

FACILITATION FACTS

The word facilitator comes from the Latin root “facile” - or “easy.”

And guess what? **Your facilitator should be making your life easy!**

Here are some of the classic indications your team may benefit from a facilitator:

- Lots of head nodding in the group but corridor conversations indicate contrary opinions
- “Happy Clappy” conferences that feel great at the time but leave you feeling empty shortly afterwards
- Conferences that result in action plans without any real commitment (things snap back to normal)
- Stunted progress - where your group just feels stuck
- Helpless silence - where the group feels unable to even get started, or waits for you as leader to perform some kind of magic
- Aggression or conflict - where there is underlying (or overt) personality conflict in the group
- Low trust - where people do not feel comfortable speaking the truth or facing facts
- New teams - when your team has newly formed or has new members, and it’s important for the team to function at a high level

Key roles of a facilitator:

Before your meeting, your facilitator will:

- Assist and advise in the preparation of the meeting / conference
- Help come up with options to make the meeting comfortable and productive
- Develop stimulus to provoke quality thinking
- Prepare any required pre-work
- Conduct research if required
- Develop an understanding of the personalities that make up the group
- Identify any group issues that need to be handled with caution
- Ensure that your meeting has clear outcomes in mind
- Set up the venue and troubleshoot any issues

During your meeting, your facilitator will:

- Welcome participants to the venue and set them at ease
- Break the ice and help the group find a feeling of flow
- Inject energy and help avoid the key energy slumps during the day
- Watch out for circular conversations and help move the group conversation forward
- Ask questions to uncover the deeper meaning of the group conversation
- Listen carefully and follow the conversation
- Watch for signs of dissatisfaction, group think or other classic group behaviour problems
- Capture the flow of the conversation on paper in real time
- Provide a safe and confidential space for a group to carry out challenging work
- Help develop a clear strategy and/or action plan for your team

After your meeting, your facilitator will:

- Prepare your action plan and meeting minutes
- Conduct a feedback survey and any follow-up research
- Provide facilitator's observations on group development and discussion
- Suggest next steps for continual improvement of group performance

You might be wondering what a facilitator costs.

Some facilitators charge a day rate or even by the hour. With so many variables for each new project, it's hard to define what the exact cost of facilitation will be, but as a guide:

For a smaller project, you should budget around \$6,000 – up to \$10,000 if there are more complex issues at play.

Larger projects may bring about costs of up to \$20,000 - especially if a co-facilitator is required.