Facilitation Skills

The following information aims to help you understand the course content.

*It is not intended to provide detailed advice on specific points.*

Legal references are not necessarily a full statement of the law.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trainer:</th>
<th>Mike Phillips</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Trainer, Facilitator, Consultant and Coach</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mike Phillips Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivered on Behalf of:</td>
<td>Directory of Social Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Updated:</td>
<td>28/03/2017</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

“This Handouts Pack can be made available in accessible formats:

Please ask for details

“Learning is a treasure that follows its owner everywhere.”

Chinese Proverb
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<td>The Quiet Type</td>
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<td>The Sniper</td>
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About Your Trainer/Facilitator

Mike is a freelance trainer/facilitator/consultant/coach who is passionate about releasing potential through learning and development.

Mike has delivered training across London, the UK and internationally using diverse interactive training techniques which build upon adult learning, brain-friendly and accelerated learning principles.

Since establishing a charity in Wales in his 20s, Mike has worked mainly in the charity sector within health and social care (including HIV, mental health and dementia).

He has also worked in social services and local government undertaking neighbourhood renewal and community development work.

Freelance since 2008, in addition to his own broad customer base, Mike works as an associate trainer with Blue Phoenix Communications, Directory of Social Change (DSC) and Dementia Path Finders (formerly Dementia UK - Training).

With a varied career, Mike specialises in topics as diverse as:

- Management, Leadership and Team-building
- Personal Effectiveness
- HR, Learning and Development
- Communication Skills
- Care Matters – Health and Social Care Issues
- Dementia Care
- Working with Diversity

Qualifications/professional memberships

- Associate Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (No. 22743061)
- Eden Alternative® Associate
- Belbin™ Team Roles Accredited
- Institute of Equality and Diversity Practitioner
- Dementia Care Mapper
- International Association of Facilitators

Further details

Please email mike@mikephilipstraining.co.uk for details about other course titles available.

Follow Mike Phillips Training on:
Course Outline

Course Aim:

To offer an overview of the basic theory; skills and tools of facilitation.

You will also explore group dynamics and behaviours and how these can be managed.

By the end of the training day, you should be able to:

- Define the meaning of facilitation and facilitator
- List the skills, qualities, roles and responsibilities of an effective facilitator
- Explain the four main facilitation styles, their advantages and disadvantages
- Describe the stages of group development and how this impacts on facilitation
- Be aware of group dynamics and use a range of strategies for managing difficult behaviours in groups
- Describe the process and explain the importance of designing, facilitating and evaluating an event.
- Use a toolbox of facilitation techniques for engaging participants and building consensus
# Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:00</td>
<td>Welcome and Introductions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group Agreement and Expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Facilitation in Context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:15</td>
<td>Tea Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30</td>
<td>Facilitation Styles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stages of Group Development and Group Dynamics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:45</td>
<td>Understanding Behaviour and Group Dynamics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Designing Facilitation Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:15</td>
<td>Tea break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:30</td>
<td>Building Consensus Facilitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tools and Techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Action Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16:30</td>
<td>Summary and Close</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note that the above timings are approximate.

In respect of your fellow learners and so that we can get through the content of the day, please take responsibility to ensure that you return from all breaks on time.
"The facilitator’s job is to support everyone to do their best thinking. To do this, the facilitator encourages full participation, promotes mutual understanding, and cultivates shared responsibility."

Facilitator’s Guide to Participatory Decision-Making
Sam Kaner, et al
Action-Centred Leadership

John Adair’s Action-Centred Leadership Model focuses on three responsibilities. It equally applies to those facilitating groups and/or events.

Your responsibilities as a manager for achieving the Task

- control and maintain activities against parameters
- create the plan to achieve the task - deliverables, measures, timescales, strategy and tactics
- establish responsibilities, objectives, accountabilities and measures, by agreement and delegation
- identify aims and vision for the group, purpose, and direction - define the activity (the task)
- identify resources, people, processes, systems and tools (financials, communications, IT)
- monitor and maintain overall performance against plan
  - report on progress towards the group’s aim
  - review, re-assess, adjust plan, methods and targets as necessary
  - set standards, quality, time and reporting parameters

“Treat people as if they were what they ought to be and you help them to become what they are capable of being.”

Goethe
Your responsibilities as a manager for each Individual

- assist and support individuals - plans, problems, challenges, highs and lows
- develop individual freedom and authority
- give recognition and praise to individuals - acknowledge effort and good work
- identify and agree appropriate individual responsibilities and objectives
- identify, develop and use each individual's capabilities and strengths
- train and develop individual team members
- understand team members as individuals - personality, skills, strengths, needs, aims and fears
- where appropriate reward individuals with extra responsibility, advancement and status

Your responsibilities as a manager for the Group

- agree and communicate standards of performance and behaviour (establish with the group, rather than impose)
- assess and change as necessary the balance and composition of the group
- develop team-working, cooperation, morale and team-spirit
- develop the collective maturity and capability of the group - progressively increase group freedom and authority
- enable, facilitate and ensure effective internal and external group communications
- encourage the team towards objectives and aims - motivate the group and provide a collective sense of purpose
- establish style, culture, approach of the group - soft skill elements
- give feedback to the group on overall progress; consult with, and seek feedback and input from the group
- identify and meet group training needs
- identify, develop and agree team- and project-leadership roles within group
- monitor and maintain discipline, ethics, integrity and focus on objectives
- observe, anticipate and resolve group conflict, struggles or disagreements
Facilitation Styles

There are a range of facilitation styles\(^1\), each of which may be more or less appropriate at different stages of training delivery.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FACILITATOR STYLE</th>
<th>TELLS</th>
<th>CONSULTS</th>
<th>INVOLVES</th>
<th>STEPS OUT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Facilitator in charge of task and process:</td>
<td>Facilitator constantly consults the group on its needs</td>
<td>Group chooses how it will use facilitator skills</td>
<td>Group manages itself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chooses venue</td>
<td>Facilitates reconsideration and response to agenda issues</td>
<td>Group may rotate leadership. Decide to change agenda, timings and so on.</td>
<td>Facilitator becomes a resource to the group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chooses agenda</td>
<td>Emphasises consideration of group’s needs</td>
<td>Facilitator skill likely to feel responsible for group process</td>
<td>Facilitator may leave the group entirely responsible for its own process and task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chairs &amp; leads discussion</td>
<td>May share leadership with some of the group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prescribes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gives information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manages the time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DOMINANT STATE OF THE GROUP</th>
<th>Dependency</th>
<th>Submitting to benevolent government</th>
<th>Interdependence</th>
<th>Independence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

\(^1\) Source: Facilitating Groups; Jenny Rogers
### PLUSES
- Facilitator likes it because it puts them in the expert-in-charge role
- Group feels safe
- May be very task focused
- Often right for early sessions while group settles down
- Gives group practice in taking responsibility for itself within safe framework
- Good compromise between the greater freedom of involvement and bossier style of 'telling'
- Exhilaration.
- Fun
- High performance
- Purposeful atmosphere
- Clear that the group is totally responsible for own learning
- Group cannot rebel as there is no authority figure

### MINUSES
- Group does not take responsibility for own learning
- May 'rebel'
- May feel childlike
- Civilised dependency may be ultimately harmful
- Does not trust group to be adults
- Gloss of involvement is only skin deep
- Learning may be limited
- Facilitators miss the 'buzz' of being in charge
- Group worries by its own freedom
- Minimal involvement may look like abandonment
- Takes time to get to this points & the group may not have this much time.
- Ambiguity may be too much for some members
- Control issues may surface again.
- Group may fall apart without 'official' leadership
- Responsibility may be too much
### Group Dynamics – Tuckman’s Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAGE</th>
<th>ISSUE</th>
<th>CHARACTERISTICS</th>
<th>FEELINGS</th>
<th>BEHAVIOURS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forming</td>
<td>Dependency</td>
<td>Inclusion/</td>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>“We” – looking for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Childhood</td>
<td>exclusion</td>
<td>Anticipation</td>
<td>what is the same as</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Am I in or am I out?</td>
<td>Uncertainty</td>
<td>self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Do I want to be</td>
<td>Confusion</td>
<td>What is acceptance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>out?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Seeking allies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Identifying and</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sub groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>belonging</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storming</td>
<td>Counter-</td>
<td>Power and control</td>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>“I” and “Me” first</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dependency</td>
<td>Differences, trust,</td>
<td>Cold</td>
<td>Rebellion against</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adolescence</td>
<td>challenge of leadership</td>
<td>Painful</td>
<td>leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Tension</td>
<td>Rivalry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>struggle</td>
<td>Exiting</td>
<td>labelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>It can’t be done</td>
<td>Liberating</td>
<td>Polarisiation of opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>It won’t be done</td>
<td></td>
<td>Conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Working out</td>
<td></td>
<td>between sub-groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>personal implications</td>
<td></td>
<td>Resistance to tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Testing out</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Releasing potential through learning and development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Norming</th>
<th>Performing</th>
<th>Ending or Mourning (Tuckman did not include this fifth stage)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Cohesion</td>
<td>- Inter-dependency</td>
<td>- Separation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Adulthood</td>
<td>- Maturity</td>
<td>- Old Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Group norms/rules</td>
<td>- Interpersonal connection, ability to take risks, air differences of opinion and trust group to handle it</td>
<td>- How do you say goodbye?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Trust</td>
<td>- Warm feelings</td>
<td>- How to leave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- We can do it</td>
<td>- Less extreme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Mutual support</td>
<td>- Loss Grief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- possible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Desire to achieve tasks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- New roles, sharing begins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Closeness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|               | - Openness, creativity | - Desire for group not to end Holding on Re-union planned |}

**Action**

Create a Mind Map of all the things you, as a facilitator, need to do for each stage of the process outlined above.
Designing, Facilitating and Evaluating an Event

Designing

1. Getting the brief and the task clear
2. Clarifying your relationship
3. Thinking through the design of the event
   - How people learn
     - Activist, Pragmatist, Reflector, Theorist
     - Left Brain/Right Brain preferences
     - Multiple Intelligences
     - Visual, Auditory, Kinaesthetic
   - Setting the agenda/purpose
     - All participants should be aware of, and agree with, the purpose of the session
     - Clear agenda helps facilitator with timekeeping and group to focus on task
     - Simply and clearly worded purpose
   - Establishing the ground rules
     - Essential to keep group on task and promote a respectful environment
     - Facilitator may want to contribute ideas; however, all participants need to have opportunity to contribute to the list to ensure ‘buy-in’
     - Post on wall as a constant reminder
     - Promote equality and fairness
   - Generally, three types:
     a. Defines behaviour of participants and facilitator
     b. Procedures to be used by the group (e.g. reaching consensus
     c. Boundaries for discussions on certain issues
Introduction/Breaking the ice

- Can be run and relate to the day’s work
- Encourage buy-in and review of issues and concepts
- Ensure you involve everyone and do not make fun of or degrade participants
- Help form trust and information to help the group form and norm
- Know your group and develop icebreakers that are appropriate
- Opportunity for group to get to know each other in a non-threatening way
- Provide insight into participant personality, level of interest, expectations, hope or fears, experience, any biases
- Use to open the discussion on a light note

Facilitating

During the session:

- Building consensus and making decisions
- Effective communication skills
- Ensuring participation
- Fulfilling your role as facilitator ethically
- Handling disruptive behaviours
- Helping the group stay on track
- Managing conflict
- Proceeding through the agenda

Concluding

- Answering questions
- Identifying the next agenda (where appropriate)
- Reviewing decisions/actions
- Reviewing the agenda
Evaluating

★ Asking for helpful feedback
★ Clarifying remaining expectations for facilitator
★ Determining action for any unfinished business
★ Saying “thank you” and Goodbye

Reviewing, Follow-up and Update

★ Review how you felt the session went
★ Review the feedback from participants
★ Redesign and update if event is to be repeated
★ Produce any reports required by the workshop sponsor

★ What the workshop covered
★ Structure of the discussion
★ How the discussion went
★ Broad timings of the session
★ Issues and ideas generated
★ Evaluations generated
★ Diagrams created
★ Voting results
★ Decisions made
★ Actions arising
★ Issues arising

★ Report back in person if required

“The idea is there locked inside. All you have to do is remove the excess stone.”

Michelangelo
Preferred Learning Styles

Each of us has a preferred learning style, even though we may use elements of all four styles. There are no rights or wrongs, however, as trainers, we need to be aware that our own preferred communication style can influence our style of delivery.

It important to include activities that appeal of all of the preferred learning styles when designing training.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STYLE</th>
<th>LIKE</th>
<th>DISLIKE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACTIVIST</td>
<td>Doing and experiencing. Enjoy games, practical activities, anything that’s energetic and involving.</td>
<td>Sitting around for too long; working alone; theorizing; having to listen to others droning on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFLECTORS</td>
<td>Time to think, observe, take it all in first; love to watch others; need some solitude and above all, time.</td>
<td>Being hurtled into activity, having no time to think; crammed timetables; lack of privacy, no time to prepare.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THEORISTS</td>
<td>To know where something fits in to overall ideas and concepts; analysis and logic; being stretched; abstract concepts; structure and clarity.</td>
<td>Frivolity, mindless fun; wasting time; not being able to question and be sceptical; lack of timetable and proper structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRAGMATIST</td>
<td>Practical problems solving; relevance to ‘the real world’; learning that answers the question ‘How can I apply this?’</td>
<td>Anything airy-fairy and theoretical; learning that makes too many references to the past or future and avoids drawing attention to NOW.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Honey and Mumford Learning Styles
A-Z of Facilitation Techniques

Appreciative inquiry
Group working process which builds on potentials, solutions and benefits to create change

**Barriers Wall**
A barrier wall can be created with blocks or cardboard bricks. The cards may be removed, replaced or enlarged several times during discussion. The more barriers - the higher the wall. More than one brick or a larger brick could represent large barriers.

**Board Games**
Adaptations of popular board games to simulate planning and design scenarios

**Brainstorming**
Vigorous discussion to generate ideas in which all possibilities are considered. Widely used first step in generating solutions to problems

**Buzz group**
Small group of people who work through an issue. Similar to focus group or workshop

**Calendar diagrams**
Used for understanding seasonal patterns, e.g. tourism, rainfall, trends in volunteering, use of services, etc.

**Car Park**
Where group members can ‘car park’ questions, issues or concerns on a board for later discussion (e.g. during a question round), at a more appropriate time during the agenda/timetable
Case Studies
A description of a particular individual/groups situation which analysed and discussed. Good for giving insight into the experience of others and to encourage empathy. Can consider cultural context, gender relationships, economic relationships, social and/or environmental aspects of a situation or issue.

Columns/Clusters
Categorising and Choosing Agree a heading for each column or cluster category through a brainstorm with the group (3 words maximum). Write each heading on coloured card and stick at the top of each column or cluster. Distribute voting dots to participants who then allocate their votes in whichever way they wish. Total the dots for each category and rank the top 3 or 5, as required. Now that the main issues have been prioritised, participants can stick post-its beside the category they wish to work on – this creates teams to work on the chosen issues and discuss further.

Columns/Clusters – Information Gathering
Cards and post-it notes are distributed to individuals, pairs or trios who are asked to write one answer to the discussion question on each card. Cards are then collected and stuck on a flipchart or pin board either in columns or clusters. Cards will be organised in columns to indicate shared themes. Alternatively clusters can be used to eliminate duplicates and cluster cards in categories of similarity.

Consensus building
A procedure for helping people with different views to come together interactively on a dispute, project, plan or issue, to work towards agreeing a sensible solution or way forward which is mutually satisfactory.
Contrast comparisons
Asking group A to analyse group B and vice versa. This has been used for gender awareness, asking men to analyse how women spend their time etc.

Diagramming
Creating diagrams in groups

Energisers
Games/activities used to change the energy within the group – either to raise the energy (e.g. after lunch when group members often get tired) or to lower energy such as a relaxation exercise/visualisation.

Exhibition
Displays of information. May be simply for presenting information or for getting feedback also.

Fish bowl Workshop
A technique where participants sit around, and observe a planning team working on a problem without taking part themselves

Flow Diagram
A diagram showing the components of any activity and linkages between them. For understanding the impact of an initiative

Focus group
A small group of people who work through an issue in workshop sessions. Membership may be carefully selected or entirely random.

Gallery Walk
A report back process where workshop flipchart sheets are pinned up at a plenary session and the reporter ‘walks’ past the sheets, using them as a prompt to summarise what took place.

Gaming.
The use of games to simulate real situations
Graffiti Wall

Group members are asked to identify issues of concern relating to an issue and to suggest which solutions might be useful but writing/drawing on a graffiti wall – made of paper. This can be particularly engaging for younger group members, but can be fun for most ages.

Ground rules/Team contracts

These contracts are drawn up by group/team members with agreed norms of behaviour; modes of interaction within teams

Icebreaker

Group activity aimed at making people feel comfortable with each other. Often held at the start of meetings and events.

Interactive display

A visual display which allows people to participate by making additions or alterations

Jigsaw display

Exhibit or activity where groups prepare different parts which are then assembled as a whole

Matrix

Diagram in the form of a grid allowing comparison of two variables. Often used for assessing options and prioritising.

Meeting

An event where people come together to discuss and decide. May be formal or informal, private or public

Mind Map

Showing people’s perceptions of trends and linkages - not a geographical map. Used for collective brainstorming to develop common outlook.

Mission statement

Written explanation of the purpose of a project, event or organisation. Usually brief and to the point. Useful for avoiding misunderstanding, particularly in partnerships.
Modelling/Making models
This usually refers to making models as a group process. Similar to mapping but in three dimensions instead of two.

Murals and Posters
A large, semi-permanent drawing designed by a group, community and/or drawn by an artist. These can be located where members of the community will frequently see them (e.g. in the reception of the drop-in centre).

Network diagram
Showing flows and linkages between people, organisations or places. Used for highlighting strengths and weaknesses in institutional relationships.

Organisation chart
Showing who is responsible for what. Used for understanding how organisations work.

Pair-wise ranking
Rapid and simple way of selecting the most important issues or problems facing a community. Brainstorming generates a preliminary list. A group of people then vote on the significance of every item against each other item using a matrix.

Participatory mapping and modelling
People’s mapping, drawing and colouring on the ground with sticks, seeds, powders etc. or on paper to make social, health or demographic maps.

Picture analysis
Getting people to say what they see in a picture and comparing notes.

Pie Chart
Dividing a circle into different sized segments. For showing population structure, distances to work etc.

Photo Surveys
Participants take and discuss photos of their existing environment individually or in teams. Photos are then sorted and placed on blank paper or maps, grouped or cut up and comments may be added using post-its or felt tip pens.
Pluses, Minuses and Emerging Issues/Interesting Facts

A display board/dry wipe board is divided into three sections (pluses, minuses, interesting facts/) and three groups each work on one of the sections. They record their findings on Post-its and post them on the board and present to the rest of the group.

Prioritising

Deciding what needs doing when. Ranking of problems to be dealt with or projects to be undertaken. This term is usually used to refer to group prioritising processes.

Problem tree

Visual way of analysing the inter-relationships among community issues and problems. A process of asking why is used to arrive at consensus about root causes and related effects. A symbolic tree is drawn with the trunk representing problems, the roots, representing causes and branches representing the effects.

Quiz

Encourages participants to review their current knowledge on a topic - particularly useful at the start (as an icebreaker) and finish (to review learning/understanding) of a training or workshop session.

Questionnaire

A simple, relevant questionnaire (e.g. true/false) to more complex questionnaires to test understanding/analyse views etc. A range of methods can be used and these can be completed during, before or after a workshop/event. Consider whether to use paper or on-line versions.

Roadshow

Series of links workshops, exhibitions and public forums to explore the potential for an initiative and provide a catalyst for change (e.g. a tour of local GP services to canvas views and ideas for a new service provided by the local charity).

“We can’t solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.”

Albert Einstein
Role play
Acting out being in someone else’s shoes and acting out scenarios. Used to help people understand the views and aspirations of others or to imagine the potential outcome of ideas proposals and how they may affect individuals or groups

Seminar
Meeting or workshop with more of an educational slant

Shared presentations and analysis
Where maps, models, diagrams and findings are presented by group members and checked, corrected and discussed.

Simulation
Acting out an event or activity as a way of gaining information and insights prior to formulating plans

Small group work
People working together in small groups of 8-15. Term used to cover a range of similar methods such as workshops and focus groups which enable people to discuss, evaluate, learn and plan together. Group work can be formal or informal, one-off or regular, topic related or wide-ranging.

Spidergram
A diagram resembling a spider’s body and legs, in which information relating to a topic is noted down in boxes joined by radiating lines to a central box containing the topic

Stick Metaphor for control
‘Handing over the stick’ is a much used term to mean the experts or facilitator handing over the chalk, pen or microphone to enable the group to become the planners, analysts, and facilitators of their own situation.

Storytelling
Story-telling Verbal recounting of tales that may be actual or mythical as a way of exploring hidden perceptions. Used to understand local values, standards, practices and relationships.
Suggestions box
A box in which people place their written suggestions or comments on a service, projects, place or proposals. Useful devise in consultation allowing participants to remain anonymous if they wish. See also Car Park

SWOT Analysis
Determination of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats relating to an organisation or activity,

Theatre/Forum Theatre
Performing plays to characterise real life and stimulate debate

Time-line
List of events or activities over time. For understanding historical trends

Timetable
Used for analysing daily routines, street activity and so on.

Time Travel
A point in the future is chosen (e.g. 2020) and the group imagine that their dreams have been achieved. The group then steps back to discuss how they managed to achieve it – what were the obstacles and how were they overcome.

Venn diagram
Using circles of different types to indicate roles of different organisations and the relationships between them

Visioning
Thinking about what the future could be and creating a vision

Wishing Tree/Wall
A physical (sometimes artistic) device, similar to a suggestions box, where individuals/passers-by can hang, post, display ideas/wishes for change, ideas for the future etc.

“I love strawberries. But whenever I go fishing I bait my hook with worms. This is because fish like worms – not strawberries”

Dale Carnegie
Top Tips for Leading Discussions

- Clarify Purpose/Objective

- Establish Ground Rules, Introductions

- Start Discussion with Open Questions
  - Cannot be answered ‘yes’ or ‘no’
  - Encourage participants to say as little or as much as they wish
  - Have more than one answer
  - It can be helpful to prepare some open questions whilst planning your workshop
  - You do not know what the answer will be

- Acknowledge and support what people say
  - Uh-hu, uhm, hmm
  - Oh? So… And? Then?
  - “That's a good point…”
  - “That reminds me of something that Abdi said earlier…”
  - “That’s interesting, could you explain that a bit further for us Elisabeth”

- Encourage them through words and body language
  - Mirroring posture
  - Nodding
  - Non-words
  - Silence
  - Smiling
- Link questions to participants' experience
  - “What has been your experience of meetings in the past and what would be some ways of improving future meetings?”

- Use active listening skills

- Check you have understood by asking:
  - “Are you saying….?”
  - “That’s a good suggestion, what do you think might happen if…”
  - “That’s interesting…does anyone have any other ideas, thoughts, feelings about that?”
  - Help participants to shift from personal experiences to seeing the wider picture and looking at the issue as a whole
  - “That’s a valid point and your experience is important. Let’s think about how other staff may consider the idea of this new database system”
  - “Thanks for sharing your thoughts and ideas. Let’s take some time to think about the service as a whole for other drop-in-centre users who may want different things. What might they need?”

- Use humour
  - Be aware that what might amuse one person may not amuse the next
  - Be sensitive to cultural and language implications
  - Can lighten serious discussions
  - “Go on, talk to me, I don’t bite, honest…”

“Man’s mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions.”

Oliver Wendell Holmes Jnr
Use summarising
★ Can bring discussion to an effective end
★ Helps to focus the discussion and pull it back on track
★ List the main points, issues and topics that have been talked about
★ Record any decisions, points of agreement, conclusions, actions to be taken

Manage interruptions
★ Don’t allow them
★ Draw attention to Ground Rules
★ Two people talking at the same time “Can we have one at a time, thanks.”
★ “Wait a minute Tom, can you let Kajol finish her point first please”

Action
Choose a Discussion Group session from an existing or new course/facilitation session you are planning.
Create a discussion plan (including appropriate questions) for leading the discussion
Conflict Management Styles

Conflict is a necessary part of daily life, yet many people find it difficult to deal with conflict.

Some people will use certain strategies for handling conflict whilst other people will use different strategies. Often the strategies we use we learned early in life, as children and they seem to function automatically – we may not even be aware of how we act in conflict situations as we do so naturally.

However, we do have a personal conflict management style and, because it was learned, we can change it by learning and developing new and more effective ways of managing conflict in our lives.

We have to main concerns when we are involved in conflict:

- Achieving our personal goals
- Maintaining a positive relationship with the other person.

The conflict management style we use will be influenced by which of these two concerns is most important. We can therefore identify 5 main styles of managing conflict:

Accommodate (The Teddy Bear)

- Relationships are of great importance to teddy bears and they want to be liked and accepted by others. Their own goals are of little importance and will sacrifice their personal goals to preserve relationships as they place harmony above all other things. They think conflict should be avoided and believe that conflicts cannot be discussed by people without damaging relationships.
They fear that if conflict is allowed to continue, someone will get hurt and the relationship will be ruined. The Teddy Bear will try to smooth over any conflict out of fear of harming their relationships.

Avoiding (The Turtle)

- Turtles withdraw into their shells in order to avoid conflict - ignore the conflict in the hope that it will go away. They give up their personal goals and relationships and stay away from the issues over which the conflict is taking place and from the people with whom they are in conflict.

- They feel helpless and believe there is no point or hope in trying to resolve conflicts. It is easier to withdraw and avoid (physically and psychologically) from a conflict than to face it.

Compete (The Shark)

- Sharks try to overpower opponents by forcing them to accept their solution to a conflict. Relationships and the needs of others are of minor importance or concern to sharks. Rather, they seek to achieve their own goals at all costs as they consider them to be much more important.

- The shark’s view is that conflicts are resolved by one side losing and the other winning and Sharks always want to be the winner as this gives them a sense of achievement and pride. They will do their best to win by attacking, intimidating, overwhelming and overpowering others.

Compromise (The Fox)

- The fox is moderately concerned with their relationships with others and their own goals. Foxes seek to give up part of their goals and persuade the other person to give up part of theirs – a compromise.

- During a conflict they will seek the middle ground between highly polarized views. In order to find an agreement, they are willing to sacrifice their own goals and relationships for the common good.
Collaborate (The Owl)

- Owls value their relationships and goals highly. They see conflict as a problem to be faced and solved and they seek a salutation that achieves their own goals and the goals of the other person.

- They will face the conflict, draw people’s attention to it, surface the issues and resolve them in a win/win way by using a systematic problem solving approach.

- Owls see conflicts as a way of improving relationships by reducing tension, maintaining the relationship through considering resolutions that will satisfy both the other side and themselves. Owls are not satisfied until a solution is found and the tensions and negative feelings have been resolved.

“There is no such thing as reality, only perception (you create your own reality through your perception).”

James Borg
Behaviour Types and Strategies to Handle Them

There are a variety of problem behaviours that can be detrimental to the group members and their work. We will describe some common ‘types’, by their behaviour, and follow them with strategies to deal with that behaviour.

The Axe-grinder

This person wants to relate everything to their pet obsession, whether it has anything to do with the topic under discussion or not.

Strategies include:

- Encourage them to refocus on the topic under discussion by asking them a question directly related to it
- Keep highlighting how irrelevant they are being
- Restate the purpose of the group/meeting

The Bulldozer

This person will try to run over you and everyone else too! It’s their method of stopping progress, because progress scares them. If they can’t change, they may leave. At a facilitated session, bulldozers may leave the room a lot and will have a host of legitimate reasons for doing so!

Strategies include:

- Don’t argue with them. Present the facts.
- Get them into problem solving mode.
- Protect the space of those they bulldoze, by asking the bulldozed to repeat their thought or by asking others in the group how they feel.
- Stand up to them in a non-combative way.
The Complainer/Whiner

his person tries to put you on the spot to fix it. He or she blames others and never self.

Strategies include:

- Ask questions.
- Don't be defensive.
- Encourage them to act.
- Listen and acknowledge, don't argue.
- Solicit solutions from them.

The Controller

This person wants to dominate and run things and be in complete control of the group.

Strategies include:

- Consider asking persistent offenders to leave
- Delegate responsibility for something of lesser importance
- Speak to the person apart from the group and request that they control their inappropriate behaviour

The Defeatist

This person feels that the problem is insurmountable and can see no solution or alternatives.

Strategies include:

- Seek out more positive contributions
- Treat the defeatism as a legitimate option
The Hair-splitter

This person wants absolute answers and definitions.

Strategies include:

- Acknowledge their need for absolute answers and definitions.
- Ask them to honour your work or style preferences just as you accept theirs.
- State what you're prepared to give.

The Inarticulate Person

This person has ideas but has problems putting the ideas into words.

Strategies include:

- Ask them for permission to help them phrase or rephrase.
- Encourage them to speak.
- Exhibit patience when they speak.

The Interrupter

This person interrupts the person speaking.

Strategies include:

- Say, "You interrupted me. Please let me finish my thoughts."
- Whenever they do it, repeat the preceding statement.

The Joker

This person is in it for laughs, may be sarcastic or sexually aggressive.

Strategies include:

- Disregard the joke and focus on asking them for opinions relating to the topic under discussion
- Give them responsibility for a task such as scribing
The Know It All

This person appears as the expert, wants constant attention and often argues with people.

Strategies include:

- Ask other group members to comment on what they heard, redirecting focus away from the Know-It-All.
- Be well prepared for the topic under discussion.
- Don't challenge -- ask questions to lead them to see their errors.
- Focus on solutions.
- Have them summarise their thoughts and record them on flipchart.
- Listen and paraphrase what they say.
- Praise their ability.

The Quiet Type

This person is quiet or timid. Their silence is often mistaken for agreement.

Strategies include:

- Address them by name and ask them to share their thoughts. Focus your attention directly on them to create the time and space they need to answer.
- Ask them some safe things early in the session to get them involved.
- Commend their participation when it occurs.
- Talk to them before the session, casually, to help them become comfortable.

“He that is good with a hammer tends to think everything is a nail.”

Abraham Maslow
The Sniper

This person attacks and criticises, usually indirectly, masking their aggression by using humour or saying things under their breath.

Strategies include:

- Address sniping each time it occurs, until it stops.
- Address the behaviour openly, asking them why they said that.
- Ask others if they agree with the criticism.
- Don't let them hide behind humour.

The Staller

This person tells irrelevant stories or experiences. They don't focus and instead give off base types of examples.

Strategies include:

- Ask them how what they said relates?
- Help them to be honest.
- Record their idea on The Car Park
- Try to find out their hidden concerns.

The Talker

This person distracts by holding side conversations.

Strategies include:

- Ask the person directly to share their thoughts with everyone (use tact and diplomacy).
- Say, "There are little meetings going on. May we have just one meeting?"
But there is good news!!

The majority of participants are fine and most groups will include the “ideal” participant:

Now you have some knowledge about challenging people and strategies to deal with them.

▪ What do you do with the ideal person?

The Ideal Person

This person has good ideas and expresses them freely at appropriate times. They’re congenial. They work well with others. They smile and laugh easily, even at themselves.

Strategies include:

▪ Acknowledge them frequently
▪ Always learn from them

“Man is disturbed not by things, but by the views he takes of them.”

Epictetus
Further Resources

Books and Publications

Releasing potential through learning and development


Stay Connected

30 Vicarage Road
London
E15 4HD
07949 826881
mike@mikephillipstraining.co.uk

For details about other courses available, visit:
www.mikephillipstraining.co.uk

Follow Mike Phillips Training on:

- http://mikephillipstraining.blogspot.co.uk/
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- www.twitter.com/MikePTrain

“Learning is a treasure that follows its owner everywhere.”

Chinese Proverb