

Facilitator Guide

Preparation

Initial Talk – Participant Preparation

- a. Explain the principles (Voluntary, Impartial, Informal, Confidential, Interest-Based & Collaborative)
- b. Validate their agreement to participate
- c. Assist them in evolving their mindset so they can engage effectively with the other person, remember that the goal is to prime them for connection & problem-solving, and help them reflect and stimulate critical thinking about their narrative on the issue using these different tools:
 - Building Psychological Safety : A social climate that supports open communication, vulnerability, and a sense of belonging.
 - Trauma Awareness : Understanding the term « trauma » and considering its role in how someone may view or interact with others. Trauma can overwhelm someone's ability to cope and has lasting adverse effects on their sense of safety, self, and ability to regulate emotions or maintain relationships.
 - Empathy in Conflict Resolution : Validates our emotions and enables our brain's "Executive" function to re-engage.
 - Emotions Wheel : Naming Emotions to decrease their intensity.
 - Mindfulness & Grounding Exercises : This type of practice supports staying present rather than escalating and helps take a step back to respond rather than react impulsively.
 - Open Inquiry : Facilitating self-reflection in a way that is respectful of the person's feelings & perspectives.
 - Intention & Impact : Understanding the gap between what is intended vs. what is experienced based on our filters & worldview.
- d. Going through the Participant Preparation, assist them in their Intentions & Mindset, Understanding the Alternatives and the steps of the discussion : Observations-Impact-Needs-Request Statements
- e. Consult them for preferences on scheduling, duration, timing & space options
- f. Provide a copy of the Agreement to participate in paper or by e-mail, for their review.

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- g. Create Facilitator Notes based on what was shared in Initial Talk
 - Specific requests, boundaries, needs expressed around psychological safety
 - Noting some powerful questions that could help unblock impasses based on what you heard
 - Participants alternatives to finding resolution through dialogue (in Participant Preparation)
- h. Arriving ahead to prepare the space : closed private room in a comfortable, neutral environment and place seating that promotes a cooperative outlook. Set materials like note pads, DPR tools, flipchart.

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Facilitating the Discussion	
Introduction a. Confirm and sign Agreement to participate in which parties commit to respecting the principles. b. Set Ground Rules <u>with</u> the parties, Ex: Respect, Good Faith, Honesty, Understanding... c. Consider Psychological Safety in the tone & framing of the discussion.	
(1) Observations  What was the context? What specific actions & behaviors are bothersome? What caused the issue? What was concerning?	(2) Impact  What were the direct consequences (on yourself, the work, the environment)? What emotions & values were affected? How does this change things?
Facilitating Dialogue : Build Understanding This might be the first time you’re hearing this, what are your reactions / thoughts? What is something you would like to explain or clarify? What might be different in your understanding of the intent vs the impact? Before we debate solutions, let’s pause and understand what each of you needs right now.	
(3) Needs  What are your needs in this situation? What is most concerning to you at this stage? What are you trying to achieve?	(4) Request  What are you hoping for? What does success look like? What would a win-win outcome look like?
Facilitating Brainstorm Options : Generate Possibilities What do you both care about when it comes to this situation? Considering BOTH of your needs are important, what options take them all into account the best? What would make the outcome feel supportive and humane for everyone involved? What small step could bring the most relief or clarity right now? If we could only solve one part of this, which would resolve the greatest number of needs?	
Mutual Agreement on Solutions In the end, it’s up to the parties involved to find a solution that works for them. d. Assist in summarizing and drafting the mutually agreed upon commitments, action items, their timeline & follow-up. Drafting the agreement in writing on site is important to secure common understanding and prevent future conflicts. e. Ensure <u>both</u> parties get to review and confirm that this agreement works for them so they can move forward with resolution.	

Caucus & Breaks : The Facilitator can, at any time, propose a break or a caucus, a private side discussion with each of the parties. This time is a pressure-release valve if there is an impasse, a boundary crossed or emotions are running high. Possible uses include: reflect back observations, check-in on participants, ensure psychological safety, de-escalate, give feedback, reality test, use open inquiry, and assist on readiness.