

Facilitation Techniques

Technique	Description	When to Use
Once-Around	Ask each person around the table, in order, to share their perspective on the issue/question.	Discussion is unbalanced Decision seems rushed
Talking Stick	Members can only speak if holding a particular item, such as a stick or a gavel.	Discussion is heated Members are talking over each other
Assigned Duty	Assign a duty, such as recording notes or charting discussion, to members who are over-participating or under-participating.	Discussion is unbalanced Certain individuals are disruptive Certain individuals are disengaged
Teacher's Chair	Leader/Facilitator sits directly next to a problematic team member.	Certain individuals are disruptive
Hallway Talk	Leader/Facilitator pulls a team member aside during a break, or before/after the meeting to discuss their behavior. For withdrawn members, this could be a friendly opportunity to check in and make sure they are okay; for disruptive members, this could be an opportunity for confrontation.	Certain individuals are disruptive Certain individuals are disengaged
Pointed Question	Facilitator directs a question to a team member who hasn't been sharing opinions during team discussion.	Certain individuals are disengaged
TTYP (Turn To Your Partner)	Before a bigger discussion, ask participants to first discuss the issue/question with another team member. Each pair would then summarize their discussion for the larger group.	Discussion is unbalanced Decision seems rushed Issue is controversial Issue is complex
Small Group	Before a bigger discussion, ask participants to first discuss the issue/question in small groups with other team members. Each group would then summarize their discussion for the larger group.	Discussion is unbalanced Decision seems rushed Issue is controversial Issue is complex
Write First	Provide a few minutes for participants to write their opinions and ideas down first, and then invite a few (especially those who haven't contributed much) to share them out loud. Introverts especially benefit from this method.	Discussion is unbalanced. Certain individuals are disengaged
Stakeholder	Ask team members, either individually or collectively, to assume the perspective of a key stakeholder in the outcome of the decision. For example, ask one team member to play the role of "member" and react to the proposal from that standpoint. Another person could be "community member", and so on and so forth.	Issue is controversial. Decision seems rushed.
Mutual Invitation	Call on one team member to share their opinion on the issue. That person should then sincerely invite someone else in the group to share their opinion. That person does the same thing and so on. Team members can pass if invited to share.	Discussion is at a standstill. Discussion is unbalanced. Certain individuals are disengaged