

Reference Reading Material for the RBM Cycle Training Series Module 4: Role of a facilitator

D. Ziegler, adapted from Doppler, Lauterburg (2005): Change Management. Campus Verlag. German.

| What is the role of a facilitator? | What is NOT the role? |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Active service provider for the whole group ▪ Coach for meaningful, efficient working methodology ▪ Coach and support for mutual understanding ▪ Coach and support for cooperation ▪ Team-Coach | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Team-speaker ▪ Technical expert ▪ Schoolmaster ▪ Referee with sanctioning power ▪ Uninvolved spectator ▪ Outside observer |

Essentials of facilitation

1. Create climate of open dialogue and trust

Atmosphere, discussion style should be open and relaxed. This is the basis of learning. It starts with openness, honesty and humour of the facilitator. The facilitator is the role model for the group.

2. Communication: control dialogue

Good understanding of team participants is crucial. The facilitator has to ensure good listening, questioning, clarifying of issues- to avoid „to get one’s wires crossed“

3. Team development: help people help themselves

Don’t do everything, but organize the team to get and stay active; to get sensible for the quality of understanding in the team; to organize their cooperation in an effective, relaxed form

4. The whole team as a “customer”

Have an eye on the functioning of the whole team. Principle: every team member is important! Be available for everyone. Do not favour anyone, do not disqualify persons, never exclude persons.

5. Do not set yourself under performance pressure

The facilitator does not always have to have everything in the focus. He/she is no witch. She/he does not always understand everything at first sight. He/she is not “guilty”, if there are stops or conflicts in the process. The only thing that matters is the effort to support the team in analysing and solving difficulties in their discussions.

Tasks of facilitation

1. Clarify background and context

Good facilitation is only possible if the context and background of the discussion is clear to the facilitator. In addition, the facilitator has to support the team in complex issues (which is mostly the case) not to draw fast conclusions, but to analyse the underlying facts and background.

2. Secure good understanding (see essentials)

3. Ascertain and care for concretion

Secure that abstract, general or not understandable contributions will be concretized, e.g. with examples, or visualized (for example on flip chart graphs)

4. Secure visualization

Complex issues should be visualized (by team or facilitator)

5. Give the word to participants

Depending on group size. Might be words or votes. Spontaneous discussions can be worthwhile to the process.

6. Activate silent participants; stop long speakers

7. Bring the discussion back to the topic

8. Work out the essentials

9. Summarize intermediate results

10. Lay open / reveal differences of opinions and interests

11. Work on conflicts if the conflict endangers the constructive discussion

12. Pick the understanding in the team up as central issue

13. Give feed-back to the team, give feed-back to single team members

14. Address feelings and perceptions; show your own feelings

15. Time management

16. Secure results of the discussion

17. Clear agreements and task distribution

18. Collective and joint review and “critique of the manoeuvre”

No event without an evaluation!

A common, critical review increases the learning effect for all participants and helps the team to steer itself better in the future.