



Agile ORLANDO 2023

JULY 24-28

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About Kadidra Hurst

- Solutions Manager/Agile Delivery Lead
American Psychological Association (APA)

Agilist striving to create a safe, collaborative and inclusive environment where team members can effectively communicate, share ideas, and continuously improve their processes to deliver high-quality products, achieve their objectives, and reach their full potential.

- Core Team Member, Agile in Color
www.agileincolor.org

Professional development and mentoring organization to amplify, boost and connect underrepresented voices in the Agile Community.



Kadidra Hurst

Agile Essentials: Great Facilitation



Agile ORLANDO
JULY 24-28 **2023**

#AGILE2023



Agile Essentials – Great Facilitation Agenda

- Introduction / Icebreaker
- Identify common meetings pitfalls (& solutions)
- Understanding facilitation
- Explore a variety of participation and facilitation techniques
- Examine agile facilitation tools

Introduction





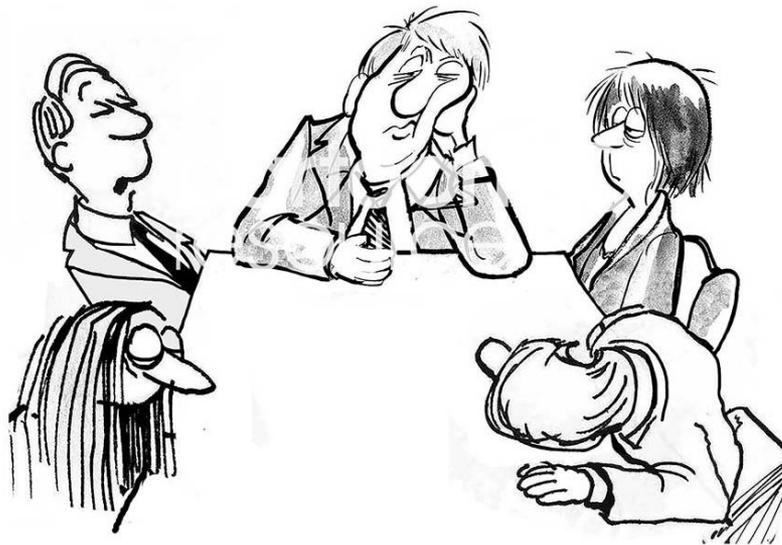
Roughly, how much time per week do you spend in meetings?

On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate the overall effectiveness of your meetings?

During meetings, do attendees struggle to stay engaged and participate fully?

During meetings do some attendees dominate the conversation while others remain silent?

What is the common theme in these cartoons?



What is the common theme in these cartoons?



What is the common theme in these cartoons?



"Frankly, I don't know why I called this meeting."

Pitfalls & Solutions



Overcoming the Pitfalls of Unproductive Meetings

No clear agenda



Set a well-defined agenda that outlines the topics to be discussed, objectives, and desired outcomes.

Lack of Participation



Encourage active participation, provide opportunities for input, and create a supportive environment that fosters open dialogue.

Dominating Attendees



Facilitate balanced participation and ensure everyone has an opportunity to share their thoughts by managing time and encouraging equal involvement.

Overcoming the Pitfalls of Unproductive Meetings

Side conversations / Multitasking



Set ground rules for respectful behavior and actively manage the meeting to minimize side conversations and maintain focus.

Lack of follow-up



Assign action items, set deadlines, and establish accountability to ensure that decisions made in the meeting are acted upon.

Meetings running over time



Practice time management, stick to the agenda, and manage discussions efficiently to ensure meetings conclude on time.

Overcoming the Pitfalls of Unproductive Meetings

Lack of Preparation



Encourage attendees to come prepared, share pre-meeting materials, and set expectations for individual preparation.

Lack of focus



Maintain a clear and focused discussion by steering the conversation back to the agenda when necessary and managing tangents.

Lack of Decision Making



Establish decision-making protocols, provide necessary information, encourage constructive debate, and ensure decisions are reached.

Is there anything missing from this list?



Is there anything missing from the previous list?

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A decorative border surrounds the text, featuring various elements: green and yellow leaves, blue and orange dots, blue and green brushstrokes, and a pattern of small black dots on a light blue background.

**Meetings should be
for doing work, not
talking about doing
work**

Understanding Facilitation

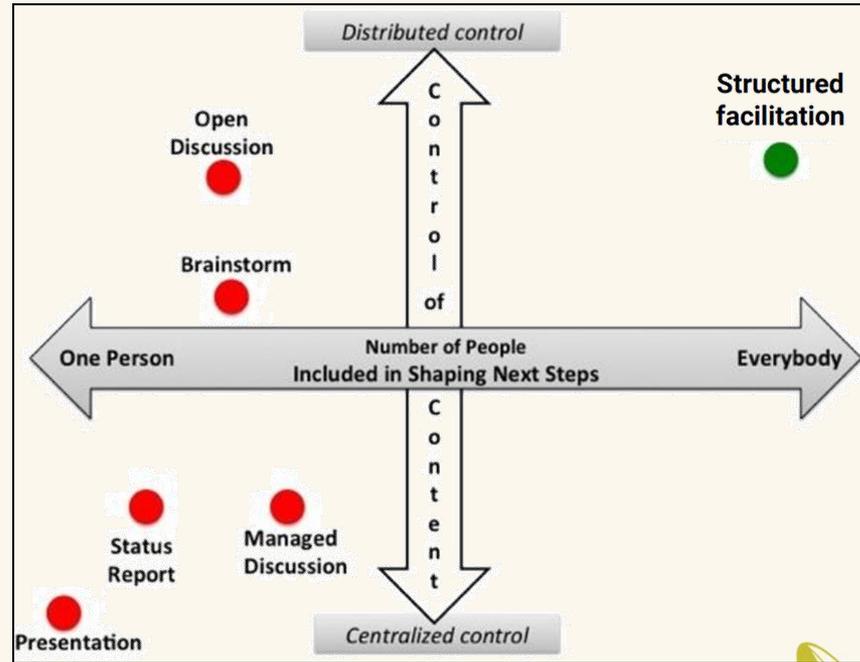


An introduction to meeting facilitation

Facilitation is about taking responsibility for making meetings as easy, inclusive and effective as possible. It is rooted in the values of shared power, equality and the belief that everyone's needs matter, and all voices should be heard



~~Teaching~~ ~~“Running”~~ ~~Leading~~ Facilitating



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Use facilitation when...

**you need a group
to make a decision
together**

Outcome of Successful Facilitation

Everyone feels heard

- Glad they attended
- More likely to buy in and support the decision
- More likely to attend next time

The best ideas, not just the loudest ones

- Fewer surprises later

Facilitator: A Definition from the Agile Alliance

A facilitator is a person who chooses or is given the explicit role of conducting a meeting. This role usually entails that the facilitator will take little part in the discussions on the meeting's topic but will focus primarily on creating the conditions for effective group processes, in the pursuit of the objectives for which the meeting was convened.

Three main areas to keep in mind when facilitating

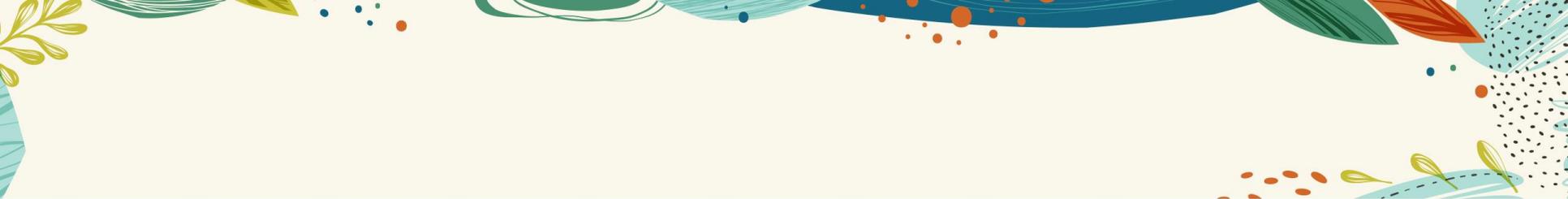
Creating a space where everyone feels valued and can participate fully in discussions and decisions.

Helping the group work efficiently and get tasks done, such as sharing information, reaching decisions, airing conflict, or making progress with their tasks.

Preparation is one of the most important and overlooked jobs of the facilitator

Facilitation & Participation Techniques





Meeting Goal	Meeting Type	Participation Technique
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share project updates • Provide updates on system performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Status Meeting • Team Meeting 	<p>Presentation</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate ideas for new products, features or services • Address a specific challenge and explore possible solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy Meeting • Team Meeting • Retrospective Meeting 	<p>Brainstorming</p>

Meeting Goal	Meeting Type	Participation Technique
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on past experiences and discuss lessons learned to improve future performance • Resolve a disagreement between two teams over resource allocation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retrospective Meeting • Conflict Resolution Meeting 	Open Discussion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss and prioritize software feature requests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Product Roadmap Planning meeting 	Managed Discussions

Facilitation skills

Active Listening

The conscious effort to get an accurate understanding of where someone is coming from.

Questioning

Asking questions can help participants clarify, develop, and refine their ideas without coaching or intrusion.

Summarizing

Regular summaries of the discussion can help avoid repetition by reassuring people their points have been heard, and highlighting the key issues raised.

Go Round

Allows everyone to speak on their own terms

Facilitation techniques

Small Groups

Working in small groups allows for more participation.

Charting

Provides ownership/acknowledgement of ideas to participants.

Individual Writing

Promotes individual reflection and independent thinking

Parking Lot

Keeps the discussion on track

Facilitating Discussions

Setting the
context

Main
Discussion

Closure

All 3 are important!

Setting the Context

Norms for
participation
(Ground Rules)

Goals for
discussion

Time
Management

Facilitating Discussions

Get each point of view heard without interruption

Stacking

Say, “First we’ll hear from John, then Susan, and then Tom.”

Facilitating Discussions

If a person is dominating the conversation

Say, “Thank you for your comments, Mike. You’ve had a lot to contribute to this idea, so now I would like to hear if other people in the group would like to share anything.

Look in the eye and kindly Say, “thank you, I would like to hear from others.

Avoid eye contact and call on others to speak

Facilitating Discussions

Get as many individuals as possible to participate so that unspoken points are made.

Encouraging

Say, “Who else wants to say something?” or “Could we hear from someone who hasn’t talked for a while?” or “Let’s hear from someone new. Mike? Mary?”

Balancing

Say, “Does everyone see it that way or are there other points of view?”

Making Space

Say, “Kevin, you look like you were about to say something.” or “Mary, did you have something you wanted to say?”

Facilitating Discussions

Get as many individuals as possible to participate so that unspoken points are made.

Using the Clock

Say, “We have five minutes left. I want to make sure we’ve heard from everyone who wants to speak - particularly those who haven’t yet had a chance yet. Who wants to speak?”

Balancing

Say, “Does everyone see it that way or are there other points of view?”

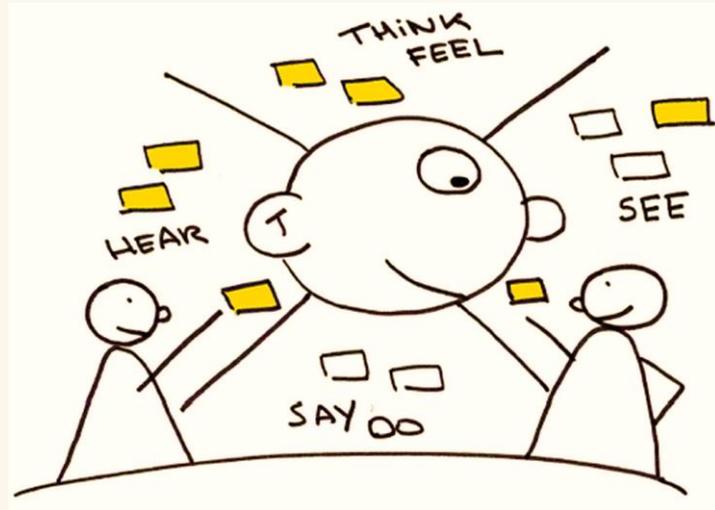
Making Space

Say, “Kevin, you look like you were about to say something.” or “Mary, did you have something you wanted to say?”

Facilitating Discussions

Practice getting
comfortable with
silence

Tools & Resources



Liberating Structures

A collection of 33 facilitation techniques designed to foster active participation, collaboration, and creativity within groups and teams.

Improv prototyping 	Drawing together 	Open space 	Critical uncertainties 
Helping heuristics 	Design storyboards 	Generative relationships 	Ecocycle 
Conversation café 	Celebrity interview 	Agree/certainty matrix 	Panarchy 

Microstructures!

Small building blocks you can combine into activities & agendas

Term/concept from Liberating Structures

Silent writing

- Start any activity with all participants generating their own stickies before inviting anyone to speak
- Ensures that quiet teammates can be heard!

Self-editing

- Before sharing stickies, ask all participants to “self-edit” down to their favorite 3, 5, or other manageable number
- Helps to focus on the best ideas, not just volume

Dot voting

- After stickies have been shared, grant each person a fixed number of votes they can allocate however they want
- Vote by placing a dot (sticker, marker, or virtual) on the ideas they most want to advance

1-2-4-All

1-2-4-All is a method for engaging all members of a large group simultaneously to generate ideas together.

This method is highly scalable and can be used for almost any group size.

- The facilitator asks a question about an issue, problem to resolve, or a proposal to put forward.
- Individuals self-reflect on the question [1 min.]
- Individuals pair up to generate ideas in pairs, building on ideas from self-reflection [2 min.]
- Pairs group into foursomes to share and develop ideas from each pair. [4 min.]
- The facilitator pulls the entire group together to share and develop a common idea.

The 2x2

Quickly rank ideas on two axes



Best in groups of six or fewer (use breakouts)

Bring stickies, pens, and blue (wall-safe) painter's tape

Decide on the two axes

- Any two considerations that are in tension with each other, or interact in unpredictable ways - benefit/value vs. time/cost/effort is common

Generate stickies

- Use any microstructures and any prompt to create a list of items - or use items from an earlier activity

Rank the vertical axis

- Using your first consideration, stack-rank the items on the wall, top to bottom - no ties
- Only after all items are ranked, place a strip of blue painter's tape horizontally at the *midpoint* of the list

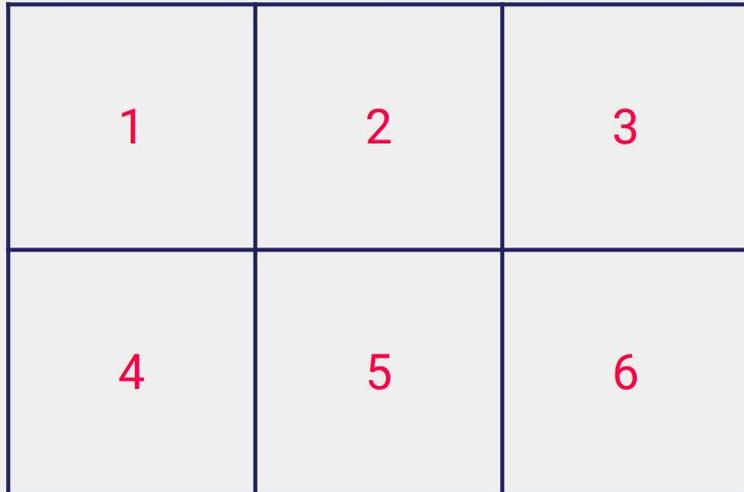
Rank the horizontal axis

- Keep each item in its same vertical position!
- Using the second consideration, move the items right and left to stack-rank them - no ties
- Only after all items are ranked, place another strip of blue painter's tape vertically at the *midpoint* of the list

(Optional) Name or describe each quadrant

The 6-Box

Quickly de-dupe ideas and narrow focus



Can work for a range of group sizes

Bring stickies and pens

Create the 6-Box diagram in advance using blue painter's tape, whiteboard and marker, an easel sheet, or whatever you like

Generate stickies

- Use any microstructures and any prompt to create a list of items - or use items from an earlier activity

Fill Box 1

- Invite anyone to offer an item to go in Box 1
- Ask everyone else if they have similar or related items that could go together in Box 1 - negotiate as needed

Fill remaining Boxes

- Invite anyone to offer an item to go in Box 2
- Repeat, and watch for opportunities to consolidate Boxes together if they are similar enough

(Optional) Name or describe each Box

Closure

Take a few minutes (even 1-2 minutes) to summarize the main points of the discussion.

Remind participants what they learned in the discussion, what they learned as a group, and even points that have yet to be resolved

Obtain feedback from the participants.

- What are you taking away from this session?
- What worked well/less well?

Type one or two key things you are taking away from this session

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Resources

- Liberating Structures – Introduction
www.liberatingstructures.com
- Open Practice Library
www.openpracticelibrary.com
- International Association of Facilitators
<http://www.iaf-world.com/>

Explore related sessions

If you enjoyed this session and would like to go deeper on this topic, *check out these upcoming sessions, recommended by their track chairs!*

Learn to be an engaging story teller with NYT Best Selling Author Melody Anne

Tuesday, 3:45pm – Osceola Ballroom D

It's Their Choice - 10 Ways to Encourage Autonomy

Thursday, 9:00am – Lafayette 4

50 Shades of Retrospective – Levelling up your continuous improvement game

Friday, 9:00am – Osceola Ballroom D



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PERSONALIZED FEEDBACK FROM AGILE PROFESSIONALS

AGILE ADVICE

OSCEOLA BALLROOM 1 & 2

MONDAY - THURSDAY, 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Thank
You

Kadidra Hurst



bit.ly/Kadidra-linkedin



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Join Agile Alliance today!

Become an Agile Alliance member and help support our non-profit mission, while gaining access to valuable benefits like online events, in-person conference discounts, and event session videos.



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