



# Exploring Leadership

## TEAMWORK: FACILITATION

A skilled facilitator keeps meetings focused and productive, by channeling the energy of team members toward the task at hand. *Facilitation* involves a set of skills to ensure meetings and events run smoothly, beginning with the creation of a well-thought-out agenda.

### CONVERSATION STARTER:

Have you ever been to a meeting, class, or gathering where there was no clear purpose and no one in charge? What happened?

Facilitation means making tasks easier and more effective. When you facilitate a meeting, your job is to keep everyone focused, organized, and productive to achieve their goals. A well-organized agenda serves as both a checklist and a guide, ensuring everyone understands their roles and what's expected. A clear plan helps meetings run smoothly, reduces stress, and boosts efficiency. Whether in school or your future career, learning to create and follow an agenda is a valuable skill for success.

### KEY OBJECTIVES:

- Identify the essential elements of facilitation.
- Create a practical agenda to facilitate a meeting.

### WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Computer/projector (or smartphone) to show [YouTube video](#) (2:38 minutes)
- Printed copies of the sample agenda (see Appendix)
- Markers or highlighters
- Paper & pencils

## EXPLORATION ACTIVITY:

In this activity, you'll learn how to create a clear, simple meeting agenda and practice facilitation by drafting one that answers key questions and helps your team succeed.

### FACILITATION TIPS:

- Search the internet for sample agendas to help participants see different styles.
- Remind participants that agendas can be flexible—they help guide the group, not control every minute.

- As a group, watch the [YouTube video](#) (2:38 minutes).
- Next, hand out the sample agenda (see Appendix) and take a few minutes to look it over together. Use markers or highlighters to help identify the key parts:
  - **Who** is the meeting for?
  - **What** is the meeting about?
  - **When and where** will it happen?
  - **Why** is the meeting important (goals)?
  - **What** needs to be accomplished (objectives)?
- Discuss how the agenda answers each of these questions and why they matter.
- Now it's your turn! Think of a meeting you might lead—like a 4-H activity or school event—and create your own agenda. Use the sample as a guide to include the 5 W's and your objectives. Keep it simple, clear, and helpful for your group.



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- What challenges can a good agenda help prevent during meetings?
- How far in advance should you share an agenda? Why is this important?
- What was the hardest part of creating the agenda for you?

## APPLICATION DISCUSSION:

- If you were facilitating a real-life meeting, what key details would you need to know from the leader or organizer beforehand?
- Think about meetings you've been a part of. How could an agenda or facilitator have made them better?



## CONCLUSION:

At some point, you'll probably have to lead a meeting or guide a group. Starting with a plan and a clear goal—like we practiced with the agenda—sets you up for success.

A well-crafted agenda is more than just a list; it helps everyone stay focused and productive. Whether you're leading a meeting, facilitating a group, or organizing an event, a clear agenda ensures everyone knows what to expect and how to contribute.

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## REFERENCES

- Effective Meetings [Agenda and Preparation] <https://youtu.be/ZuMjkcX10uw?si=AeVol8TIGY2IgoCl> (2:38 minutes)
- Facilitation: <https://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/facilitation>
- What are Facilitation Skills, and Why are They Important? <https://voltagecontrol.com/blog/what-are-facilitation-skills-and-why-are-they-important/>
- What Do Facilitators Do: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UDLGjKBHSXg> (3:56 minutes)
- 6 Signs Your Meeting is Out of Control and What to Do About It: <https://www.inc.com/john-boitnott/6-signs-your-meeting-is-out-of-control-and-what-to-do-about-it.html>



## APPENDIX: SAMPLE AGENDA

**What:** Party Planning Meeting

**When:** Tuesday, April 6 @ 1:00 P.M.

**Where:** Library Conference Room

**Who:** Senior Class Officers

**Goal:** Plan the end-of-year graduation party.

**Objective:** By the end of the meeting, create a to-do list and assign responsibilities for each task.

- 1:00-1:10 - Welcome and Icebreaker
  - Two Truths and a Lie. (Led by Jake)
- 1:10-1:20 - Check-in Question
  - Question: How can your skills shine in this committee? (Led by Maria)
- 1:20-1:35 - Brainstorm Party Themes
  - Goal: Choose a theme that will make the party memorable. (Led by Jordan)
- 1:35-1:45 - Brainstorm Next Steps
  - Question: What are the key steps to make this party happen? (Led by Kamille)
- 1:45-1:55 - Assign Tasks
  - Task: Decide who will be in charge of each activity. (Led by Jordan)
- 1:55-2:00 - Plan for Next Meeting
  - Task: Draft a quick agenda for the next meeting. (Led by Maria)

Notes: