

CAC Training Summary Handout: Effective Meeting Facilitation

March

Providing Structure

- Manage structure to get the most complete input from participants.
- Do not try to direct or control the comments of the group.
- Keep the group on track and on task.
- Arrange the space in a way that encourages participation and dialogue from all participants.
- Help visitors feel welcome with a quick introduction of each member at the beginning of each meeting.
- Make sure all necessary supplies are present and working:
 - Handouts, reference materials, project

Setting Objectives

- Establish ground rules with the Council, and enforce the ground rules during all meetings.
- Ground rules help clarify expectations for participation and acceptable consequences for participants who behaviors become difficult to manage.
- Clarify the purpose of each meeting to ensure that everyone knows why they are there.
- Set and keep to an agenda.
- Ensure goals and objectives are met.

Managing Conflict

- Expect conflict and disagreements, and intervene appropriately if the group behavior becomes unproductive or unhealthy.
- Refer back to ground rules for handling conflict and remind participants about the big picture – it's all about our STUDENTS!
- Common group inhibitors include:
 - Sidebar conversations, never ending discussions, personal attacks, personal agendas, pessimists, tardiness, attention-seeking, apathy, and participants who consider their opinions untouchable
- Facilitator intervention include:
 - Identifying points of agreement, encouraging people to build on each other's ideas, allowing time for cooling off, an identifying deal-breakers verses points of compromise

CAC Training Summary Handout: Effective Meeting Facilitation

March

Engaging Participants

- Listen attentively to each opinion shared, and provide positive non-verbal feedback to each speaker (eye contact, head nodding).
- Questions you can ask if no one is participating in the discussion:
 - Is this consistent with the data/mission or vision statement?
 - Is there another way to look at this?
 - How will this impact the students?
 - Can someone give me an example?
- Questions you can ask if no one is participating in the discussion:
 - Does anyone else have an idea?
 - Is there a student's perspective on this topic?
 - What was said at table two?
 - Let's hear from someone who hasn't spoken for a while.