

## Core Competencies of an Effective Facilitator

### A. Support the Group in Doing its Work

1. Have enough understanding of the issues the group is dealing with so you can follow and help
2. Be able to use time effectively
  - Balance task and process
  - Shift the focus when needed
  - Make transitions clear so people can follow from one issue to the next
  - Come to decisions
3. Support each person being heard
  - You can go round robin to hear from each person
  - Some may not be ready to speak, but check back in with them when everyone else has spoken to see if that has shifted
  - Or you can simply ask who have we not heard from yet and ask those who have already spoken to wait until everyone has had a say
4. Ask questions for clarification and focus on group's agenda, not your own
5. Help the group come to decisions

### B. Hold the BIG Picture

- Keep the big picture context of the work in mind and refer back to it (this could be Guiding Principles or the fact that we are all in this together)
- Understand and be able to articulate where the group is headed in the long run and how this issue fits into that big picture
- Share insights into what is happening in the group from a group development perspective (for example, we are new to making decisions by consensus and I sense we are being cautious about raising concerns)

### C. Know when you are not able to maintain neutrality or keep your boundaries

- If you find yourself becoming impatient with the process or wanting to add your own thoughts, check in with yourself and either
  - Own that you are having a reaction that is probably not neutral
  - Take off your facilitator "hat" and add your comments
    - Then determine whether or not you can move back into your facilitator role
    - If you can't, ask for someone else to step in
- Maintaining good boundaries requires knowing the line where you and your concerns end and where those of others begin. They are essential for any facilitator.

### D. Build feedback into every meeting

- At the end of every meeting ask what went well and what changes would have made it better
- Specifically ask for constructive feedback on the facilitator role

Prepared by Deb Burwell