
Facilitation Skills in Large Group

1. **Stacking** is simply recognizing those who want to speak and determining an order for who speaks next. You can do this formally by stopping the conversation and asking: “Who would like to speak to this issue?” and then establishing an order. Or you can keep a running list on a note pad as people raise their hands. **Three-before-me** is a good guideline to help create space for those less likely to jump in. You’re helping a group become more inclusive in their dialogue by using such a guideline consistently, and explicitly (i.e. I’m going to invite at least 3 other people to comment before inviting someone to talk again. That helps us make sure we’re getting a breadth of perspectives.)
2. There are many other ways to get different people’s input in a full group dialogue.
 - **Encourage.** “Who else would like to speak who hasn’t had a chance yet?”
 - **Balance.** “Can we hear from someone who may see this issue a little differently?”
 - **Use the Clock.** “Since we agreed to spend only another 5 minutes on this today, who *else* would like to speak?”
 - **Quantify.** “We’ll hear 4 different ideas from the group” or “We’ll hear 2 ideas per person.”
3. Facilitators can help individuals make their point more clearly understood by the group. Here are two ways to support clarity.
 - **Paraphrase.** Repeat, in your own words, what a participant just said.
 - **Mirror.** Recap “What I’ve heard so far is...” “There seems to be concern about....”
4. It is a facilitator’s job to help the group focus their discussion. Here are three ways to support focus.
 - **Track.** When a group is going around in circles, identify high-level issues, summarize them, and allocate time for discussion of each topic
 - **Suggest Silence.** Groups usually feel too busy to stay silent for a moment. But, sometimes the best thing we can do as facilitator is to give participants time to think.
 - **Use a Graphic.** A simple sketch can help frame an issue. For example, you may use a large timeline to organize people’s ideas about how to roll out a new campaign.