

SKILLS FOR FACILITATING DISCUSSION

18
EXERCISE



OBJECTIVES

Participants will be able to:
Facilitate discussions on the
issue of stigma



TIME

1-2 hours



MATERIALS

Ten Steps to Good
Facilitation Handout

ACTIVITIES

DEMONSTRATION

Ask 6-8 participants to join you at the center of the circle. Facilitate a discussion, using the techniques below. Stop at points to ask the observers (outside circle) to describe what you are doing. Ask the facilitator to lead an effective discussion. Check that trainees understand each technique.

Technique	Purpose
Open questions	–Stimulate many ideas and opinions
Eyes/hands/names	–Encourage people to contribute
Listening carefully	–Understand clearly to lead the discussion
Minimal encouragers	–Encourage people to keep talking
Rephrasing	–Clarify what person says/show appreciation
Redirecting	–Get others involved and get more views
Probing	–Get out more information and views
Observing and reacting	–Check on who is silent and encourage them
Summarizing	–Help people understand and reach agreement

PRACTICE FACILITATION IN GROUPS

Divide into groups of 6-8 people and organize a series of practice sessions. For each session assign a new topic and ask each group to select a new facilitator. Give each facilitator 8 minutes, then stop and organize feedback in each group. Then do a quick report back.

Practice Session 1

“Facilitate a discussion on why there is a lot of stigma in the community and what they want to do about it.”

Practice Session 2

“Facilitate a discussion to find out how the community can mobilize support for AIDS affected and vulnerable households.”

STRATEGIC CHATTING

An important skill is to “break the ice” and get others talking about stigma and doing this informally. Divide into pairs and ask partners to take turns trying this skill. Then debrief. Ask: “How difficult was it to bring stigma into the conversation? How did you do it?”

STRATEGIC CHALLENGING

Another key skill is to challenge stigma in an assertive way.

Divide into trios and assign roles:

A—the person who uses stigmatizing language

B—the person who challenges A about his stigmatizing words

C—the observer who leads the feedback session

TEN STEPS TO GOOD FACILITATION

EXERCISE 18

1. Ask questions

Use simple, clear, and “open” questions which allow for many different answers and discussion.

2. Wait for responses

Give people time to think and come up with an answer. Don't bombard them with more questions.

3. Encourage everyone to contribute

Make eye contact, use hands, walk close to shy people and use names.

4. Use minimal encouragements

“Yes...I see...and then?tell me more...” They help to keep the person talking.

5. Listen actively

Use eye contact and body language. Praise and encourage—but don't over praise.

6. Rephrase

Briefly restate what people say in your own words, to make sure you have heard and understood.

7. Probe

Ask follow-up questions to explore issue and make it clearer—“Why? Tell me more. Can you explain further?”

8. Redirect

Get others to contribute: “She said..... Do you agree? What do others think?”

9. Observe

Look around and see who is participating and who is left out. Are people still interested?

10. Summarize

Restate what people have said in a simple, brief form. This will make it easier for people to contribute.