

Effective Group Facilitation



**Thomas Jefferson District/UUA
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Facilitation Tips

I. Establish Clear Group Roles

- 1) The Facilitator:
 1. observes the process of the group
 2. focuses on facilitating the group
 3. creates a safe meeting environment in which members can contribute their ideas
 4. knows when and how to get others to perform the facilitating and recording function
 5. balances process and content focus
- 2) The Members:
 1. bring ideas to the group
 2. are open
 3. are prepared to participate
 4. are prepared to share ideas
 5. help to develop others' ideas
- 3) The Recorder:
 1. puts information on the chart to create group memory

II. The Facilitator

- 1) does not contribute ideas or evaluate the group members ideas
- 2) helps members to focus energy on the task and stay on track
- 3) makes sure everyone has a chance to participate
- 4) defends others from personal attack
- 5) is a meeting chauffeur
- 6) is a process advocate who makes suggestions on how to proceed
- 7) makes sure everyone is doing the same thing, in the same way, at the same time

III. How To Define Your Role

"I'm here to help you develop your action plan. I won't contribute my ideas; but I will make process suggestions. We will be working together from this point on to assure that things get done and that goals are met. It is necessary that we all commit to this plan for change."

Effective Group Facilitation

I. Definition of Facilitation

A. The use of communication skills by an outside person to help groups perform effectively.

B. The facilitation process ensures that each group fosters:

1. *Democracy*: Each person has an opportunity to participate in the group.
2. *Responsibility*: Each person is responsible for their behavior and for the performance of the group.
3. *Cooperation*: Group members work together to achieve their collective goals.
4. *Honesty*: Each person must represent him or herself honestly.
5. *Egalitarianism*: Each person has something to contribute to the group and is provided a fair opportunity to do so.

II. Role of a facilitator

A. Maintain ethical behavior:

1. Demystify the role of facilitator
2. Delegate power
3. Maintain passive role
4. Avoid performing as a psychotherapist
5. *Do not* use situation to satisfy your own emotional and personal needs
6. Be up front in what you are trying to accomplish

B. Facilitator functions:

1. Ultimate goal is that group will accomplish task without depending on facilitator
2. Make sure someone in the group records the group activity
3. Help group perform effectively by soliciting the leadership skills and potential of ALL members
4. Make sure everyone has an opportunity to contribute to the group
5. Share your information and establish yourself as an equal with group members, NOT above them
6. Solicit feedback from group members, question members
7. Keep group members on topic of discussion
8. Interrupt major conflicts and misunderstandings
9. Offer clarifying comments

III. Stages of facilitation

A. Stage One: ENTRY

1. Facilitator establishes contact with the group
2. Establishes role with the group

3. Assist in establishing group goals and ground rules
 - Content - What people want to do
 - Process - How people are going to do it

4. Starting the group process
 - Entering the room
 - Observe the individuals as they walk in the room and pick up on the non-verbal and verbal to get a feeling of how people will work with each other. Are people talking w/ each other? What are they talking about? What expressions are on their faces? Age, sex, ethnic group?
 - Be early and waiting for them
 - Seating arrangements
 - Strong influence on communication and cooperation
 - Make sure each participant can make eye contact with each other (Circle Seating Arrangement)
 - Who sits next to whom. People talk to the person next to them. Avoid letting friends sit next to each other. Change seating arrangements with each meeting?
 - Introduction
 - Include your credentials - what is it about you that justifies you being there
 - Personal Information? Set the stage for the egalitarian atmosphere by presenting yourself as a person too
 - Introduction of the group
 - Learn the participants names
 - Why did they want to be involved with this program?
 - What are their expectations for the program?
 - Other activities from your personal experience that have worked
 - Clarifying roles
 - Tell the participants what you view your role as being, demystify role
 - Recorder - Can be a group member or the facilitator
 - Participants - Egalitarian participation, share leadership, tell them what you expect of them, what do they expect of each other
 - Agreement of plan
 - Set an agenda for the meeting
 - What are their wants and needs?

B. Stage Two: OBSERVATION & LISTENING

1. Observe how the group functions:
 - Communication patterns
 - Power issues
 - Personal behaviors

2. Identify group and individual needs and expectations
 - Restlessness
 - Silence
 - Do people look at you? At each other?
 - Posture

3. Identify what stage the group is in
4. Listening:
 - Do not immediately evaluate
 - Understand others' perspectives
 - Ask questions
 - What you think is not the focus

C. Stage Three: INTERVENTION

1. Where is the group now?
2. Where does the group want to be?
3. What barriers, externally and internally, will keep the group from getting what they want?
4. What is the plan of action that overcomes these barriers to get what is wanted?
5. Questions are important
 - Avoid leading questions
 - Phrase questions in a positive manner
 - State conclusions as your own and then ask group to respond

D. Stage Four: TASK ACCOMPLISHMENT

1. Help group rely on themselves
2. Follow through with the plan of action
3. Reflective behaviors/ Feedback
 - Specific rather than general: "You did a good job of putting the agenda together", instead of "You're good with people"
 - Tentative rather than absolute: "You seem uncomfortable interacting with the group", instead of "You don't get along with anyone"
 - Informing rather than commanding: "I haven't finished yet", instead of "Stop interrupting me"
 - Suggesting rather than directing: "Have you considered dividing into sub-committees?", instead of "Divide into sub-committees"
 - Tied to behavior rather than abstract: "You do not include everyone in the discussion", instead of "You need attention"

IV. Team Development Stages

A. Stage One: FORMING

- 1) Task dimension:
 - Focus in on orientation of group members
 - Questioning Why are we here? What are we supposed to do? How are we going to get it done? What are our goals?
- 2) Relationship dimension:
 - Must resolve dependency issues (dependence on facilitator and/or leader) for Structure
Ground rules Establish agenda
 - Individuals feel inadequate, tentative, watchful, superficial
 - Difficult to look beyond immediate needs
- 3) Climate: More suspicious than trusting; tentative

B. Stage Two: STORMING

1. Task dimension:
 - Focus in on organizational concerns
 - Who is going to be responsible for what?
 - What are going to be the work rules? Limits?
 - Organizational concerns reflect interpersonal conflict over
 - Leadership, structure, power, authority, responsibility
 - Members take a stand and issues become polarized
 - Winning may become a focus to establish influence and prestige in group
2. Relationship dimension:
 - Interpersonal conflict
 - Authority, dependency, rules, agenda
 - Extremely critical phase
 - Avoidance and denial will lead to disintegration and
 - slower development
 - Admittance and discussion will lead to cohesiveness
 - and problem solving
 - Individual concerns
 - Being liked and accepted
 - Establishing personal recognition and influence
3. Climate: Tense, conflictive, tentativeness is gone, situation is more real

C. Stage Three: NORMING

1. Task dimension:
 - Openness with regard to task
 - Significant work achievement with brief periods of task abandonment
 - Issues may be over discussed with difficulty making decisions
2. Relationship dimension:
 - Beginning sense of "groupness" by sharing ideas, feelings
 - Give and solicit feedback
 - Share information related to the task
 - People feel good about being a part of the group
 - Competitiveness is played down
3. Climate: Honesty and openness are encouraged with subtle pressure to NOT break down the harmony of the group. Tension may be felt over issues discussed, but tension does not increase.

D. Stage Four: PERFORMING

1. Task dimension:
 - Marked by problem solving and consensual decision making, followed by action
 - Minority points of view are solicited, accepted and understood
 - Seek outside and inside opinions
 - Hidden agendas disappear, group tasks are well defined, with high commitment
 - Shared leadership
 - Greater participation through division of labor
2. Relationship dimension:
 - Marked by interdependence and mutual influence
 - Members can work alone, in sub-groups, or as a unit
 - Collaboration
3. Climate: Free, accepting, easily communicate personal attitudes. Periods of conflict and tension still exist

E. Group Dynamics

1. Effective groups work through tensions and conflict.
2. Return to earlier stage may be triggered by a crisis, new member, new idea.
3. Not all groups reach to final stage

4. Facilitating good discussion

F. Getting discussion started

1. Everyone should know what the discussion is about and the reason for having it
2. Give participants room to be involved
3. Be a model - If discussion calls for personal examples provide one in a relaxed tone
4. Use questions to stimulate discussion
5. Listing - Brainstorm and then list all ideas
6. Go around the room - Ask each person for a response
7. Write things down - Recorder
8. Relate discussion to people's experiences - The more people relate to a topic the more they will participate
9. Use humor to break the tension/silence if appropriate
10. Trust your intuition

G. Facilitating during discussion

1. Equalize participation
2. Keep on the subject
3. Clarify and interpret and then ask for responses
4. Summarize, let the group hear where you think they are or what they have done
5. Pacemaking - Slow them down or speed them up if necessary

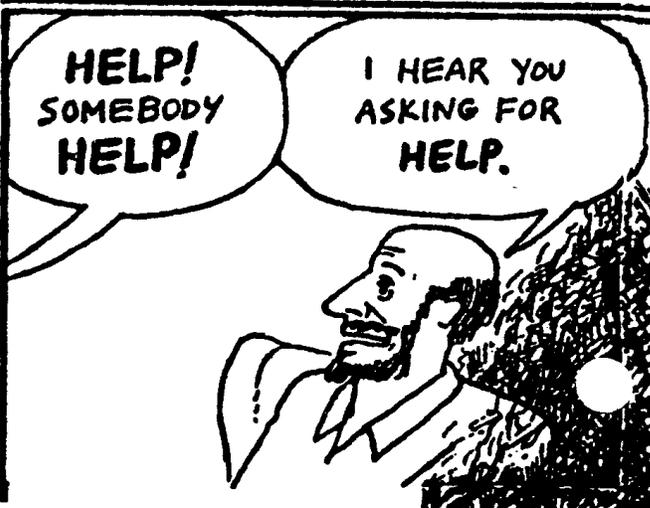
Some examples of task functions of Facilitators:

<i>Initiating</i>	Any attempt to get an action or movement started. Suggesting a new direction for the group discussion or offering a way to get the discussion going.
<i>Regulating</i>	Attempts to order the direction and pace of the group. Calling attention to time, mentioning the agenda, suggesting a structure to go about the task, recalling the group from a tangent.
<i>Informing</i>	Giving or soliciting information. Giving opinions, asking opinions, reporting data, asking for data.
<i>Supporting</i>	Building on the ideas of another. Supporting another's suggestions or initiations with additional input. Elaborating on the thoughts of another, acknowledging the contributions of another by adding to them.
<i>Evaluating</i>	Critiquing the feasibility of an idea. Testing the group for consensus, examining the practicality of a suggestion, helping the group to look at its own process for critique.
<i>Summarizing</i>	Digesting the discussion of the group at some point. Sharing with the group what you hear them saying, restating the contributions of another for clarity.

In discussing TASK functions, Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard mention the following:

- Goal-Setting
- Organizing
- Setting Time Lines
- Directing
- Controlling

Facilitating Challenging Behaviors



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Facilitating Challenging Behaviors

What to Look for in Groups

Observed Behavior	Why	Suggested Response(s)
Professional Heckler	Aggressive, argumentative personality. Gets satisfaction from needling others.	<p>Hold your own temper. Don't let others get excited.</p> <p>Try to find merit in one of his/her points...express your agreement and move on to something else.</p> <p>When he/she makes an obvious misstatement of facts, toss it to the group and let them correct him/her.</p>
Overly Talkative	<p>You'll find this person is usually one of four types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An "eager beaver"; ▪ A show-off ▪ Exceptionally well-informed and anxious to show it; or ▪ Just plain talkative 	<p>Wait until he/she takes a breath; thank him/her; refocus attention on the subject; and then move on.</p> <p>Slow him/her down with some difficult questions.</p> <p>Or jump in with: "That's an interesting point...now let's see what the group thinks."</p>
Asked you for your Opinion	<p>Trying to put you on the spot.</p> <p>Trying to have you support one view.</p> <p>May be simply looking for your advice.</p>	<p>Generally, you should avoid solving their problems for them.</p> <p>Point out your view is relatively unimportant compared to the view of the people at the workshop.</p> <p>Don't let this become a phobia. There are times when you must...and should...give a direct answer.</p> <p>Before you do so, try to determine their reason to asking your view.</p> <p>Say, "First, let's get some other opinions...Joe, how do you look upon this point?" (Select a group member to reply.)</p>

Observed Behavior	Why	Suggested Response(s)
Won't Talk	<p>Bored</p> <p>Indifferent</p> <p>Feels Superior</p> <p>Timid</p> <p>Insecure</p>	<p>If <u>bored</u>, find his/her interest by asking for his/her opinion.</p> <p>If <u>indifferent</u>, irritate him/her for a moment by tossing a provocative query.</p> <p>If the <u>superior type</u>, ask for his/her view after indicating the respect held for experience (Don't overdo this and have the group resent it.)</p> <p>If <u>timid or insecure</u>, compliment him/her the first time he/she does talk. BE SINCERE.</p>
Quick; Helpful	<p>Really trying to help. Actually, makes it difficult; keeps others out.</p>	<p>Cut across him/her <u>tactfully</u> by questioning others.</p> <p>Thank him/her, suggest "We put others to work."</p> <p>Use him/her for summarizing.</p>
Rambler	<p>Talks about everything except subject.</p> <p>Uses far-fetched analogies; gets lost.</p>	<p>When he/she stops for breath, thank him/her attention by restating the relevant points, and move on.</p> <p>Grin, tell him his point is interesting and in friendly manner, indicate we are a bit off the subject.</p> <p>Last resort, glance at watch.</p>

Observed Behavior	Why	Suggested Response(s)
Personality Clash	<p>Sometimes differences of opinion get too sharp.</p> <p>In other cases, two people just don't get along.</p> <p>Can divide your group into factions.</p>	<p>Emphasize points of agreement, minimize points of disagreement (if possible.)</p> <p>Draw attention to objective(s).</p> <p>Cut across with direct question on topic.</p> <p>Bring sound member into discussion.</p> <p>Frankly, ask that personalities be omitted.</p>
Obstinate	<p>Won't budget</p> <p>Prejudiced</p> <p>Hasn't seen your point</p>	<p>Throw his/her view to the group; have group members straighten him/her out.</p> <p>Tell him time is short, you'll be glad to discuss it later; ask him/her to accept group view point for the moment.</p>
Wrong Subject	Not rambling, just off base.	Take blame: "Something I said must have led you off the subject. This is what we should be discussing" (rest point or use the flip chart, etc.)
Inarticulate / Wrong	<p>Lacks ability to put thoughts in proper words.</p> <p>He/she is getting idea but can't convey it.</p> <p>He/she needs help.</p>	<p>Don't say "what you're trying to say is this."</p> <p>Say, "You're saying then that..."</p> <p>Twist his/her ideas as little as possible, have them make sense.</p> <p>Check back for agreement.</p>

Observed Behavior	Why	Suggested Response(s)
Definitely Wrong	Member comes up with comment that is obviously incorrect.	Say, "I can see how you feel" or "That's one way of looking at it." Say, "I can see your point, but can we reconcile that with (true situation)?"
Objector	Against everything	Ask him/her to resolve the objection he/she raises.
Side Conversation	May be related to subject. May be personal. Distracts members and you.	Don't embarrass them. Call one by name, ask him/her an easy question. Call one by name, then restate last opinion expressed or last remark made by group member, and ask his/her opinion of it.
Griper	May have a pet peeve; for the sake of complaining; or in some cases has a legitimate complaint.	<u>If on the subject:</u> Point out that the purpose of a workshop is to find better ways to do things by constructive cooperation. In some cases, it works to have a member of the group answer instead of you. <u>If off the subject:</u> Indicate you'll talk to him/her later.

Process Observing

Process Observer

There are three roles in facilitation:

1. in the midst of the circle- leading.
2. sitting in the circle- participant.
3. standing outside of the circle – observer

The Process Observer does not participate or lead but watches the process and keeps time.

According to those who have worked with a Process Observer, an outside person works better than one from within the society for which you are leading a retreat. If that is not possible, you might have a person be the P.O. for the morning, another for the afternoon, etc.

A Process Observation Check List
(what to follow to give feedback on)
supplied by Malcom Warren

Time Keeping

Gate Keeping

Clarifying

Checking

Polling

Supporting

Sensing

Air Time

Comfort Management

Closures

Thomas Jefferson District/Unitarian Universalist Association

PROCESS OBSERVATIONS

Did anyone ask about non-participants?

What if any emerging leadership was evidenced?

What process did we use to bring in individuals into the group:

What group process was decided on?

How did the different segments of the group communicate?

How did we allow for differences like height differences, personality differences etc.?

Who gets to write and who gets to talk?

Respectful communication

Good humor and goodwill

Agenda focus/remaining on task

Process Observation Checklist

	Yes	No	Not Applicable
Getting tasks done roles			
Initiating – Gives ideas			
Suggests methods to use			
Informing – Gives facts,			
Opinions/Makes self			
Statements			
Clarifying – Expands others			
Ideas/Clears confusion			
Summarizing – Restates			
Others ideas/offers			
Conclusions			
Reality Testing – analyzes,			
Tests suggestions			
Tries others ideas out			
Expediting – Prods group to			
Action/Pushes to decision			
Getting along roles			
Harmonizing-Defuses			
Tension/Explores differences			
Gatekeeping – Invites			
Others to speak/Works to			
Include others			
Encouraging – Acts warm,			
Friendly/Values others			
Contributions			
Compromising – Modifies			
Own position/Encourages			
Others to modify			
Standard Setting – Checks			
Limits with others/Helps to set			
Norms			
Process Observing – Notes			
Others' behavior/Reports			
To group			
Getting in the way roles			
Blocking – Stops group			
Process/Prevents agreement			
Withdrawing – Avoids topic			
Remains indifferent			
Dominating – Monopolizes			
Air time/Belittles other's ideas			
Playing – Uses jokes to stall			
Ridicules tasks, group work			
Undermining – Criticizes			
And boast/Becomes			
Aggressive and abusive			
Interrupts group participants			

Trouble Shooting Tips

Occupational Hazard



"It's orthopedic toothpaste—for people who put their foot in their mouth a lot."

TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS

Action

Stands up and threatens to leave

Verbally or physically threatens another disputant

Starts to cry

Interrupts another person

Remains locked into his/her position, refusing to budget

Things are getting chaotic and everyone is talking at once.

Person's thoughts are fragmented/disjointed confused.

Person appears to be in need/pain, etc.

Person makes a toxic i.e. an inflammatory statement

Tries to ally with you ("Haven't you had to consider what steps may have to be taken regarding your own parents?")

Response

Use a calm voice and gestures to encourage the person to rejoin the session.

Use a calm firm voice to regain control; ask the person to leave the room until s/her calms down; remind group members to address each other respectfully and about ground rules.

Be caring, don't ignore group member. Pass tissues and always have some available.

Repeat the ground rules; use body language to block interruptions i.e., hold your hand up, a glance of disapproval if repeated.

Enumerate the issues and options as you understand them and let the person know they have choices and now you need to move on.

I'm sorry we need the benefit of what you're saying. I'm going to ask each of you to speak one at a time.

I'm confused about what you're saying. Are you saying ... or exactly what do you mean when you say...?

What are you thinking right now? (or) What do you need right now?

Use reframing or ask person to restate using neutral language and remind about ground rules.

Do not get embroiled in these kinds of questions: ignore the comment or quickly refocus conversation.

Eg. "I have, but let's hear from some others..."

Tries to attack your authority or impartiality (“How can you be neutral when you work here?”)

Respond candidly to questions and cite your belief that you can be impartial and that you do care about group members and breathe!

Discloses something about another individual which is very intimate

Say I feel uncomfortable with your sharing this information and so and so is not present.

Side conversations going on while a group member is speaking

I (want, need, would like) your undivided attention.

Types of Personalities You May Encounter

GROUP MANAGEMENT

TYPES OF PERSONALITIES YOU MAY ENCOUNTER

How He Acts	Why	What to Do
Professional Heckler	Aggressive, argumentative personality. Gets satisfaction from needling others.	<p>Hold your own temper. Don't let others get excited.</p> <p>Try to find merit in one of his/her points...express your agreement and move on to something else.</p> <p>When he/she makes an obvious misstatement of facts, toss it to the group and let them correct him/her.</p>
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How He Acts	Why	What to Do
<p>Asked you for your Opinion</p>	<p>Trying to put you on the spot.</p> <p>Trying to have you support one view.</p> <p>May be simply looking for your advice.</p>	<p>Generally, you should avoid solving their problems for them.</p> <p>Point out your view is relatively unimportant compared to the view of the people at the workshop.</p> <p>Don't let this become a phobia. There are times when you must...and should...give a direct answer.</p> <p>Before you do so, try to determine their reason to asking your view.</p> <p>Say, "First, let's get some opinions...Joe, how do you look upon this point?" (Select a group member to reply.</p>
<p>Won't Talk</p>	<p>Bored</p> <p>Indifferent</p> <p>Feels Superior</p> <p>Timid</p> <p>Insecure</p>	<p>If <u>bored</u>, around his/her interest by asking for his/her opinion.</p> <p>If <u>indifferent</u>, irritate him/her for a moment by tossing a provocative query.</p> <p>If the <u>superior type</u>, ask for his/her view after indicating the respect held for experience (Don't overdo this and have the group resent it.)</p> <p>If <u>timid or insecure</u>, compliment him/her the first time he/she does talk. BE SINCERE.</p>

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Wrong Subject	Not rambling, just off base.	Take blame: ”Something I said must have led you off the subject. This is what we should be discussing” (rest point or use the flip chart, etc.)

How He Acts	Why	What to Do
Side Conversation	<p>May be related to subject.</p> <p>May be personal.</p> <p>Distracts members and you.</p>	<p>Don't embarrass them.</p> <p>Call one by name, ask him/her an easy question.</p> <p>Call one by name, then restate last opinion expressed or last remark made by group member, and ask his/her opinion of it.</p>
Inarticulate Wrong	<p>Lacks ability to put thoughts in proper words.</p> <p>He/she is getting idea but can't convey it.</p> <p>He/she needs help.</p>	<p>Don't say "what you're trying to say is this."</p> <p>Say, "You're saying then that..."</p> <p>Twist his/her ideas as little as possible, have them make sense.</p> <p>Check back for agreement.</p>
Definitely Wrong	Member comes up with comment that is obviously incorrect.	<p>Say, "I can see how you feel" or "That's one way of looking at it."</p> <p>Say, "I can see your point, but can we reconcile that with (true situation)?"</p>
Definitely Wrong Opinion	Must be handled delicately	<p>Say, "Sorry, I wasn't clear. What I meant was..."</p> <p>Ask group, "How do the rest of you feel about this?"</p>
Objector	Against everything	Ask him/her to resolve the objection he/she raises.
Highly Argumentative	<p>Combative personality...professional heckler</p> <p>Or</p> <p>May be normally good natured but upset by personal problems.</p>	<p>Keep your own temper firmly in check...don't let group get excited either.</p> <p>Honestly try to find merit in one of his <u>points</u> ... express your agreement (orb get the group to do so) ...then move on to something else.</p> <p>When he makes an obvious mis-statement, toss it to group...let them turn it down.</p>

		As a last resort, talk to him privately during a recess...try to find out what's bothering him...see if you can win his cooperation.
Side Conversationalist	May be commenting on subject matter, but usually personal conversation.	<p>Don't embarrass him...but call him by name and ask an easy question.</p> <p>Call him by name, then restate the last opinion expressed or last remark, and ask his opinion of it.</p> <p>Get the conversationalist <u>into the act</u>.</p>

Effective Meetings

MORE EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

Evaluate Your Board

Thinking of the way in which your committee or board or board functions, rank each of the following items by placing the appropriate number in the blank in front of the item, using the following scale:

- 5. Yes, definitely
- 4. Usually, yes
- 3. More often than not
- 2. Sometimes
- 1. Rarely happens
- 0. Never happens

- _____ A. It's easy to get items on the agenda.
- _____ B. The same few people do most of the talking
- _____ C. Conflicts are smoothed over or avoided.
- _____ D. Once a decision is made, it is clear who is to carry it out.
- _____ E. At each meeting we review the decisions of the past meeting checking whether they were carried out and why or why not.
- _____ F. The same problems keep coming up month after month.
- _____ G. We consider many alternative solutions prior to making a decision about action.
- _____ H. Usually a motion suggesting action is made prior to much discussion about the problem at hand.
- _____ I. People talk differently outside the meeting than they do in the meeting.
- _____ J. Members check with each other to make sure they understood what was said.
- _____ K. Each individual speaks for himself rather than generalizing with statements like "we think" or "our people believe" or "everybody thinks".
- _____ L. Our committee or board seems to wander aimlessly and not be clear about our purposes.
- _____ M. Listing the agenda items to be considered and the ordering of these items is one of the first decisions we make at each meeting of our committee or board.
- _____ N. At our meetings chairs are arranged so that we can all see each other's faces.

MEETING CHECKLIST

PUBLICITY/PROMOTIONS/NOTIFYING

<u>Who responsible</u>	<u>By when</u>	<u>Notices to whom</u>	<u>Phone calls</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____

AGENDA AND RESOURCE MATERIALS

_____	copies of agenda	_____	_____
_____	previous minutes, com. rep.	_____	_____

RESPONSIBILITIES BEFORE THE MEETING

_____	leadership assignments	_____	_____
_____	record keeping	_____	_____

MEETING SPACE

_____	size, shape, room set up	_____	_____
_____	location, transportation	_____	_____
_____	heating, AC, ventilation	_____	_____

EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES FOR THE MEETING

_____	tables (number, size & shape)	_____	_____
_____	chairs (comfort and number)	_____	_____
_____	newsprint, tape recorder, pencils	_____	_____
_____	name tags, tents	_____	_____
_____	copies of previous mins/reports	_____	_____

JUST BEFORE THE MEETING

_____	seating arrangement	_____	_____
_____	equipment (easels, screens, etc.)	_____	_____
_____	materials (paper, pens, etc.)	_____	_____
_____	refreshments	_____	_____
_____	agenda available	_____	_____

AT THE MEETING

_____	facilitation, running	_____	_____
_____	documentation – recording	_____	_____
_____	operation of equipment	_____	_____
_____	process review, stop sessions	_____	_____

END OF MEETING AND AFTER

_____	collect unused materials	_____	_____
_____	remind people of their commitments	_____	_____

Resources

Opening Words

I light this flame,
Symbol of our Unitarian Universalism,
Reminding us that

As we number our days
 We are the keepers of the power of wisdom;

As we number our days
 We are the keepers of the power of love;

As we number our days
 We are the keepers of the powers of hope;

As we number our days
 We are the keepers of the powers of joy.

Opening Words

When we walk to the edge of all the light we have and take the step into the darkness of the unknown, we must believe one of two things will happen – there will be something solid for us to stand on, or we will be taught how to fly.

Patrick Overton

Opening Words

We pause this hour to honor the Spirit and to accept ourselves as fragile humans, equally full of nobility and strength.

We gather weary of life's trials and cheered by infinite possibilities for love's grace.

We meet with smiles and glad voices for old friends and new – every stranger a gift of potential friendship.

We rejoice in the keen intellect and the warm heart.

We remember those whose opportunities and needs our society thwarts, and we give thanks for the blessings that are ours.

We praise all who extend a hand in service and those whose vision of justice commands action.

We pause;

We gather;

We meet;

We rejoice;

We remember;

We give thanks;

We praise;

We proclaim our community.

Bruce Southworth

Opening Words

We are here,
Come from our individual homes to this place
To be among kindred spirits
Who are our companions along life's road..

We come with our wounds and our triumphs,
Our fragmented selves and our hours of wholeness,
For all of who we are
Is welcome in this place.

We come to touch and be touched,
To reach across generations
For we are young and old,
Women and men, boys and girls together.
We come seeking intimations of truth,
An increasing complexity.

We come to restock our store of courage and hope.

We come to be enfolded in the arms of love,
The source and calling of life.

Ann Tyndall

Opening Words

Look to this day!
For it is life, the very life of life.
In its brief course lie all the verities
And realities of your existence:
 The bliss of growth,
 The glory of action,
 The splendor of beauty:
For yesterday is but a dream,
And tomorrow is only a vision;
But today, well lived, makes every
Yesterday a dream of happiness
And every tomorrow a vision of hope.
Look well, therefore, to this day.

“The Exhortation of the Dawn” Kalidasa

Resources:

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