

Encouraging Positive Group Dynamics

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AGENDA

- The Many Roles of a Facilitator
- A Framework for Positive Group Dynamics
- Facilitation and Moderation Skills
- Tips to Handle Challenging Dynamics
- Open Forum

The Many Roles of a Facilitator

Facilitator = moderator, encourager, peer,
host, conductor, clock-watcher,
logistical expert ...

▶ The Two Keys to Encouraging Positive Group Dynamics

Positive Group Dynamics =

- being audience-centered
- being intentional

▶ A Framework for Positive Group Dynamics



Establishing a Framework for Smooth Group Dynamics

Clear Goals

Start strong! State the goals of the group clearly and simply.

Ask for help achieving them.

"Let's remember that we're here to provide support and understanding...."

"Please help by sharing any resources you can recommend to others ..."

Establishing a Framework for Smooth Group Dynamics

Knowledge of the Group

Find out all you can about participants before/during.

Use it to make connections and address specific needs.

Don't discount initial small-talk! (But don't let it use up too much time.)

Where are they in their health journey?

Are there communication, physical or cognitive impairments?

Hobbies, interests, family and community?

Establishing a Framework for Smooth Group Dynamics

Guidelines

State them clearly : both logistics and ideal dynamics.

LOGISTICS

- *Please stay on mute when not speaking.*
- *Point out tech features (remote) or location of restrooms (in-person)*
- *Staying on/off camera.*
- *We'll take a break at 2:15...*

DYNAMICS

- *Set the tone right away.*
- *Define the environment: safe, confidential, supportive*
- *Define your role: "I'll help balance the voices/time..."*
- *Set expectations: not here to problem-solve, but to offer resources and provide space to share...*

Establishing a Framework for Smooth Group Dynamics

Regular Communication of Goals/Guidelines

Reinforce/remind to keep things on track.

Thank members for “following the guidelines.”

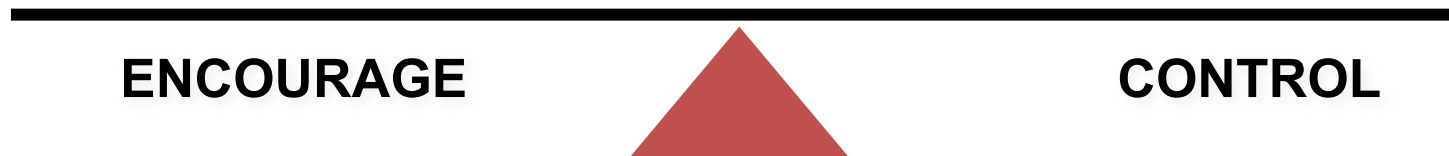
- *At the start of each meeting*
- *When new members join*
- *At the end of meetings*
- *“Thank you for helping us stay focused on providing support...”*

Establishing a Framework for Smooth Group Dynamics



Facilitation and Moderation Skills

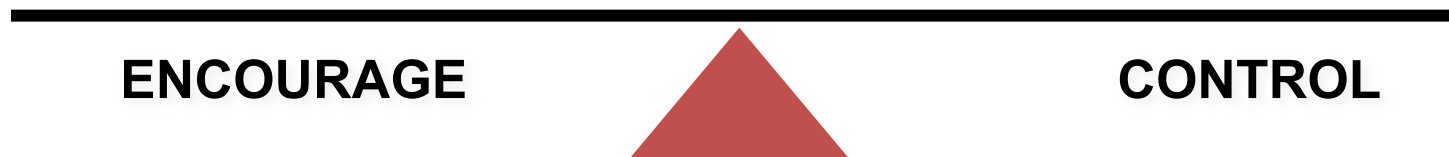
Encouraging Participation vs Controlling the Process



Facilitation and Moderation Skills

Most of us tend toward one or the other...

Which do you favor?

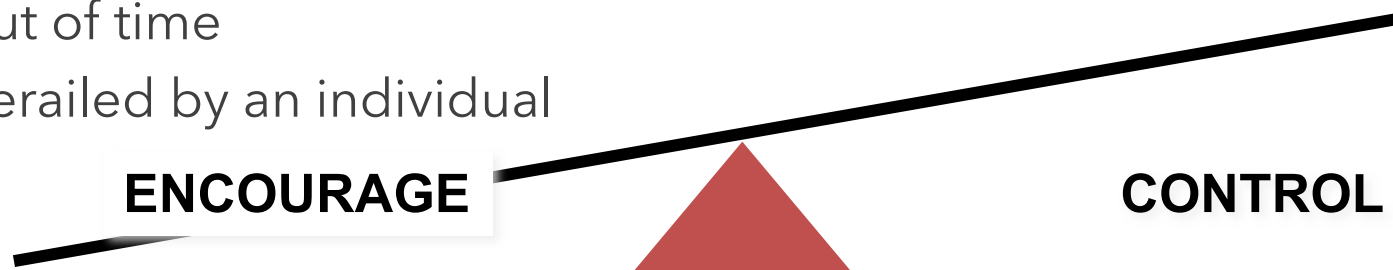


Facilitation and Moderation Skills

If your tendency is to encourage...

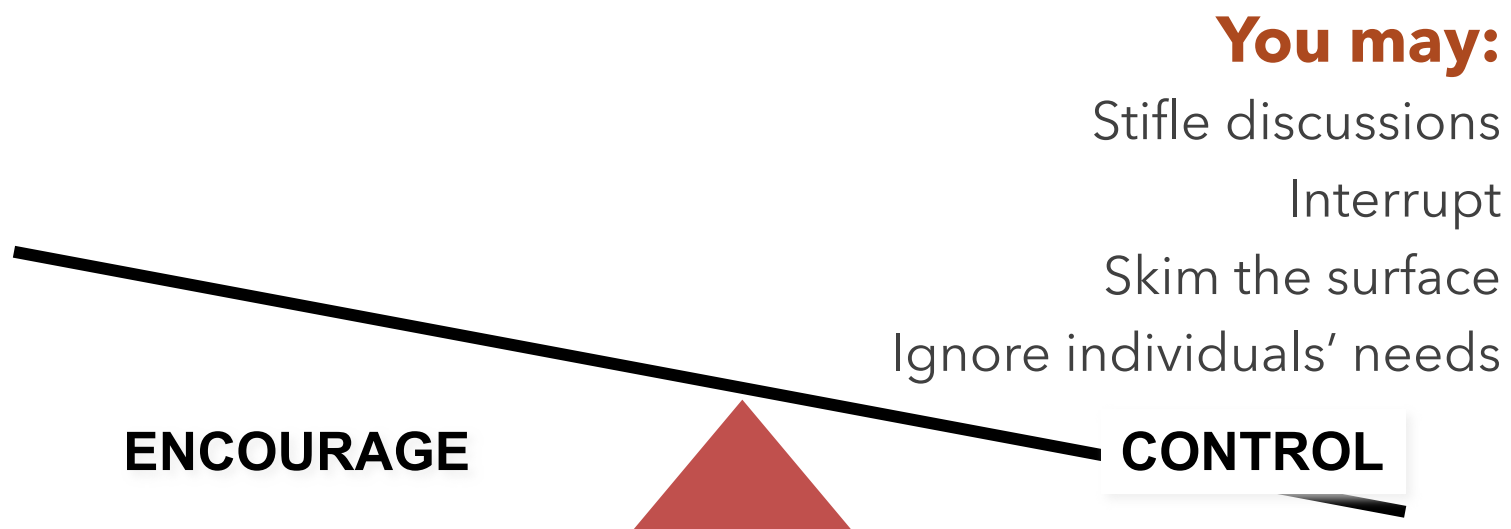
You may:

- Let discussions go too long
- Get off track
- Run out of time
- Get derailed by an individual



Facilitation and Moderation Skills

If your tendency is to control the process ...



Facilitation and Moderation Skills

Facilitation means making decisions. Strike the balance!

Let discussions go on

Ask open-ended, follow-up questions

Discuss emotions

Chart and discuss ideas

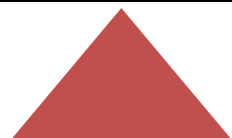
Keep group on track/on topic

Use the "parking lot"/refer to other sessions

Acknowledge emotions

Summarize discussions and move on

ENCOURAGE

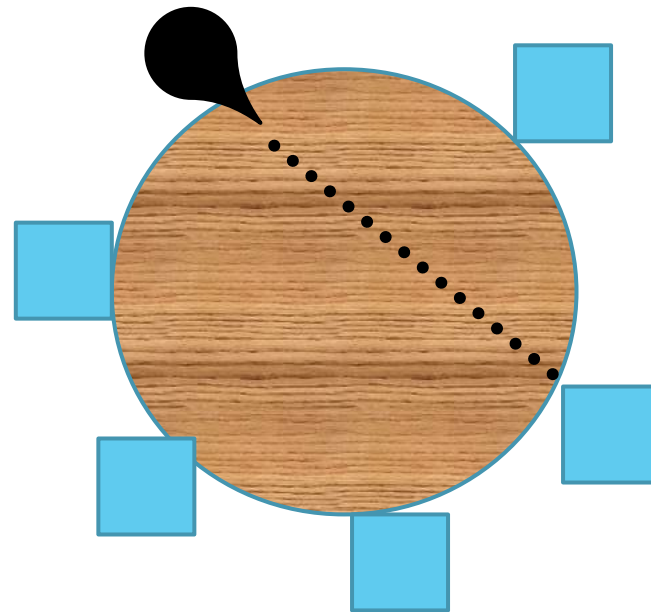


CONTROL

Facilitation and Moderation Skills

Use nonverbals to encourage

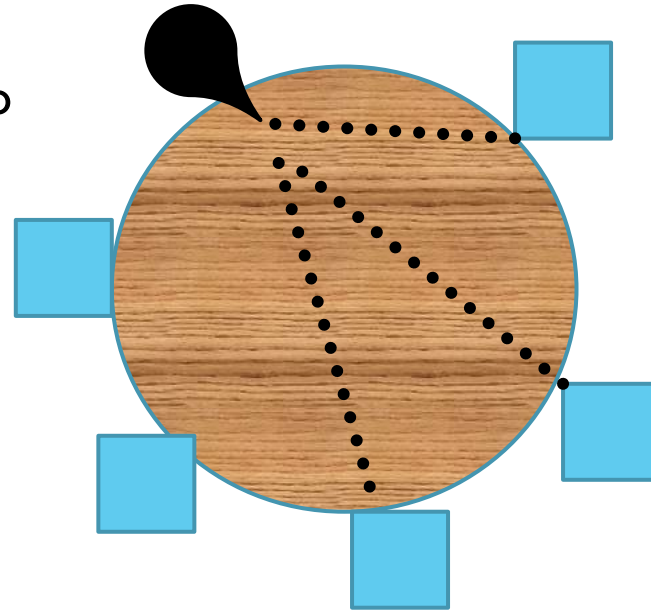
Focusing on an individual encourages participation.



Facilitation and Moderation Skills

Use nonverbals to control

Focusing on the group enables control



Tips for Encouraging and Engaging

Non-responsive participants

1. Give it time. Watch nonverbals. Focus on individuals.
2. Provide an example response: "I've heard others say x." (vs. "What I believe is...")
3. Take a poll: "How many of you have seen this happen? Tell us about that."
4. Respond as a co-facilitator (when co-facilitating).

▶ Tips for Encouraging and Engaging

Domineering Participants

1. Return to guidelines: "I want to make sure others get to weigh in..."
"We have just 5 minutes left and we haven't heard from everyone...."
2. Let your cofacilitator manage: "There's also a comment in the chat..."
3. Jump in and summarize: "It sounds like you have a lot of experience with this issue. How about other people?"
4. Shift focus to the group. Speak to all.

Making the Technology Work for All

1. Explore options in settings, such as “Always display participant name,” or “Always use Gallery view.”
2. Open the room before the session starts. Greet people individually.
3. Arrange participants’ thumbnails directly under your camera. (And keep notes close as well.)
4. Guidance for engagement (chat, on-camera, mute, etc.)
5. Practice your camera skills. Record yourself!

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