Meeting Facilitation

Beyond the Basics

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Let's get started

- Enter your name and pronouns by clicking the three dots in the upper righthand corner of your Zoom square

- Mute yourself when you're not speaking by clicking the microphone button

- Please join us on camera!

- Questions - Raise your hand to join stack or drop your question in the chat

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Checking in

Let's check-in using the chat window!

- Name, Pronouns, Co-op
- Access Needs
- Land Recognition

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Overview

- Building on the basics
  - Meeting practices
  - Reading the room
  - De-escalation tools

- Facilitating online meetings
  - Holding space
  - Meeting exhaustion
  - Oppression and tech

- Practicing Facilitation
  - Online facilitation tools
  - Sharing local facilitation practices

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Building on the Basics

Summary of basic meeting practices

- Building an informed agenda
  - Proposals
  - Proposal sponsor
  - Time limits
  - Preparation
  - Documentation

AGENDA	PRESENTER	OUTCOME	TIME	DOC
Intros and Check-In	Polly	Check-in	5	--
Approve Agenda	Jeff	Vote	2	--
Approve April 10th Minutes	Colin	Vote	3	A
House & Officer Reports Questions on written and submitted house and officer Reports	All	Report	5	B
Budget / rent formula	Kelly	Disc.	10	C
Reunion recap	Leigh	Disc.	5	--
Check Out	All	Reflection	5	--
Total			35	

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Summary of basic meeting practices

Examining the agenda:

- Do the suggested time limits feel right for these topics?

- Are there voting items not ready for a vote?

- Are there items you would want to discuss ahead of the meeting with the sponsor?

- Are there items you would need documents to prepare for?

AGENDA	PRESENTER	OUTCOME	TIME	DOC
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Summary of basic meeting practices

- Self Facilitation
  - Active listening
  - Meeting hand signals
  - Getting on stack vs a parking lot
  - Stack vs direct response or point of info

- Facilitation roles
  - Shepard
  - Guide
  - Time keeper
  - Note taker

- Build consensus
  - Propose
  - Address concerns
  - Alter/ cooperate
  - Propose again

- Challenging group dynamics
  - Problem solving
  - Brainstorming
  - Feedback
  - Snowball
  - Round Robin

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Let me see your hand signals!

"I want to talk" Hand

"Clarifying Question" C-Hand

"Process" Triangle

"I agree" Twinkle Fingers

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Do your co-ops use other gestures or audible cues?

? **?**

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Reading the room - "Fist to Five"

Fist	One	Two	Three	Four	Five
Wholehearted endorsement	I agree	Neutral but on the side of agreement	I'd like to discuss more; I have concerns	I can see major issues to resolve	Hard no

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Practice

Let's use some short statements to measure agreement using fist-to-five!

- I support having snacks in meetings
- I will use fist to five in my home co-op's meetings
- I support having snakes in meetings
- We should sell half our co-op's buildings to a developer for 3x the price they're worth and use the money to expand

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Reading the Room

- Maintain a wide focus
- Know when to step in

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Reading the room: Non-verbal cues

- Eye rolling

- "Wrap it up" gestures

- Muting / unmuting during a call without speaking

- Many of the members not speaking

- Aggressive gestures

- Emotional distress

- Members not engaging

- Members walking out

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Reading the room: Conversation

- Inflammatory language

- Jumping stack

- Interrupting speakers

- Back-and-forth argument

- Not following agreed-upon process

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Reading the room: Representation & Dynamics

- Who is talking? Who is remaining silent?

- Who gets interrupted? Who interrupts?

- Is aggression being targeted at a specific group? (Race, gender, ability, etc?)

- Are assumptions made "about people, without people" without relevant input?

- When members share their accessibility needs, do their needs get met?

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When to disrupt the meeting

Assertive facilitation may be both uncomfortable and necessary. Consider stepping in with process suggestions if:

- Emotional distress prevents members from engaging

- Members have left the meeting

- The conversation is not changing opinions on the proposal

- The meeting is over time and there is no consensus to extend

- The discussion has moved off the topic immediately at hand

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Tools to de-escalate

- Taking a break

- Reframing inflammatory questions

- Reminding speakers of the decision-making process

- Asking disruptive speakers to leave or to wait until the stack is cleared

- Muting or removing speakers (online only)

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Considerations for online tools

- Creating a social space

- Maintaining engagement

- Accessibility & tech

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Creating a social space online

- Ask participants to add their name and pronouns to their username if possible

- Welcoming people and their emotions

- Encourage participants to turn their video on

- Draw a virtual table

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Virtual table
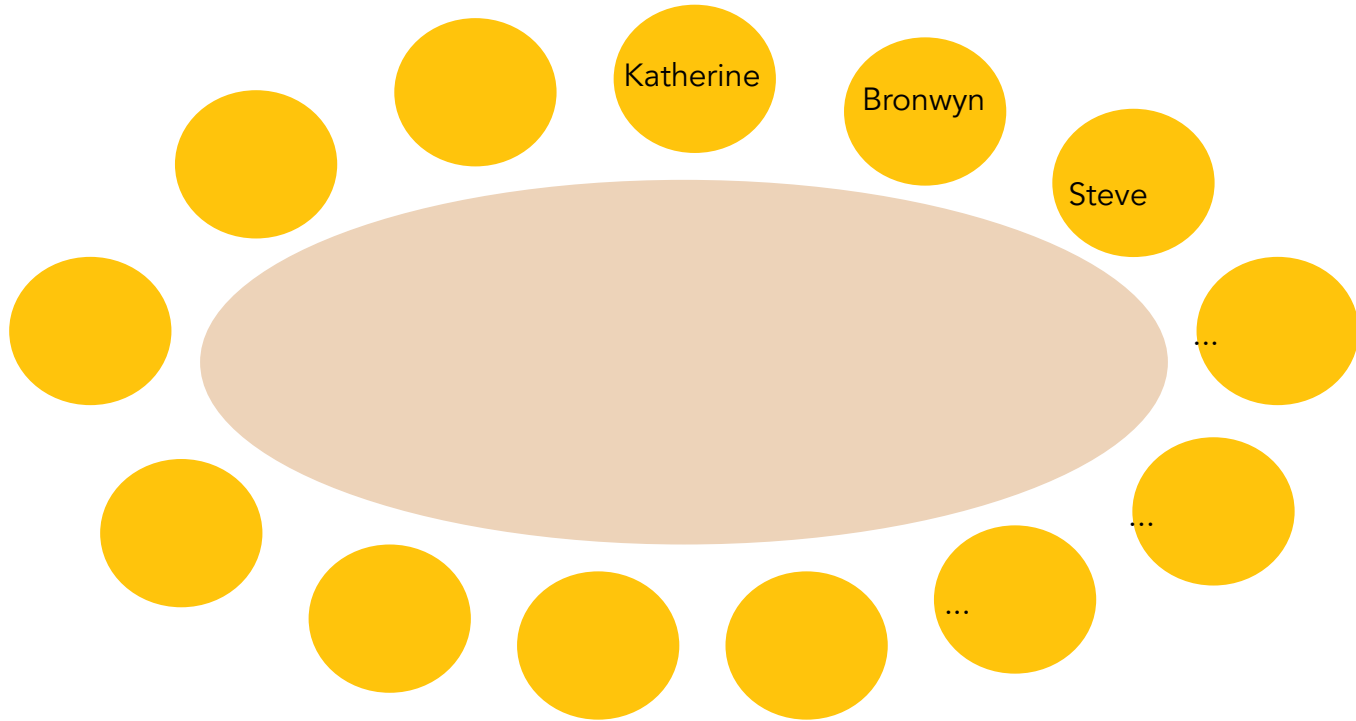
Holding space online

- Start meetings with check ins
  - Name / pronouns / accessibility needs
  - Use a prompt

- Set expectations
  - Discuss and approve the agenda first, state the time allotted
  - Consider the time and info needed for discussion items vs voting items
  - Make agreements for online meeting etiquette

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Holding space online

- What practices has your co-op developed in online meetings?

- How have your practices changed over the last year?

- Are there member needs not being met in your current practices?

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Virtual meeting exhaustion

Over the past year, we have become accustomed to participating in more virtual meetings, virtual get togethers, virtual social events, etc. Some ways we can reduce virtual meeting fatigue include:

- Limiting the agenda / length of the meeting (1.5 hours)
- Build in breaks (even mini stretch breaks)
- Engage with participants in a variety of ways
  - Journal prompts (3-5 mins)
  - Share note taking, facilitation, stack keeping among participants
  - Open or close the meeting with a dance break, or stretch session

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Being present to participants

It is easy to fall into multitasking in front of your computer. The best way to keep participants engaged is to be present with them
- Ask questions to respond via chat
- If there are folks calling in on the phone call on them by name to encourage participation
- Pick up on visual clues in video chat helps people feel seen

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Accessibility & technology

Access to technology is not a given for everyone. Before requiring online meetings check in with your community through known communication channels.

- Offer alternative avenues to participate
- Make sure all participation is heard
- Take a beat to create space
- There is no perfect meeting, tech mishaps happen

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Wiggle break

Stretch and drink some water

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Facilitation Practice

Co-op Discussion Scenario

A window was broken at the FriendSwarm Co-op. A member's relative broke it by accident and wants to know if they will be required to pay for it. The window was not due to be replaced and was not budgeted for but there is some money in maintenance funds.

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Member Discussion

Member A: If a neighbor had broken our window we would ask them to pay for it this seems like a no brainer.

Member B: Yea but it was with our members and we do have some money. But I am open.

Member C: I am frustrated we would consider paying for it when this member already does a lot of damage to our common areas.

Member D: I price checked and it's cheaper to replace a couple windows. We could save money by getting a few and ask our member to replace the one they broke at the cheaper rate.

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Summarize

How would you summarize that conversation to move toward a decision?

Take 2 minutes to write (or type) it out

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Share

Inflammatory statement

Member C: I don't want us wasting money buying windows when we can ask *those* responsible to cough up the dough and make it happen. They are destructive and they owe us big time.

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Rephrase

How would you rephrase that statement to de-escalate?

Share

What would you do now?

- Summarize solution on the table and move to vote

- Recommend co-op common area expectations as a future agenda item

- Disrupt meeting by tabling, adjourning, breaking, or using a different speaking order?

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Reflection

Are there any of these methods that your co-op has tried that were really effective?

Are there any of these that your co-op has tried that were NOT effective? Why?

Have you found barriers to changing / discussing meeting process in your co-op?

Does your co-op have any other facilitation tools you want to share today?

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Questions?

Resources for continued learning

[Leading Groups Online](#) (Training for Change)

[Tips and Tools for Addressing Systemic Power](#) (AORTA)

[Facilitation in Motion](#) (AORTA)

[Facilitators Guide to Participatory Decision Making](#) by Sam Kaner

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Thanks!

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