

Guardrails for Buddying

IAF England & Wales

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IAF England & Wales (IAF EW) wants to help facilitators support each other in our professional development, through informal as well as formal ways. Alongside the [mentoring](#), [CPF](#) and [ProPath](#) provided by IAF globally, there has been a lot of interest in the idea of informal buddying.

This guidance has been developed by a small group of facilitators in IAF England and Wales, to help facilitators who would like to set up a 'buddying' relationship with each other. IAF England & Wales is not organising buddying, but if you choose to set up some buddying with another Facilitator, we hope this guidance will help you make the most of it and avoid some pitfalls.

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1. Different kinds of buddying relationships

It is useful to share your assumptions about buddying, with your prospective buddy. We think that the kinds of relationships include:

- Peer-2-peer: You observe me, then I observe you and we give each other feedback and ask each other questions. This might happen in separate engagements or it might occur in a co-facilitation situation too, where the observation and feedback is related to single event or process that both buddies are involved with
- Learner as observer: The buddy with less experience in the particular approach (the buddy-ee) observes someone more experienced in that approach (the buddy-or) to learn how they go about it. The Buddy-or will commit time to review the event with the Buddy-ee after the event
- Learner driver: The buddy-ee delivers specific section/s of the buddy-or's workshop or process for the client, under supervision, to learn by doing. This would require a certain level of trust, and the buddy-or should be careful to not exploit the buddy-ee as 'free labour'
- How did I do? Inviting another Facilitator (peer-level or otherwise) to observe your work with a client to give you constructive feedback. Useful for seeing patterns that are hard to see when you are doing the facilitation yourself

2. Contracting with your buddy

Things to think about and agree include:

- Which type of buddying relationship is being offered / expected?
- Why this event or process? Why Now? (for both parties)
- Money
 - Any fees being offered?
 - Any expenses being incurred / paid?
- Scope of anticipated relationship:
 - Duration (Calendar time)
 - Commitment (hours / days to be expended)
 - Events or process steps (number of real-time events, plus other process steps)
 - Learning and reflection commitment (time / format)
 - Immediately post event/process
 - Option of later follow up (after time allowed for actions)
- Whether there is anything in particular the person would like feedback on.
- Review points (for the relationship, if it is an extended one)

3. Contracting with your client and the group

It's essential for the client and group to be aware of and happy with the presence of a 'buddy'.

- Opening conversation about buddying possibility in general
 - What we do
 - Why we do it (for the benefit to us and buddy)
 - What benefit there might be to client
 - Living the principles of learning and organisational development.
 - Providing an extra resource for the event (often useful)
 - The option of including the client in the buddying discussion and reflection
- Specific event request
 - Anticipated buddying relationship
 - Specific buddy (name / profile) if known at this stage
- Discussion with client of
 - Specific sensitivities
 - Any boundaries to buddy role requested by client
- Review after the event

4. A possible framework for reflection and feedback

- **DURING PREPARATION**
 - What steps in preparation did I see?
 - What was the purpose / benefit of each one?
 - What was most different or new to what I normally do in my current practice?
- **DURING EVENT or PROCESS (time frames might include SET-UP, OPENING, BODY OF EVENT or PROCESS, CLOSING, FOLLOW UP)**
 - Observations about process (e.g. room layout or design of online space, method choice etc).
 - Observations about facilitator (e.g. speech, body language, position in room, use of virtual features).
 - Observations about participants (e.g. speech, body language).
 - Observations about overall engagement between people in the room or virtual space and with the process.
 - Observations about specific 'happenings' during the event or process.
- **KEY LEARNING**
 - Summing up most striking points for Buddy-ee.
 - Action plans / intentions from the learning.



5. Resources for reflection and feedback

- IAF Core Competencies (cognitive framework/checklist) <https://www.iaf-world.org/site/publications/iaf-core-facilitator-competencies>
- Brene Brown on feedback <https://daretolead.brenebrown.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/DaringFeedback-EngagedFeedbackChecklist.pdf>

6. Help us improve these guidelines

The initial development of these guidelines was by Penny Walker, Susannah Raffe, Paul Brand and Gary Austin, of IAF England & Wales in 2020.

If you have some improvements to suggest or would like to share something about how you got on working with a buddy, please add them on the IAF Facilitators & Friends Slack channel #iaf-ew-cofacilitation-buddying.

<https://app.slack.com/client/TPSQMJBKK/CTY029683>.