IAF CORE COMPETENCIES

BACKGROUND

The International Association of Facilitators (IAF) is the worldwide professional body established to promote, support and advance the art and practice of professional facilitation through methods exchange, professional growth, practical research and collegial networking.

The IAF Core Competencies framework was developed over several years by the IAF with the support of its members and facilitators from all over the world. The competencies form the basic set of skills, knowledge, and behaviours that facilitators must have in order to be successful facilitating in a wide variety of environments.

The IAF Core competencies, together with the IAF Code of Ethics and Statement of Values, are the backbone of all IAF activities, programmes and awards: IAF Facilitation Impact Award, IAF Mentoring Programme, IAF Endorsed™ Facilitator, IAF Certified Professional™ Facilitator, IAF Certified™ Professional Facilitator | Master and IAF Certified™ Professional Facilitator | Emeritus, IAF Endorsed™ Facilitation Training Programmes.

If you have any questions then please send us an email to certification@iaf-world.org

A. Create Collaborative Client Relationships

1. Develop working partnerships

- Clarify mutual commitment

- Develop consensus on tasks, deliverables, roles & responsibilities

- Demonstrate collaborative values and processes

2. Design and customise processes to meet client needs

- Analyse organisational environment

- Diagnose client need

- Establish stakeholders' roles and level of involvement.

- Create appropriate designs to achieve intended outcomes

- Predefine quality outcomes with client

Manage multi-session events effectively

- Contract with client for scope and deliverables

- Develop event plan

- Deliver event effectively

- Assess / evaluate client satisfaction at all stages of the event or project

B. Plan Appropriate Group Processes
1. Select clear methods and processes that
• Foster open participation with respect for client culture and participant diversity
• Engage participants who have different approaches to learning and ways of processing information
• Achieve quality outcome that meets the needs of the client
2. Prepare time and space to support group process
• Arrange appropriate space and logistics to support the purpose of the meeting
• Plan effective use of time
• Provide appropriate atmosphere to support the purpose of sessions / meetings

promoting the power
of facilitation worldwide

C. Create and Sustain a Participatory Environment
1. Demonstrate effective participatory and interpersonal communication skills
Apply a variety of participatory processes
Demonstrate effective verbal communication skills
Develop rapport with participants
Practice active listening
Demonstrate ability to observe and provide feedback to participants
2. Honour and recognise diversity, ensuring inclusiveness
Encourage positive regard for the experience and perception of all participants
Create a climate of trust and safety.
Recognise barriers to participation and ways to address them
Accept all ideas without judgment
Create opportunities for participants to benefit from the diversity of the group
Cultivate cultural awareness and sensitivity

3. Manage group conflict
• Help individuals identify and review underlying assumptions
• Recognise conflict and its role within group learning / maturity
• Provide a safe environment for conflict to surface
• Manage the range of behaviours demonstrated by group members
• Recognise and address the value of tension and conflict and its impact in arriving at a group decision
• Be sensitive to cultural factors regarding conflict

4. Evoke group creativity
• Draw out participants with various approaches to learning and ways of processing of information
• Encourage creative thinking
• Use approaches that best fit needs and abilities of the group
• Stimulate and tap group energy

D. Guide Group to Appropriate and Useful Outcomes

1. Guide the group with clear methods and processes

- Establish clear context for the session

- Clarify and summarise to elicit the sense of the group

- Manage small and large group process

2. Facilitate group self-awareness about its task

- Vary the pace of activities according to needs of group

- Identify information the group needs, and draw out data and insight from the group

- Help the group to make sense of the underlying issues in their discussion, clarify patterns, trends, root causes, frameworks for action

- Assist the group in reflection on its experience

3. Guide the group to consensus and desired outcomes

- Use a variety of approaches relevant to achieving group consensus

- Use a variety of approaches relevant to meeting group objectives

- Adapt processes to changing situations and needs of the group

- Assess and communicate group progress

- Recognise and clarify tangents in order to refocus on the task

- Foster task completion

E. Build and Maintain Professional Knowledge

1. Maintain a base of knowledge

- Knowledgeable in the theory and practice of group process facilitation and related knowledge about people, organisations, groups and processes (e.g. organisational development, psychology, conflict resolution, dynamics of change, learning and thinking theory)

2. Know a range of facilitation methods

- Understand a range of models and / or processes that may help groups generate ideas, solve problems, prioritise, take decisions and plan

- Understand a variety of group methods and techniques

- Know consequences of misuse of group methods

- Distinguish process from task and content

- Learn new processes, methods, models and technologies in support of client's changing/emerging needs

3. Maintain professional standing

- Engage in ongoing study / learning related to our field

- Continuously gain awareness of new information in our profession

- Practice reflection and learning

- Build personal industry knowledge and networks across our field

F. Model Positive Professional Attitude as a Process Facilitator

1. Practice self-assessment and self-awareness

- Reflect on behaviour and overall outcomes

- Maintain congruence between actions and personal and professional values

- Modify personal behaviour / style to reflect the needs of the group

- Cultivate understanding of one's own values and their potential impact on work with clients

2. Act with integrity

- Demonstrate a belief in the group and its possibilities

- Approach situations with authenticity and a positive attitude

- Describe situations as facilitator sees them and inquire into different views

- Model professional boundaries and ethics (as described in the IAF Statement of Values and Code of Ethics)

3. Trust group potential and model neutrality

- Honour the wisdom of the group

- Encourage trust in the capacity and experience of others

- Vigilant to minimise influence on group outcomes and the content of the discussions

- Maintain an objective, non-defensive, non-judgmental stance

Return to the IAF website