For example, if there are four members, one member might take Envelopes A and B. If there are more than five participants in a group, ask two people to share a single envelope OR invite additional members beyond five to not participate in the exercise and act as observers instead.
5. Invite participants to open up their envelope(s) and remove the pieces inside. Inform them that they will discover from two to four pieces.
6. Announce the goal of the exercise and the “rules of the game”:
 - Your job is to create your own 6-inch square. [If you have two envelopes, your job is to create two 6-inch squares. If you are sharing an envelope, create one square together.]
 - The exercise is not over until everyone creates his or her own 6-inch square. Thus, at the end, there will be five squares.
 - No one may speak during the exercise.
 - No one can ask (by gesture) for a piece from anyone else or take a piece from anyone else.
 - You can give away your own pieces at any time during the exercise. If you decide to do so, simply give the piece to another member without showing him or her what to do with it.
 - No one can overlap pieces or cut/tear them apart.
 - Do not attempt to create one giant square from all the pieces. That is not the object of the exercise.
7. Start the exercise and observe that participants are obeying the rules. [Recruit any non-participating observers to help you in this process.] Continue until all the groups are finished. If one or more groups cannot complete the task within ten minutes, allow its members to communicate and assist each other to complete the task.
8. Reconvene the entire group. Ask participants what they experienced in the exercise. Some of them will report the following:
 - I didn’t believe the task was solvable.

- I focused on making my own square. I didn't look around to see what others needed.
 - I made a square but realized it had to be dismantled to let others succeed.
 - I grew impatient when someone didn't know what to do with his or her pieces.
 - I was frustrated by the rule that we couldn't talk to each other.
 - I kept waiting for someone to notice that I didn't have enough (or any) pieces to create my own square.
9. Distribute Form B and ask participants to review its contents. Invite each table group that participated in Broken Squares to discuss examples from their own experience in which groups were either "individually oriented" and "team-oriented."
 10. Obtain a few examples from the entire group.

■ *C. Stages of Team Development (Problem-Solving Activity; Materials: Form C)*

1. State to participants that teams, like babies, "need to crawl before they can walk." All groups need time, patience, acceptance of ups and downs, and guidance to develop into high-performing teams.
2. Distribute Form C (Is It Forming, Storming, Norming, and Performing?) Ask participants to complete Form C individually as best they can. Ask them to base their answers on their current familiarity with the concepts of forming, storming, norming, and performing.
3. Reconvene the table groups from the Broken Squares activity. [These table groups will remain together for the duration of the workshop.] Provide each group with a clean copy of Form C. Ask them to complete the form as a group by selecting the four events most likely to occur at each stage of team development.
4. Review the answers [Forming: 1, 5, 8, 13; Storming: 9, 10, 12, 14; Norming: 4, 7, 11, 15; Performing: 2, 3, 6, 16]. Make sure to provide these key points:
 - The forming period is awkward. Most members take few risks and are "on their best behavior". They are dependent on the leader for direction.
 - The storming period can be tense. However, two positive events occur (goals start to be clarified and participation increases).
 - The norming period is a time when useful agreements get made that allow the team to move forward as one group instead of opposing factions. The leader does not have to be directive.
 - The performing period is when teams are really productive, in part because leadership is shared and the team trusts subgroups to work through tasks that don't require everyone's input.

5. Conclude by stating that a facilitator's job is to help a team form well, experience conflict as positively as possible, reach agreements about its goals and process, and then get out of the team's way so that it can become a "high-performing" group. Explain that knowledge of and skill with facilitation techniques suited to each stage of development are critical to a facilitator's success.

■ II. "Forming" Teams

■ A. Helping Teams Form (*Read and Discuss; Materials: Form D*)

1. Mention that new teams can get off to a good start if a facilitator engages the team in certain "forming" experiences that begin building trust, understanding of the team concept, widespread participation, and initial goal setting. If a team has been in existence for some time and hasn't had a good foundation, some of these experiences can be used to remediate the lack of solid forming. Distribute Form D.
2. Convene table groups to clarify and discuss the contents of Form D. Invite questions from the entire group when the table groups are finished.

■ B. Initial Team Building (*Creative Exercise; Materials: Form E*)

1. Choose one of the initial team-building activities listed on Form E. Convene table groups and facilitate the activity.
2. Debrief the activity by asking: *How does this activity help a team to start the forming process?*
3. If not mentioned, make these key points:
 - Team building occurs when members experience something together that is unique and creative.
 - A good team-building activity may serve as a model of how a group of people can work collaboratively and experience success together.
4. Distribute Form E and allow participants time to explore other initial team-building activities besides the one they just experienced.

■ C. Opening Up the Channels of Communication (*Whip; Materials: Form F*)

1. Remind participants that communication is tentative during the forming stage of teams. It helps to open up the channels of communication in new teams or teams that have been bogged down. One way to accomplish this is the use of "go-arounds"

(also called “whips”). Go-arounds are a way to capture briefly the thoughts and feelings that participants are bringing to a team meeting. This process helps to open communication channels and bring hidden agendas to the surface. Go-arounds are also a participation equalizer that may set the tone for inclusion of every person attending the meeting.

2. Distribute Form F. Ask table groups to read and discuss the different ways to use “go-arounds.”
3. Compose a sentence stem that each table group could use to experience a go-around. A simple one would be “One thing I am looking forward to in this workshop is. . .” Another possibility is “I think that our group. . .”
4. Invite each table group to do one or more “go-arounds” and then inquire whether it was a helpful process to allow people to express themselves more openly.
5. Mention that there are many other ways to open up channels of communication during the forming stage. People often bring unvoiced worries and expectations to early team meetings. Together, these concerns can actually impede progress, so it is very important to clear the air right at the beginning. Questions to ask may include all or any of the following:
 - *What do you want from others?*
 - *What do you need to know about the goals and purpose of the team?*
 - *What concerns do you about the team’s ability to do its job effectively?*
 - *What do you look forward to as you work on this team?*
 - *What would make this team effective?*

■ *D. Roles and Responsibilities (Checklist; Materials: Form G)*

1. State that, if teams are going to be effective, some crucial jobs have to be done. If no one does them, the teams will drift aimlessly without achieving much. To make this point, you might want to share a well-circulated story:

A team had four members called Everybody, Somebody, Anybody, and Nobody. There was an important job to be done. Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Everybody got angry about that because it was Somebody’s job. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done.
2. State that teams can be more effective by giving jobs to several participants to “divide up the labor” and share responsibility. Distribute Form G. Ask participants to select roles they think are needed by the team(s) they facilitate.
3. Invite a few participants to share with the entire group what they selected from Form G.

■ *E. Ground Rules (Brainstorming; Materials: Flip chart)*

1. State that during the forming stage, it is premature for teams to finalize any agreements or “ground rules” about how individual team members should behave to contribute to the effectiveness of the team. However, it is a good time to start discussing such ground rules. (Merely discussing them will raise the consciousness of team members about how they should behave.)
2. Invite the entire group to brainstorm possible team ground rules. Create a list, recorded on a flip chart by a volunteer scribe. (*Variation:* Reconvene table groups and ask each group to brainstorm and report out its own list.) Here are some ground rules to get the group started:
 - Respect confidentiality
 - Pitch in to help others when they need it
 - Be on time for any meeting
 - Let others finish what they are saying without interrupting
 - No “put-downs” or “cheap shots”; focus on issues, not people
 - Avoid squelching ideas prematurely
 - Volunteer your special talents and expertise
 - Be prepared for each time the team meets
 - Include everyone in the information loop
 - Share credit for a job well done
 - Let others know when you will be away
3. Invite participants to write down some ground rules they would like to suggest to the team(s) they facilitate.

■ *III. Stimulating Discussion and Dialogue*

■ *A. Ten Ways to Facilitate Group Discussion (Skill Practice; Materials: Form H, Facilitator Hat, Badge, or Lei)*

1. Distribute Form H. Ask participants to read the instructions.
2. Reconvene the table groups. Explain that each group will work on an assigned task for the next twenty-five minutes. Each participant will take a five-minute turn as the facilitator. When a participant’s turn occurs, that person should try to use as many of

the ten facilitation skills from the checklist as possible. Urge other group members to refrain from using any facilitative behaviors when it is not their turn.

3. Give each group a task that relates to their real team experience or ask them to simulate a group with one of the following assignments:
 - Developing creative ideas to deal with the problem of homelessness
 - Marketing a new gourmet cookie business
 - Improving customer service at (any known organization)
 - Creating a plan to motivate citizens to protect the environment
4. Provide some creative way to identify the facilitator in each team, such as a hat, badge, or Hawaiian lei. Request that someone in the group volunteer to be the first facilitator.
5. Keep track of the time, announce when each five-minute turn is over, and request that the person to the left of the current facilitator assume the role for the next five minutes. Rotate around the group until everyone has taken a turn as facilitator.
6. Ask participants to individually complete the Ten Skills Checklist (Form H).
7. Invite team members to share their assessments with one another.
8. Debrief the activity by asking the following questions of the total group:
 - Which skills were the most difficult to use?
 - On which skills do you personally want to improve?
 - Which skills are more useful at the beginning, middle, and closing periods of the task?

■ *B. Discussion Formats (Guided Teaching; Materials: Form I)*

1. Distribute Form I. Ask participants to read over the list of ways to obtain participation and identify ones that have been used in the workshop so far.
2. Invite participants to share the ones they selected. Discuss the pro's and con's of each format. Clarify any options that are not clear to participants.

■ ***IV. Facilitating Creative Problem Solving***

■ *A. The Positives of Brainstorming (Lecturette)*

1. Share with participants that many people view the “storming” phase of a team’s development as a necessary evil. However, “storming” does not have to be a negative

experience if a team uses “brainstorming” to explore its options and not get bogged down in argument and debate.

2. Remind the group that brainstorming is a process of generating ideas or solutions without judging their worth right from the beginning. (Mention that a team can also brainstorm many other items such as problems, questions, and pro’s and con’s, and criteria for evaluation.) It often leads to creative, “out of the box” thinking. This is helpful when teams need to come up with breakthrough thinking that challenges the status quo and moves an organization from “business as usual” to “business as unusual.” Best of all, a list of brainstormed items becomes the depository of the entire team rather than the preferred views of individual members. In essence, team members are giving the group ideas rather than advancing their own preferences. By creating “group property,” a team can then assess its options in a collaborative fashion.

■ *B. Brainstorming Options (Guided Teaching)*

1. Convene the table groups and ask them to come up with several uses for a belt if the group were stranded on an island. Inform them that they have three minutes for the task. Tell them to go for quantity, not quality. Have them record their ideas somewhere.
2. Invite the table groups to share with the entire group some of their most creative ideas. Note when participants get more creative as they shift mental sets (or “boxes”). For example, the belt can be used to carry something, to strike something, to reach something, and so forth. Parts of the belt can be used to write, count, measure, dip, and so forth.
3. Next, ask table groups to brainstorm novel travel excursions from the East Coast of the United States to the West Coast that a travel company might offer its customers (e.g., a trip by hot air balloon or a trip that stops at each major league baseball stadium). This time, request that each member write down an idea first and then ask each table group to go around and hear the ideas of all members. In addition, encourage others at each table group to ask any clarifying questions about the idea of an individual member (e.g., “How long do you think the trip will take?” or “Who do you think would be our most likely customers for this trip?”). Finally, others can add to the idea of any member.
4. Invite the table groups to share with the entire group one of the creative ideas generated by its members.
5. Next, ask participants to discuss at their table groups the differences in the brainstorming process between the belt task and the novel excursion task. Invite each group to present some of their conclusions.
6. Conclude by saying that most people assume that brainstorming is a “fast” process of getting as many ideas as possible in a very short period of time. However, brainstorming can be done at a leisurely pace as well. Fast brainstorming can be

compared to making popcorn. Kernels form in people's minds and out pop ideas (some of which may be "corny"). If things go well, you get a lot of ideas and then the process is exhausted. The process typically involves the following guidelines:

- Participants are urged to go for quantity. The more ideas, the better.
- Participants are encouraged to think freely. In some cases, the crazier the ideas, the better.
- Participants are invited to toss out ideas when they occur.
- Participants are required to hold back any comments about the ideas until the time for brainstorming is up.

As a result of the above, the pace is usually frenzied and uninhibited. Slow brainstorming has a different tempo and feel. Participants are expected to be thoughtful and responsive. As a result, fewer ideas might be developed, but perhaps the quality will improve. However, there are still "rules" that qualify it as a form of brainstorming.

- Participants are asked to wait a few seconds before shouting out their ideas.
- Participants are sometimes requested to write down ideas first before making them public.
- Participants are sometimes required to limit themselves to one contribution until everyone contributes or passes.
- Participants are urged to ask clarifying questions. When an idea is offered by someone, others are "allowed" to seek more information about the idea ... as long as they don't make it sound like a judgment.
- Participants are encouraged to add to an idea (*Maybe we could also ...*)

The keys to either type of brainstorming session, fast or slow, are creative imagination and open, non-judgmental interaction. Of course, after the ideas are produced ... whether fast or slow ... they must be listed, discussed, and evaluated. One way to quickly sort out the participants' reactions to the brainstormed ideas is to group them into these categories:

- *Keepers* (implement immediately)
- *Potentials* (promising enough to warrant serious consideration)
- *Hold-offs* (put aside for now)

■ C. Part Changing (*Creative Exercise; Materials: Post-it Notes*)

1. Mention that brainstorming new ideas is often difficult because the size of the problem taxes the creative imagination of the group. One way to overcome this situation is to break the problem, issue, or goal down into its constituent parts and examine each part separately. Then, participants can brainstorm ideas involving each part.

Doing this will help to loosen up participants and they may produce some truly novel and productive ideas.

2. To illustrate this concept, ask participants to imagine that they were responsible for designing a new type of bathtub. Perhaps, a few ideas might come to mind but then they are stuck. Explain that the task would be much easier if they first considered the elements that characterize a bathtub. Write on a flip chart: *size, shape, color, composition, water source, and depth*. Ask participants to brainstorm bathtubs that do not have the typical *size, shape, color, composition, water source, and depth*. (Take one element at a time.) The participants will surely explode with new ideas.
3. Next, tell the participants that they are planning how to improve the way a president is elected in the United States. List the following three elements to electing an president (there are more!):
 - The way in which candidates are selected
 - How candidates campaign
 - The voting process

Display the three elements on different sections of a whiteboard or on separate flip-chart sheets.

4. Review with the participants the current reality of each element. For example, each major party holds state-wide primaries to determine its candidate at the party's nominating convention. In rare instances, other candidates are on the ballot. Each major campaign uses mostly TV advertising, much of which is expensive and misleading. (There are also presidential debates.) Except for absentee ballots, most voters have to cast their votes on a single voting day at a designated place. (States and cities/towns vary on when and where people vote.) The candidate with the most electoral votes wins.
5. Explain that creative problem solving involves challenging assumptions of the way "things should be." Give each participant several blank Post-it notes and invite them to use as many notes as they want to write down a creative idea for change in any of the three elements. (Only one idea per note.) When they are done, request that they attach each note under the element for which it is intended on the whiteboard or a flip-chart sheet. For example, allowing voting over an entire weekend would be placed under "the voting process."
6. When everyone has posted notes, invite participants to walk around and read all the notes. Ask them to write down ideas they especially like (no more than four). Then have participants return to their table groups and share the ideas they feel have the most potential for positive change.
7. Debrief the experience of brainstorming by part-changing. Ask participants to share issues, goals, or problems facing the teams they facilitate for which they might use this process.

■ **V. Managing Controversy and Conflict**

■ **A. Conflict Is Normal, Natural, and Necessary (Lecturette)**

1. Ask participants to shout out words and phrases they associate with “conflict.” Record the associations. Participants will discover that most of their associations are negative (e.g., tension, argument) rather than positive (e.g., growth, opportunity).
2. State that no team worth its salt avoids controversy and conflict. They are normal, natural, and necessary events for a team that is trying to accomplish important goals. In many teams, however, controversy and conflict are not allowed to come to the surface. Even if they are, the group often becomes immobilized by the tension. When teams are able to confront controversy and conflict within their ranks and find win-win resolutions, they reach a stage of maturity that enables them to perform at very high levels.

■ **B. The Keys to Conflict Resolution (Experiential Exercise)**

1. State that the following are two keys to the resolution of conflict:
 - Understanding the positions and concerns of the people in conflict with each other
 - Expanding the options available to resolve the conflict in a way that allows the team to move forward
2. Ask each table group to assume that they had the following conflict within the group: *Some members maintain that the team can meet face-to-face infrequently and rely on electronic discussion boards to get much of its work done, while other members feel strongly that there is no substitute for frequent live meetings.* (Feel free to substitute a different conflict scenario you believe will engage your participants more effectively than the one above.) Request that each table group find a way to split up into two factions on the issue.
3. Ask each table group to take a few minutes to grow into their roles and develop a climate of heated conflict. During this time, participants should not attempt to resolve the conflict.
4. Next, ask each table group to stop arguing and, instead, ask questions of each other. During this time, participants should not argue or make any suggestions. The time is dedicated to understanding each other’s positions and concerns.
5. Next, give each table group time to explore other options besides those advocated by each faction. Encourage creative, win-win ideas.
6. When the exercise is completed, ask participants how useful this process was as a way to facilitate conflict resolution.

■ *C. Breaking a Stalemate (Read and Discuss; Materials: Form J)*

1. Explain that when a conflict completely overtakes a group and each side won't budge, you might try to move the process along by asking all parties to agree to engage in a four-step process. Tell the group that, in your opinion, the conflict has deteriorated into an argument of who's right and who's wrong. Explain that you have a process to attempt to break the stalemate.
2. Distribute Form J. Give participants time to read the four-step process. Then ask participants to discuss their reactions to the process in their table groups.

■ **VI. Building Consensus**

■ *A. Watching Decision Making in Action (Observation)*

1. Obtain five volunteers. Place them in a circle in the middle of the room. Request that the remaining participants sit behind the volunteers in a circle. (You are creating a "fishbowl.").
2. Explain that the volunteers will be given a brief task to accomplish while the remaining participants will observe them.
3. Give the volunteers the following instructions: *You have ten minutes to decide what is the major disadvantage of teams making decisions by majority vote. At the end of the ten minutes, the group should state the disadvantage in one sentence.*
4. After they are finished, ask the observers to comment on *how* the group reached its decisions. Did they see a total consensus? How were different preferences dealt with?

■ *B. The Value of Consensus (Read and Discuss; Materials: Form K)*

1. Explain that most experts agree that groups should make important decisions by building consensus, as opposed to voting. A consensus exists when everyone is willing to support and commit him- or herself to a specific decision. It may not be everyone's first choice, but everyone can live with the conclusions being reached. When a group builds a consensus, there is greater commitment to implement the group's decision. With voting, a disgruntled minority usually winds up upset and lags in their commitment to the implementation phase.
2. Further explain that reaching decisions by consensus is often frustrating because it is time-consuming. Moreover, as time crunches are felt, the agreements that are reached are often not satisfying to everyone. Some members *concede* rather than *concur*. There is a "consensus" in name, but not in spirit.

3. Distribute Form K. Invite participants to review its contents and then allow them to discuss with table groups those ideas that they find useful.
4. Obtain group-wide feedback to the suggestions on Form K.

■ VII. Closing Activities

■ A. Dress Rehearsal (Skill Practice)

1. Inform participants that you would like them to have an opportunity to practice some of the facilitation skills covered in the workshop.
2. Reconvene the table groups. Give them a task that is relevant to their work contexts. Or use this task as a fun way to practice their skills:

Your group has decided to form a consulting firm called “Team Builders.” So far, you’ve decided to:

- Offer training and consultation on how to make teams more effective
- Contribute \$500 a person toward start-up costs
- Keep your “day jobs” and utilize your own equipment (e.g., computers) and access to resources (e.g., photocopying) to minimize costs

Develop a marketing plan for your consulting firm. Your marketing plan should address these issues:

- Targeting who your customers will be
 - Creating the message you want to convey to the customers so that they are motivated to use your services
 - Selecting advertising/publicity strategies (e.g., ads, direct mail, free previews, email or fax campaign, etc.)
3. Tell the table groups that they have forty minutes to work on the task. During this time, at least four members should take a turn serving as the group facilitator. An additional person can serve as a timekeeper for each ten-minute shift.
 4. When time is up, give table groups a brief opportunity to share their marketing plans. Then ask participants to share some of the facilitation skills they observed during the forty-minute process.

■ B. I Hereby Resolve (Written Exercise; Materials: paper and envelopes)

1. Ask participants to tell you what they are taking away from the training program. Record their thoughts and display a composite list.

2. Provide participants with blank sheets of paper and envelopes.
3. Invite the participants to write themselves letters indicating what they (personally) are taking away from the training and what steps they intend to take to apply what they have learned. Suggest that they could begin the letter with the words “I hereby resolve. . . .”
4. Inform the participants that the letters are confidential. Ask each participant to place his or her letter in an envelope containing his or her email address on the front and to seal the envelope.
5. Ask each participant to place a Post-it note on the envelope with the date on which he or she wants you to email the letter. Promise to send the letters to the participants on the dates specified. Or collect the envelopes, shuffle them, and distribute one to each participant. Request that the participant email back one month after the course the “I Hereby Resolve” statement to the person who wrote it.

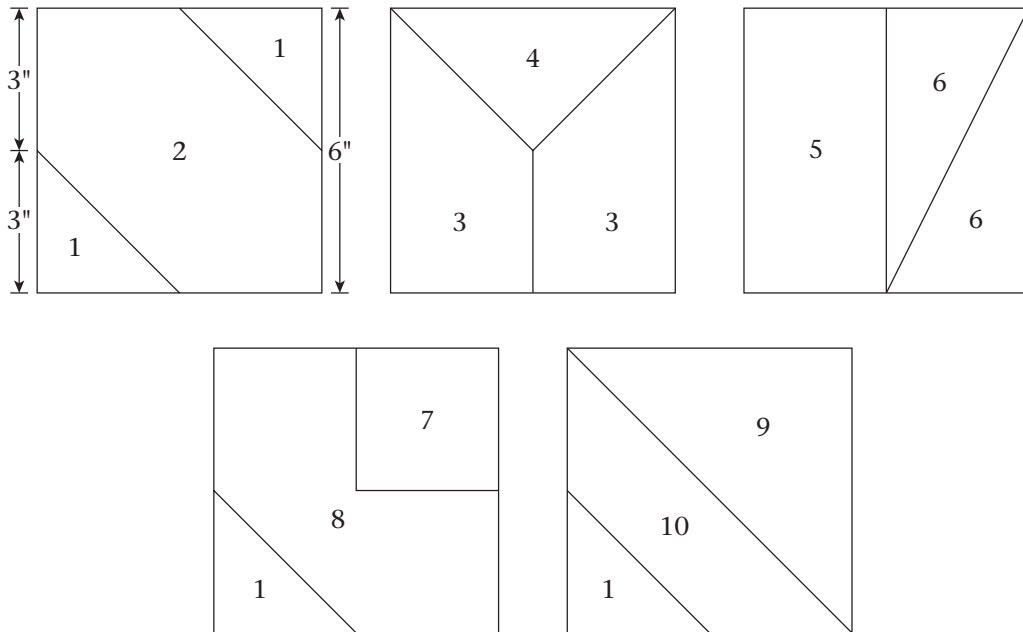


■ FACILITATING TEAMS FORM A

Creating Broken Squares

In advance of the session, prepare the necessary materials for this exercise as described below:

- You will be preparing a set of materials for each team. *A set consists of five envelopes* containing pieces of cardboard cut into different patterns that, when properly arranged, will form five cardboard squares of equal size.
- To prepare a set, cut out five cardboard squares, each exactly 6 inches by 6 inches. Place the squares in a row and mark them as below, penciling the numbers lightly so they can be erased.



- The lines should be drawn so that when the pieces are cut out, those marked “1” will be exactly the same size, those marked “3” the same size, and so forth. Several combinations are possible that will form one or two squares, but only one combination will form all five squares, each 6 inches by 6 inches. After drawing the lines on the squares and labeling the sections with numbers, cut each square along the lines into smaller pieces to make the parts of the puzzle.
- Label the five envelopes A, B, C, D, and E. Distribute the cardboard pieces into the five envelopes as follows: envelope A has pieces 5, 8, 9; B has 1, 1, 1, 3; C has 1, 10; D has 4, 6; and E has 2, 3, 6, 7.
- Erase the penciled numbers from each piece and write, instead, the letter of the envelope it is in. This makes it easy to return the pieces to the proper envelopes for subsequent use.



■ FACILITATING TEAMS FORM B

Individually Oriented vs. Team-Oriented Groups

In Individually Oriented Groups:

- Members talk more than listen
- Members focus on their own ideas and preferences
- Members state their opinions and stop
- Members agree quickly or argue with ideas they disagree with
- The process is haphazard
- Decisions are made prematurely

In Team-Oriented Groups

- Members listen more than talk
- Members ask questions and seek information from each other
- Members seek feedback about their views
- Members explore different ideas
- A process for working on tasks is developed
- Options are examined carefully before decisions are reached



■ FACILITATING TEAMS FORM C

Is It Forming, Storming, Norming, and Performing?

1. Members are concerned with acceptance.
2. Leadership is shared.
3. Team enjoys open, honest communication.
4. Conflict continues to occur.
5. Goals are not clear but clarity is not sought.
6. Team encourages innovation.
7. Cohesion and trust increase.
8. Members communicate in a tentative manner.
9. Clarification of goals begins.
10. Participation increases.
11. Member satisfaction increases.
12. Conflicts start to surface.
13. The team leader is seen as benevolent and competent.
14. Subgroups and coalitions form.
15. Leader's role becomes more consultative.
16. Subgroups work on important tasks.

Forming

Storming

Norming

Performing



■ FACILITATING TEAMS FORM D

Helpful Experiences During Forming

Clarify and Discuss Each Item

1. Take time to get to know each other as “real” human beings. Learn about each others’ background, life experiences, interests, and preferences.
2. Don’t plunge right into work. Have some fun together and get “in sync” with each other.
3. Talk about the job ahead of you. Share visions about what the team might accomplish and how it might work successfully as a group.
4. Brainstorm the things that are needed so that the team’s work will be productive.
5. Discuss the talents and expertise among team members, both those that are relevant and those that are tangential to the team’s assignments.
6. Offer some ideas about how the team will achieve success and listen to each other without debate. Ask questions that clarify rather than evaluate.
7. Discuss expectations that team members might have of one another.
8. Identify different ways that individual members can be helpful to the group as a whole.



■ FACILITATING TEAMS FORM E

Initial Team-Building Exercises

1. Ask a team to create a group resume. It might include total years of experience, accomplishments of its members, and special skills and talents within the team.
2. Ask a team to create a structure that is simultaneously *high, sturdy, and pleasing to look at*. The only materials that can use for building the structure are index cards. No glue, scissors, or paper clips are allowed.
3. Challenge the team to create a group story. Have one member begin by completing the sentence: “Once upon a time, there. . .” Ask each subsequent participant to add one sentence to the story.
4. Pass a ball around the team and see whether they can do it more rapidly each time. Next, try the activity with members’ eyes shut. Finally, introduce a second ball going in the opposite direction.
5. Blindfold the team members and lead them to a nylon rope circle in a large room free of obstacles and tell them to hold onto the rope. Ask them to form a triangle. When they think they’ve completed the task, ask them to hold still and then take their blindfolds off so they can see how they fared.
6. Ask a team to create a thirty-second television commercial that advertises their team, their profession, their industry, or their company/organization.
7. Tell participants that their job is to predict how each person in their team will answer certain questions you have prepared for them. Some all-purpose questions are: *Where did you grow up? What were you like as a child/student? What type of music do you listen to the most? What are your favorite leisure activities? How many hours do you usually sleep nightly?* Other questions can be added or substituted depending on the team you are facilitating. Begin the process by selecting one person as the first “subject.” Urge participants to be as specific as possible in their predictions about the chosen person. As the members guess, request that the “subject” give no indication as to the accuracy of the predictions. When the predictions about the “subject” are finished, the “subject” should then reveal the answer to each question about himself or herself.



■ FACILITATING TEAMS FORM F

How to Conduct a Go-Around

1. Explain to participants that you would like to begin the meeting by “going around” the group and hearing from everyone. Indicate that a sentence stem is useful in conducting go-arounds because each person can be brief and to the point.
2. Start at one end of the meeting table or allow participants to share their endings whenever each one feels like doing so. Invite participants to “pass” when it’s their turn by saying “I would prefer to pass” or “I pass *with dignity*.” Also invite participants to repeat what someone else has said previously if it expresses their sentiments well. If you want, eliminate repetition by asking each participant for a new contribution to the process. If the group is large, create a smaller go-around group by obtaining short responses from one side of the room from people who are wearing glasses, or some other sampling technique.
3. To surface thoughts and feelings about the meeting agenda, use one of the following:

I hope this meeting. . . .

By the end of this meeting. . . .

It’s important today that we. . . .

Briefly, my opinion about (insert topic) is. . . .

I’m coming to this meeting. . . .

4. To elicit comments on a more personal level, use one of the following:

I’m excited about. . . .

Something that happened to me since the last time we met is that. . . .

Some recent good/bad news I’ve had is. . . .

Today I feel like. . . .

I’m thankful that. . . .

I’m looking forward to. . . .

5. To obtain feelings about the group or organization in general, use one of these:

One thing I’m frustrated by is. . . .

I just wish. . . .

I want to tell you. . . .

I would prefer. . . .

I am pleased that. . . .



■ FACILITATING TEAMS FORM G

Team Roles

Here are possible “hats” people can wear in your team. Consider rotating them to include everyone. Too often, certain individuals are pegged for certain jobs.

1. *Facilitator*. This person leads all or a portion of a meeting, providing structure, direction giving, and stimulation and encouraging participation, problem solving, and consensus.
2. *Timekeeper*. This person tells the group how much time is left in a meeting for a specific agenda item and alerts the group when time limits are being approached.
3. *Minute-taker*. This person takes notes about the team meeting discussion and decisions and disseminates them as meeting minutes as soon as possible after the meeting.
4. *Record-keeper*. This person maintains all the records accumulated by the team such as agenda, minutes, member information, reports, correspondence, data, and other documentation.
5. *Flip-chart scribe*. This person records group ideas quickly and legibly on a flip chart or other recording surface.
6. *Researcher*. This person researches information of use to the team.
7. *Energizer*. This person conducts activities to energize or relax the team participants.
8. *Meeting planner*. This person organizes and coordinates all the behind-the-scenes details of a team meeting session.
9. *Point of contact*. This person acts as a point of contact between meetings for participants. He or she can also be responsible for maintaining contact with outside parties who may be interested in the group’s proceedings.
10. *Process observer*. This person observes the group process and shares those observations with the group when appropriate.



■ FACILITATING TEAMS FORM H

Rotating Facilitators Ten Skills Checklist

Instructions: First read through the following list of ten facilitation skills. Decide whether any need to be clarified and whether you think the list is complete as it stands. When told to do so, check the appropriate box below each of the skills listed.

1. Paraphrase what a participant has said so that he or she feels understood and so that the other participants can hear a concise summary of what has been said.
 - Skill I Use
 - Skill Others Used
 - Skill I Need to Learn to Use
2. Check your understanding of a participant's statement or ask the participant to clarify what he or she is saying.
 - Skill I Used
 - Skill Others Used
 - Skill I Need to Learn to Use
3. Compliment an interesting or insightful comment.
 - Skill I Used
 - Skill Others Used
 - Skill I Need to Learn to Use
4. Elaborate on a participant's contribution to the discussion with examples, or suggest a new way to view the problem.
 - Skill I Used
 - Skill Others Used
 - Skill I Need to Learn to Use
5. Energize a discussion by quickening the pace, using humor, or, if necessary, prodding the group for more contributions.
 - Skill I Used
 - Skill Others Used
 - Skill I Need to Learn to Use
6. Disagree (gently) with a participant's comments to stimulate further discussion.
 - Skill I Used
 - Skill Others Used
 - Skill I Need to Learn to Use

7. Mediate differences of opinion between participants and relieve any tensions that may be brewing.
 - Skill I Used
 - Skill Others Used
 - Skill I Need to Learn to Use
8. Pull together ideas, showing their relationships to each other.
 - Skill I Used
 - Skill Others Used
 - Skill I Need to Learn to Use
9. Change the group process by altering the method for obtaining participation or by having the group evaluate ideas that have been presented.
 - Skill I Used
 - Skill Others Used
 - Skill I Need to Learn to Use
10. Summarize (and record, if desired) the major views of the group.
 - Skill I Used
 - Skill Others Used
 - Skill I Need to Learn to Use



■ FACILITATING TEAMS FORM I

Ten Ways to Obtain Group Participation

There are a variety of ways to structure discussion and to obtain responses from participants during a team meeting. Some methods are especially suitable when time is limited or participation needs to be coaxed. You might also consider combining these methods. For example, you might use subgroup discussion and then invite a spokesperson from each subgroup to serve on a panel.

1. *Open discussion.* Welcome any comments from anyone in the entire group. If you are worried that the ensuing discussion might be too lengthy, say beforehand, “We have time for four or five short comments. Who would like to begin?” To encourage several participants to volunteer comments, ask, “How many of you would like to comment on this matter?” Then note who wants to participate and establish an order of participation.
2. *Subgroup discussion.* Form participants into subgroups of three to six members. Use subgroups when you have sufficient time for discussion. This is one of the key methods for obtaining everyone’s participation. Usually, it is desirable to ask each subgroup to summarize its discussion for the remainder of the groups, but sometimes it is not necessary. Make sure subgroup members are directly facing each other during their discussion.
3. *Partners.* Form participants into pairs and ask them to discuss and problem solve together. Use partners when you want to involve everybody but do not have enough time for subgroup discussion. A pair is an effective discussion format to enable every participant to talk about an issue prior to whole group discussion. It may be especially helpful with large groups.
4. *Response cards.* Pass out index cards and request that participants record their comments or ideas. Use response cards to save time or to provide anonymity for personally threatening self-disclosures. Cards can also be used in brainstorming sessions. The cards can be passed around the group, shuffled, and redistributed to individual participants, or collected for reading and review by the facilitator.
5. *Polling.* Design a short survey that is filled out and tallied on the spot, or verbally poll participants. Use polling to obtain data quickly and in a quantifiable form. If you use a written survey, try to supply the results to participants as quickly as possible. If you use a verbal survey, ask for a show of hands.
6. *Go-arounds.* Invite each participant for a short response to a key question by “going-around” the entire group. Use go-arounds when you want to obtain something quickly from each participant. Sentence stems (for example, “One idea to save costs is. . .”) are useful in conducting go-arounds. Invite participants to pass when they wish. Avoid repetition, if you want, by asking each participant for a new contribution to the process.

7. *Calling on the next speaker.* Ask participants to raise their hands when they want to share their views and request that the present speaker call on the next speaker (rather than the facilitator performing this role). Use this method when you are sure there is a lot of interest in the discussion and you wish to promote participant interaction.
8. *Panels.* Invite a small number of participants to present their views in front of the entire group. An informal panel can be created by asking for the views of a designated number of participants who remain in their seats. Use panels when time permits to generate a focused exchange of ideas. Rotate panelists to increase participation.
9. *Fishbowl.* Ask a portion of the group to form a discussion circle and have the remaining participants form a listening circle around them. Rotate new groups into the inner circle to continue the discussion. Use fishbowl discussions to help bring focus to large group discussions. Although time-consuming, this is the best method for combining the virtues of large and small group discussion. As a variation to concentric circles, participants can remain seated at tables and you can invite different table groups or parts of a table group to discuss the topic as the others listen.
10. *Games.* Use an enjoyable activity or a quiz game to elicit participants' ideas, opinions, and knowledge. Games stimulate energy and involvement. There are many collections of games suitable for teams.



■ FACILITATING TEAMS FORM J

Breaking a Stalemate

1. Ask each side to prepare a four-part presentation:

The Conflict We're Having

Discuss and agree on the positions being taken that oppose each other. Be objective and descriptive, and show that you have listened well to your opponents. Don't disparage their positions. Be respectful.

For example, consider a conflict between the academic dean of a college and the faculty on grade inflation. The faculty might state: It seems that we have opposite views about grade inflation. You want a greater distribution of grades so that we appear to have higher standards than what is reflected in the current grade distribution. We think that the higher grades reflect well on us as a faculty. We must be doing something right.

What Concerns Us

Ask each party to share feelings, concerns, and needs about the issue in conflict.

The faculty might further say: We are concerned that students will become obsessed with how they are graded rather than how they can be effective learners. We also worry that focusing on grade inflation emphasizes making things tougher for students, not rethinking what our basic teaching goals are and what we can do to facilitate them.

What We'd Like to Suggest

Each party shares a creative suggestion to get beyond where the group is stuck.

The faculty might then say: What would be ideal is to agree to be more explicit about the performance criteria for different grading outcomes. If most students do well, there's no reason to have a grading curve.

What We're Willing to Do About It

Each party makes a statement about the actions it is prepared to make to create a better situation.

The faculty then concludes: We'd be willing to submit to the academic dean our current grading criteria and obtain his recommendations on how they can be made clearer.

2. Invite each side to make its presentation.

3. Ask each side to comment on the presentation.

- How understanding was the other side?
- What suggestions hold promise?
- Is there a basis for moving to a win-win resolution of the problem?



■ FACILITATING TEAMS FORM K

Ways to Reach Consensus

Which of the following suggestions would be useful to the teams you facilitate?

1. (If your team is large and reaching a total consensus would be difficult) Establish a prior ground rule that any decision reached by a team must have the agreement of a super-majority of the group (for example, 75 percent).
2. After some discussion of an issue, take a “straw poll” of members to capture the relative strength of various decision options. Explain that the straw poll is not a binding vote. Its only purpose is to provide a snapshot of where the team is relative to a decision.
3. Provide team members who are in the minority on an issue with the opportunity to be heard without debate from the majority. Sometimes, providing this opportunity for “dissenting opinions” allows dissenters to go along with a majority without feeling that they were disregarded.
4. Use “multi-voting” as an efficient and effective way to narrow the choices from a long list of decision options. One way to use this technique is narrow the options by 50 percent each time a vote is taken. For example, with eight options, the team decides on the top four, then the top two. With two options left, each should be tested for consensus.
5. Use a process by which the team weighs each remaining decision option against a set of criteria, such as cost, ease of implementation, best reward/cost ratio, and so forth. Such a discussion tends to be more objective.
6. Put a decision “on trial.” Suggest that any decision reached is “on trial” for a period of time to evaluate its effectiveness. After the trial period is over, the decision is reviewed.

