

Regional Plan for Sustainable Development

# FACILITATOR HANDBOOK

DEVELOPED BY PUBLIC AGENDA  
FOR FOCUS ST. LOUIS AND ST. LOUIS REGIONAL SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

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## **About this Handbook**

As communities and institutions come together to address their most pressing challenges and develop successful solutions, a wide range of stakeholders will need to engage in productive dialogue and deliberation about what is working, what is not working, and what can be done at various levels to help reach communities' goals. Effective facilitation of dialogue in a range of settings is critically important to the success and sustainability of solutions that are developed.

This handbook was created as a reference guide to support facilitators. In it you will find key principles of effective engagement, strategies and techniques for creating productive environments for dialogue and problem solving, and specific tips for managing different type of meetings and personalities. The contents of this handbook were adapted from materials used by Public Agenda, the Center for Public Deliberation at Colorado State University, and the Center for Civic Participation at Maricopa Community College. Together they represent the current state of the art in effective facilitation of dialogue and collaborative problem solving.

In addition to the primary resources, we also adapt sections from Sam Kaner's *Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision Making* and draw on the insights of organizations like the International Association for Public Participation in order to offer a wide range of concrete how-to tips for facilitators and recorders.



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## Part 1. Public Engagement Basics

### Key Principles of Public Engagement

For over two decades, Public Agenda has provided hundreds of communities with design and facilitation support for their public engagement programs at both the community and institutional levels. In all settings, we adhere to ten core principles of public engagement and encourage our partners to do the same. The ten core principles follow here.

#### 1) Begin by listening

Understanding the public's starting point and the best ways to communicate with and engage people on tough issues requires careful and systematic listening. Be alert to the issues nonexperts care about, the language they use to discuss them, and their concerns, aspirations, knowledge base, misperceptions and initial sense of direction with respect to solutions. Doing so will allow you to engage people in ways that are meaningful in light of their interests, concerns and natural language. It will help you avoid making faulty assumptions about people's positions or using jargon that, however useful to you, is counterproductive when it comes to engaging the public. Interviews, focus groups and other forms of qualitative research are almost always useful first steps in engagement efforts.

#### 2) Attend to people's leading concerns

When there are gaps between the priorities of leaders and experts and those of the public, it is important to recognize that people will be most receptive to leaders' and experts' concerns if the issues that they themselves are already feeling most concerned about are acknowledged and being addressed by leaders.

#### 3) Reach beyond the "usual suspects"

It's easy to bring together those people who are already powerfully involved stakeholders in an issue, as well as those who love to sound off in public. Finding ways to include or represent the broader public, especially those whose voices have traditionally been excluded, is a more challenging proposition. This takes special effort at community outreach through networking strategies and the use of a variety of media and venues.

#### 4) Frame issues for deliberation

Engaging citizens involves speaking their language and acknowledging their concerns. Expert-speak must be translated into the language that laypeople use and should address the public's concerns. Framing an issue for public deliberation requires focusing more on values-related conflicts and broad strategies than on technical details and tactical minutiae, which are more the province of experts. It means, in essence, helping people wrestle with different perspectives and the pros and cons of going down different paths. Framing for deliberation communicates that there are no easy answers and that many points of view are welcome and essential to the discussion.

#### 5) Provide the right type and amount of information at the right time

It is helpful to provide people with carefully selected, essential, nonpartisan information up front in order to help them deliberate more effectively, but it is equally important to avoid overloading people with a "data dump." Concise and thoughtfully presented information is useful, but too much all at once can result in people feeling overwhelmed by information. It plays to the experts in the room while disempowering regular citizens. Instead, beyond a few salient essentials, people should themselves determine, through their deliberations, the information that will allow them to move

deeper into an issue. Enabling people to better determine their informational needs is one of the important purposes and outcomes of public engagement.

### **6) Help people move beyond wishful thinking**

The trade-offs that are embedded in any issue that citizens must confront should be brought to the surface. A strong public engagement initiative will look for diverse ways to achieve realism and seriousness (not to be confused with humorlessness) in the public debate and help people move past knee-jerk reactions and wishful thinking. Challenging leaders who pander to people's wishful thinking and providing corrective information once it's become clear the public is "hung up" on a misperception or lacking vital information are key tasks here.

### **7) Expect obstacles and resistances**

People are used to doing things in a particular way, and it is hard work to grapple with new possibilities. It may even threaten their identities or interests (or perceived interests) to do so. It therefore takes time, and repeated opportunities, for people to really work through problems, absorb information about the trade-offs of different approaches and build common ground.

### **8) Create multiple, varied opportunities for deliberation and dialogue**

People need to go through a variety of stages to come to terms with an issue, decide what approach they are willing to support and figure out how they can make their own contribution.<sup>1</sup> A strong engagement initiative will be inclusive as well as iterative, giving people multiple and varied opportunities to learn about, talk about, think about and act on the problem at hand.

### **9) Respond thoughtfully and conscientiously to the public's involvement**

It is critical that organizers, experts and/or leaders respond to the public's deliberations. This is a matter, in part, of taking care to "close the loop" in any given round of engagement. For instance, participants should be informed of the ways their ideas and concerns are being incorporated into the work of problem solving among official decision makers. Moreover, it means taking the time to explain why some ideas are not being incorporated. Doing so deepens people's understanding of the issues and fosters mutual respect. Moreover, citizens who participate in the work of public engagement should be encouraged and supported to act on their deliberations and not just wait for officials to act on their behalf. This work is predicated on the idea that tough public problems require work on many levels by many parties. Well-designed engagement opportunities energize citizens and lead many to want to roll up their sleeves and get involved. Encouraging and enabling citizen action in response to public deliberation gives people a role and a way to contribute. Moreover, it gives them a personal stake in the success of the work.

### **10) Build long-term capacity as you go**

When done well, each round of public engagement will set the stage for broader and deeper public engagement in the future. Engagement processes are not only exercises in public problem solving, they are civic experiments that help people learn how to better reach out to and include new people, frame issues for deliberation more effectively and meaningfully, facilitate dialogue and collaboration across boundaries that have not typically been broached, and build common vision and common ground that allow different kinds of people, with different interests and experiences, to work together to make headway on common problems. The work should thus always operate on

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel Yankelovich, *Coming to Public Judgment: Making Democracy Work in a Complex World* (Syracuse University Press, 1991).

two levels simultaneously: On one level it is about addressing a concrete problem, such as improving education, public safety or jobs. On another it is about building what philosopher John Dewey called “social intelligence”—the capacity for a democratic community to communicate and collaborate effectively in order to solve its common problems and enrich its public life.

## Public Engagement and the Regional Plan for Sustainable Development

### The RPSD in Brief

The Regional Plan for Sustainable Development (RPSD) is a collaborative partnership funded through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Eleven core partners and hundreds of additional stakeholders from a variety of public, private and non-profit organizations throughout the St. Louis region have joined as the St. Louis Regional Sustainable Communities Consortium. The Consortium is funded to conduct a three-year process to create a regional plan that builds the capacity of local and regional leaders to implement sustainable practices by sharing knowledge, best practices and resources; connecting local, regional, state and federal planning efforts; and making federal and local investments more effective and efficient.

Committees involving over 100 members have been formed to collaboratively develop the RPSD and ensure that a broad and diverse cross section of the region is a part of its development. Recognizing the diversity and variety of challenges in the region, the RPSD will ultimately be a flexible guide that can be applied in multitude ways to enhance sustainability. In 2013, once the East West Gateway Council of Governments Board approves the RPSD, its key principles will be coordinated with the region’s long-range transportation plan. Agencies throughout the region will be encouraged to adopt the RPSD into their planning processes.

### The RPSD Public Engagement Plan in Brief

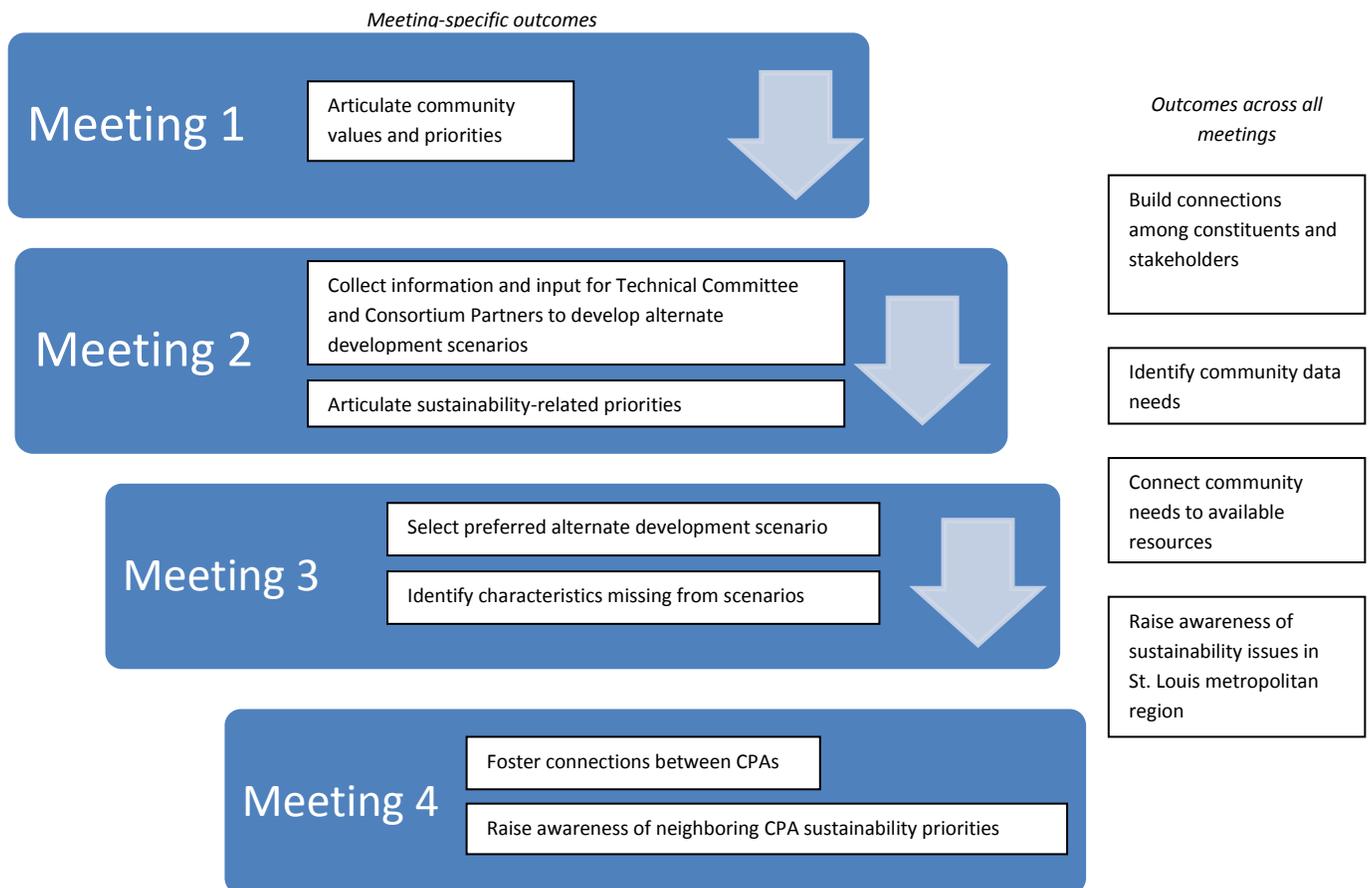
The RPSD Public Engagement Plan was developed collaboratively by FOCUS St. Louis (the public engagement lead of the RPSD grant), East West Gateway Council of Governments, and Public Agenda with input and feedback from the RPSD Public Engagement Committee as well as a range of community leaders and experts in the St. Louis metropolitan region. It combines promising and tested practices in public engagement nationally with strategies appropriate to the local context and specific project needs.

The RPSD Public Engagement Plan has been designed as a four-meeting structure (Table 1) that will be facilitated in eleven sub-regions (or Community Planning Areas, CPAs) of the larger St. Louis metropolitan region, with a modified structure for the City of St. Louis CPA in order to align with its existing sustainability planning effort. It is a flexible and iterative meeting design, meaning that no two meetings need look the same. Meetings will be tailored to the local context, vary in size and composition, and produce outcomes consistent with the priorities and values of each CPA population. All meetings, however, will adhere to key principles of public engagement. They are designed to be roughly two-hours each and will be facilitated by trained facilitators.

The ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES FLOWCHART depicts the intended outcomes for each of the four rounds of public engagement meetings in the CPAs. While each round will have its own MEETING-SPECIFIC OUTCOMES, there are a number of impacts that can build during public engagement process. These are designated as the OUTCOMES ACROSS ALL MEETINGS.

Table 1. Four-Part Meeting Structure			
Meeting	Time Frame	Driving Questions	Organizers
Meeting 1	February – March 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is the RPSD and what is the purpose of the engagement process?</li> <li>What are the key characteristics of the community and what are the community values and priorities?</li> </ul>	FSL, CPA Leads, Consortium Partners
Meeting 2	June – July 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What do we know so far about the CPA?</li> <li>How do community values and priorities relate to sustainable development?</li> </ul>	
Meeting 3	October – November 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What do we know so far about the CPA?</li> <li>Based on community values and priorities for sustainability, what kind of development scenario should be adopted in the CPA?</li> </ul>	
Meeting 4	February – March 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the preferred development scenarios for each CPA?</li> <li>How can we as a region ensure that our preferred scenarios all fit together?</li> </ul>	

### Activities and Outcomes Flowchart



## Part 2. Responsibilities, Characteristics & Techniques of the Effective Facilitator

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Facilitation is about supporting a productive, respectful conversation that helps participants better understand the issue and each other. The quality of facilitation can make or break the success of current and future stakeholder engagement; and, unfortunately, some people who are likely to self-identify as strong facilitators may not have the qualities necessary for effective facilitation of public engagement. The facilitators of the conversations must be credible and able to create environments that allow stakeholders to be candid or critical.

Regardless of the specific goals, deliberative conversations always begin with “starting questions,” which are open-ended questions that get people talking about the issue at hand. Once the facilitator poses an initial starting question, the deliberation begins when someone starts talking. The facilitator must both listen carefully to what is being said and plan his or her next move.

To be clear, no single person possesses all the characteristics described here; instead, we encourage facilitators to be aware of their individual strengths and weaknesses. The Recipe for a Great Moderator provided in Appendix D can serve as a useful self-assessment tool for moderators looking to improve their skills over time.

### Main Responsibilities of a Facilitator<sup>2</sup>

- **Motivator** – From the rousing opening statement to the closing words of cheer, you must ignite a fire within the group, establish momentum and keep the pace. Be careful praising specific ideas or arguments, but feel free to praise productive interactive behaviors such as asking good questions of fellow participants.
- **Guide** – You must know the steps of the process the group will execute from the beginning to the end. You must carefully guide the participants through each of the steps.
- **Questioner** – You must listen carefully to the discussion and be able to quickly analyze and compare comments and formulate questions that help manage the group discussion.
- **Bridge Builder** – You must create and maintain a safe and open environment for sharing ideas. Where other people see differences, you must find and use similarities to establish a foundation for building bridges.
- **Clairvoyant** – Throughout the session, you must watch carefully for signs of potential strain, weariness, irritation and disempowerment – and respond in advance to avoid dysfunctional behavior.
- **Peacemaker** – Although it is almost always better to avoid a direct confrontation between participants, should such an event occur, you must quickly step in, reestablish order and direct the group toward a constructive resolution.
- **Taskmaster** – You are ultimately responsible for keeping the session on track; this entails tactfully cutting short irrelevant discussions, preventing detours and maintaining a consistent level of detail throughout the session.

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<sup>2</sup> Adapted from Michael Wilkinson’s *The Secrets of Facilitation* (Josey-Bass, 2004), pp.24-26

## Key Characteristics of an Effective Facilitator

An effective facilitator...

- **Remains impartial about the subject.** Avoid expressing your own opinion or evaluating the comments of the participants (be careful with saying “Good point!”). However, facilitators are not disengaged, and in fact they should be passionate about the process itself.
- **Manages the group well.** Find the right balance between having too much and too little structure to the conversation.
- **Models cooperative attitudes and skills.** By exhibiting strong listening skills and asking good questions, you can model the behaviors you are hoping the participants will develop.
- **Does not take on an “expert” role with the subject matter.** Your role is not to teach the participants about the issue—even if it is a subject you know very well.
- **Keeps the deliberation focused and on track.** When comments go astray, bring participants back to the goals of the session. Make sure the goals are clear, even if the conversation is wide-ranging.
- **Intervenes as necessary.** If the conversation begins to focus on personalities rather than issues, gently remind the group of guidelines or refocus the dialogue back to the issue. An effective facilitator creates an atmosphere of acceptance of all ideas and persons, and helps give an equal hearing to all perspectives.
- **Asks clarifying questions when necessary.** If you are not sure what a participant means, chances are good that others are unclear also. You may ask participants to clarify what they are trying to say and ask if you have understood correctly.
- **Encourages everyone to join in the conversation.** Help ensure no one dominates and that all voices have ample opportunity to contribute.
- **Asks thoughtful and probing questions to surface tradeoffs and consequences.** Make sure the participants have considered the potential outcomes of their comments and ideas and get beyond wishful thinking.
- **Helps participants find common ground and identify and work through key tensions.** Participants will not always agree and may sometimes be in direct conflict with each other. Helping them identify both common ground and key tensions will help move the conversation forward in important ways.
- **Encourages deeper reflection.** Ask participants to share what is important to them about the issue or why they feel a particular approach or strategy is valuable.
- **Helps people prioritize their ideas for action.** Helping people move from exploratory dialogue to concrete action planning is an important role of a facilitator.

## Part 3. Facilitating Dialogue & Problem Solving

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### The Six Basic Facilitator Choices

When facilitating dialogue and deliberation, the facilitator has six basic “moves” at his or her disposal for helping keep the conversation productive, inclusive and on-track:

1. **Move on** to the next speaker by simply pointing to the next person in line or asking the group for additional comments. People like to talk, and in many cases you will have a line of people ready to talk, and can simply move from one to another.
2. **Paraphrase** what a person has said in order to clarify the point, help the recorders and/or move the conversation to a deeper level. When paraphrasing, always do so in a way that makes it easy for the speaker to correct you (“So what I’m hearing is that... Is that right?”)
3. **Ask a “probing” or “follow up”** question to the *same speaker* to get clarification or dig deeper.  
*Ex. “Why is that important to you?”; “Can you say more about that?”*
4. **Ask a “reaction”** question that seeks to have *other* people respond to the last speaker’s comments in some way.  
*Ex. “Does anyone else have a different view?”*
5. **Ask a new starting question.** Depending on the goals of the session, you may have a set of questions you are supposed to ask, or you may have certain issues you want to discuss, so you may just jump in to take the conversation a different direction. Based on the responses, you may also develop a question that works to combine or compare opinions that were shared. A new starting question may be particularly important if the conversation has gotten off track and the participants need to be redirected to the issue.  
*Ex. “Many argue that one of the key topics with this issue is X. What are your thoughts on its importance?”*
6. **Let there be silence.** Often, facilitators feel pressure to keep the conversation flowing, so they are troubled by silence and seek to fill it with probing questions or a change of topic. However, sometimes the right thing to do is to sit with the silence and give people a little space to find their way to what they want to say.

### Basic Facilitator Techniques

Below we describe the basic facilitator techniques, and in Appendix B we offer concrete how-to tips for each technique. We recommend that facilitators review this material as a refresher before facilitating new groups, and jot notes about specific techniques that may be especially important given the goals of the conversation.

- **Paraphrasing** is fundamental to active listening. It is the most straightforward way to demonstrate to a speaker that his or her thoughts have been heard and understood.
- **Summarizing** is an important technique because the most interesting conversations can also be the hardest ones to close.

- **Stacking** is a procedure for helping people take turns when several people want to speak at once.
- **Tracking** means keeping track of the various lines of thought that are going on simultaneously within a single discussion.
- **Listening for Common Ground** is a powerful intervention when group members are polarized. It validates the group's areas of disagreement and focuses the group on areas of agreement. Just be careful not to overuse this strategy or you'll end up whitewashing important disagreements that ought to be aired.
- **Linking** is a listening skill that invites a speaker to explain the relevance of a statement he or she has just made.
- **Intentional Silence** is highly underrated. It consists of a pause, usually lasting no more than a few seconds, and it is done to give a speaker that brief extra "quiet time" to discover what he or she wants to say.
- **Empathizing** is commonly defined as the ability to understand and share the feelings of another.
- **Validating** is the skill that legitimizes and accepts a speaker's opinion or feeling, without agreeing that the opinion is "correct."
- **Acknowledging Feelings** is important because people communicate their feelings through their conduct, their language, their tones of voice and their facial expressions, and these communications have a direct impact on anyone who receives them.
- **Making Space for a Quiet Person** sends the quiet person this message: "If you don't wish to talk now, that's fine. But if you would like to speak, here's an opportunity."
- **Balancing** is a critical task that allows a facilitator to broaden a discussion to include perspectives that may not yet have been expressed.
- **Encouraging** is the art of creating an opening for people to participate, without putting any one individual on the spot.
- **Drawing People Out** is the skill that supports people to clarify, develop and refine their ideas. Another version of this is helping the group see that some of the ideas are in tension and bear further exploration.

Facilitators should both model these behaviors, as well as help participants adopt them themselves. A summary of the facilitator behaviors and tips or examples of ways to practice them is provided in the Art of Active Listening Chart.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Adapted from International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) training materials

## The Art of Active Listening Chart

Behavior	Purpose	Tips	Examples
<b>Encouraging</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conveys interest</li> <li>Encourages the person to keep talking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don't agree or disagree</li> <li>Use neutral words</li> <li>Face the speaker and nod as they speak</li> <li>Ask probing question</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Can you tell me more?"</li> <li>"And then what happened?"</li> </ul>
<b>Clarifying</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures understanding</li> <li>Avoids confusion</li> <li>Obtains additional information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask questions</li> <li>Restate understanding</li> <li>Ask if interpretation is on track</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"When did this happen?"</li> <li>"By impacts you mean...?"</li> </ul>
<b>Restating or Paraphrasing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows you are listening and understanding what is being said</li> <li>Checks meaning and interpretation of message</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restate basic ideas and your understanding of what was said in your own words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"So you would like NGE to provide materials in Spanish. Is that right?"</li> <li>"You thought that this action was required at this time?"</li> </ul>
<b>Reflecting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diffuses difficult situations</li> <li>Shows understanding of feelings and emotions</li> <li>Helps the speaker evaluate his/her own feelings after hearing them reflected by someone else</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflect the speaker's basic feelings</li> <li>Listen to the tone of your voice</li> <li>Watch body language</li> <li>Guess their feelings and reflect them back</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"This has really been frustrating to you."</li> <li>"You sound disappointed..."</li> <li>"I hear anger in your voice..."</li> </ul>
<b>Summarizing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviews progress</li> <li>Pulls together ideas, facts, and feelings</li> <li>Establishes closure; allows people to move on</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restate major ideas, thoughts, and feelings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"These seem to be the key ideas you have expressed..."</li> <li>"Your main priorities were..."</li> </ul>
<b>Validating</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acknowledges the worthiness of the other person</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acknowledge the value of their issues and feelings</li> <li>Show appreciation for their efforts and actions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"I appreciate your willingness to resolve this issue."</li> </ul>
<b>Questioning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gathers information</li> <li>Focuses discussion</li> <li>Expands understanding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use open-ended questions starting with what, how, when, and where</li> <li>Seek specific details to help understand and clarify</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"How did that new road surprise you?"</li> <li>"What made you think that?"</li> </ul>

## The Art of Asking Good Questions

Asking good questions is a critical part of facilitating, as is knowing when not to ask questions. Conversations can often progress pretty well without specific questions; all participants may need is some initial prodding to react to background material. This fact makes it somewhat easy for novice facilitators, because they can learn on the job by simply letting things go on their own somewhat and picking and choosing when to intervene. If the participants are doing well on their own, the need for the facilitator and his or her questions is diminished, so don't feel the need to force questions.

- Question asking will depend on the overall goal/purpose of the meeting.
- Be careful of starting with questions focused on specific aspects of the issue being discussed. People may have something pressing they want to share about the topic, and a narrow question may not give them that chance. Asking a warm-up question that meets people where they are before diving into a topic is a good idea.
- Preparing questions beforehand can be helpful, but also be prepared not to use them.
- At times there will be questions you need to ask because you are gathering specific information on that question from all the groups. There is nonetheless an important tension here between too much and too little structure. Asking specific questions of all groups will provide good information on that question, but it is also somewhat forced: The topic did not necessarily come up naturally in all groups; it was introduced by the facilitator. A more open process may bring more interesting results because you will be able to observe what issues arise naturally in the groups. The tradeoff is that by allowing the natural process, you may not get feedback on a particularly important issue. All in all, you need to be careful when introducing specific discussion questions, and be transparent in the reporting of the data about what questions were asked. Impartiality can be questioned if questions are loaded or if they direct participants in particular ways.
- Most questions will be reactive clarification/follow-up questions.
- Asking too many questions can be as bad as asking too few.
- Ideally, participants are asking each other good questions by the end of the conversation.

## The Art of Paraphrasing

### Purposes of paraphrasing

- Shows you are listening and thus shows speakers that what they are saying is important.
- Helps solidify your role as impartial facilitator (your paraphrases need to be fair and nonjudgmental).
- Checks meaning and interpretation of a message.
- Helps people more clearly express themselves.
- Helps equalize contributions (speakers who are more eloquent do not gain as much of an advantage).
- Helps others understand each other better. Your paraphrase may be the key to others getting what the original speaker meant.

- Gives speakers a chance to clarify their points (they realize they aren't explaining themselves well).
- Helps them evaluate their own feelings (your paraphrase may actually teach them about themselves — “Yeah, I guess that is what I meant...”).
- Helps recorders capture a summary.
- Can help shift the discussion to a deeper level (move from positions to interests).
- Can help shift the discussion from a tense/emotional level to a more understanding level (especially when you paraphrase and take out inflammatory statements).
- Helps you stay present in the conversation and paying attention.

### Perils of Paraphrasing

- You can easily get too caught up in paraphrasing everything, making it more about you than the group.
- Paraphrasing encourages back and forth between you and the speaker, rather than between the speaker and the rest of the group.
- People may get the impression that you are implying you speak better than they do.
- You may capture only part of what a speaker is trying to say.
- You may miss the main point, and the speaker may not feel comfortable correcting you.

Be sure to paraphrase in a manner that allows the participant to feel comfortable disagreeing with your paraphrase. Do not paraphrase matter-of-factly (“You mean that...”), always paraphrase with qualifiers (“What I am hearing is... Is that right?”; “So do you mean that...”; “Would you say then that...”; etc.

Facilitators can also utilize the participant, the recorders or the other members to help paraphrase, particularly by relying on the need to capture the thought well on the notes. You can ask the person to summarize for the notes (“How could we write that briefly and still capture your concerns?”) or ask others (“Could someone try to paraphrase that for me so we can get that down?”). If you as the facilitator are not following a comment—and you think it is important—be honest. Ask for help to make sure the comment is captured and appreciated.

Overall, it is important to consider that deliberation is difficult, and at times participants will struggle. Sam Kaner describes this as the “Groan Zone” that groups must go through as they work on difficult issues. So challenges are not failures or evidence of something going wrong; they may very well mean things are going as they should. In many cases, when an individual is being difficult, the best remedy is to focus not on the individual but on the rest of the group. Below are some general guidelines for dealing with challenges. See Appendix C for more specific tips on classic facilitator challenges, common mistakes and effective responses.

## Part 4. Handling Facilitator Challenges

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### Setting the Ground Rules

Constructive dialogue and deliberation is more likely to take place if some guidelines are laid out at the beginning; they can help prevent difficulties later on. Aside from establishing the boundaries of productive dialogue, a key function of ground rules is to provide the participants with examples of norms and behaviors that hopefully they will find value in beyond the conversation itself. The hope is that once they realize the higher quality of conversation that occurs under these conditions, it becomes a habit for them that impacts their communication style in multiple settings.

Ground rules should be few, simple and basic. Complicated ground rules that require people to think before they talk could stifle expression. The purpose should be to create an environment that is safe for people to participate and where there are equal opportunities for them to do so. A simple set of ground rules that will generally be useful is something along these lines:

- Let's work together to make sure everyone has good opportunities to participate. To do that, let's try to keep our statements at a reasonable length so no one inadvertently monopolizes the time.
- In this dialogue we are free to agree and to disagree with one another. If we disagree, let's do it respectfully, keep it on the level of each person's ideas, and avoid any personal attacks.
- Whatever is said here will only be recorded as a general statement, without names attached. While everyone has to take care of themselves as far as what they are willing to say in public, let's agree in principle that we should respect each person's privacy and that we will not talk to others about specific things people say. If we talk with others about this discussion, we will only talk about what was said in general, without quoting anyone. Agreed?

#### The Basic Ground Rules

You might want to write down the basic ground rules and make them visible for the group throughout the discussion.

- Be honest and respectful
- Listen to understand
- It's okay to disagree, but do so with curiosity, not hostility
- Be brief, so everyone has an opportunity to participate
- Put your phone on vibrate and resist the temptation to check e-mail or multitask

### Dealing with Conflict

Facilitating dialogue and deliberation has many connections to the field of conflict management. Conflicts are inherent to collaborative problem solving, and people need to learn how to deal with the inherent conflict more productively, rather than seek to resolve or avoid conflict. The first step to managing conflicts is understanding them. In particular, understanding at what level a conflict may reside is critical for facilitators to understand how to address the conflict.

### Typology of Conflicts

1. **Conflict based on different facts** – These conflicts are perhaps the most difficult to address in dialogue and deliberation. If participants with opposing views have fundamentally different facts they are working with, and there is no clear way to resolve those differences with the resources available during the conversation, then at times the best the facilitator can do is bracket the discussion and have the participants simply agree to disagree and perhaps seek out the answer—if there is one—after the conversation.
2. **Conflict based on misunderstandings** – At times, what appear to be differences in facts are actually misunderstandings. Here the process and the facilitator can help address the conflict by making sure the opposing sides have a clear opportunity to explain themselves and listen to each other. Our current political culture often relies on misunderstandings, so there are plenty of misunderstandings for deliberation to undo, and many conflicts dissipate when opposing sides truly understand each other.
3. **Conflict based on value differences** – Many conflicts are fueled by value differences. The process of clarifying those value differences, and having participants struggle with their actual value differences rather than false, perceived differences is very important. While serious differences may still exist, they are typically much more manageable when understood. The key to addressing these conflicts, then, is to isolate the values and help participants work through the differences. If the conflict is particularly heated, it may be useful for the facilitator to lay out what he or she sees as the conflict, or perhaps even ask a third participant to do so (“Would anyone want to try to characterize the differences between these two perspectives?”).
4. **Conflict based on outside issues** – Sometimes conflicts arise that are the result of personalities, past history or other factors irrelevant to the issue (such as political goals). These conflicts are also difficult to address during the forums, and often require deeper interventions. The primary response for facilitators in these cases is to try to bring the group back to the issue at hand, in part by directing attention away from the participants in conflict.

Facilitators should also remember that in most deliberative settings, they do not need to resolve the conflict. Once the conflict is clarified, and the opposing views are clearly captured in the notes, it may simply be time to move on. Do not let a personal conflict dominate a discussion.

### Dealing with Emotion

The first point to make here is that emotions are not detrimental to deliberation. Indeed, the lack of emotions is much more of a problem. The surfacing of emotions represents an important teaching moment that facilitators should welcome. One function of deliberation is to allow participants to express their emotions in a productive manner. Another is for participants from opposing perspectives to see the emotions present in others in a respectful, safe environment, so those emotions can contribute to increased understanding.

Facilitators can react to emotion in many different ways. Most often, you simply allow the participant a chance to vent (as long, of course, as no one feels threatened). The expression of emotion is often a clear opportunity to help participants move from positions to interests and reveal powerful underlying values and concerns. Paraphrasing may be particularly useful, especially for the

other participants, who may get caught up in the emotion and not be really listening to the message being sent. Restating an argument made by an emotional participant in a less emotionally laden manner—taking out, for example, particularly inflammatory statements that may distract others—can be valuable technique. Clearly showing that their viewpoint has been captured in the notes can also be important.

**Other suggestions for dealing with emotional participants from IAP2 include:**

- Don't interrupt, be defensive or argue.
- Respect the speaker's opinion and his or her right to it.
- Try not to take anger or emotion personally.
- Use active listening skills.
- Ask questions to clarify the source of the speaker's anxiety, concern, fear or anger.
- Summarize what you have heard so the speaker is sure he or she is being understood (often anger comes from repeated failed attempts to get an opinion across).
- Get the speaker's agreement on the summary, and be sure to have his or her concerns clear in the notes.
- Ask the speaker what he or she would like done to address these concerns (shift from past to future).

Good Signs	Signs the facilitator should make a move
People listen to what others are saying.	People are just waiting their turn to "have their say."
People are talking to each other, asking questions of each other.	All comments are directed to the facilitator.
Everyone is listening with respect; no one is dominating.	There are "sidebar" conversations or interruptions.
Alternate viewpoints get aired.	The group mainly concurs on each approach.
Consequences of each approach are addressed.	The pro arguments have no negative consequences.
People share personal experiences.	People speak theoretically or analytically.
People express emotion around what is important to them.	The forum is cerebral and lacks feeling.
The dialogue builds on any prior work by the group	Comments ignore prior considerations.

- Check to make sure that you have accurately recorded the speaker's comments and concerns.

**If a participant continues to interrupt:**

- If there is more than one facilitator available, suggest that the person talk directly to the other facilitator in another room to allow the meeting to continue.
- If you are the only facilitator, offer to talk to him or her during a break or after the meeting so that you can continue the meeting.
- Alternatively, ask the person to write down his or her concerns, and commit to providing the comments as part of the meeting record.

## Part 5. The Basics of Recording

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Recording is a crucial job. Through recording one must capture the input of internal stakeholders and work with both the moderators and event organizers to create a written record of the workshop proceedings. While the recorder is not expected to write everything that is said word for word, he or she should try to capture the essence of the main points being made by each participant.

### Purposes of Recording

- To help establish that what the participants say is **valued and being listened to**
- To **remind participants** of their comments, agreements and action items, particularly during the reflection time
- To support the importance of **equality and inclusion**. Comments are captured regardless of the source, and the author is not identified
- To serve as a **reference document** for future conversations
- To facilitate the **writing of a report** that will inform a wider audience of the discussion, decisions and actions

### Qualities of Effective Recording

- Brief
- Clear
- Legible
- Accurate
- Well organized
- Uses active verbs
- Reports the appropriate amount of information
- Captures the tensions, tradeoffs and common ground for action
- Notes are distributed soon after the forum
- Treat each person's contribution with equal respect. It is not your role to determine the value of a comment, but rather to capture the discussion.

### Effective Recording Practices

- Record not only each person's position ("I'm for such and such"), but each person's thinking ("I'm for such and such because...").
- Keep your own views out of the way and record the proceedings as faithfully as possible.
- If there is a separate facilitator, occasionally ask that person to clarify a point if it is unclear to you or if things have moved too quickly. However, the recorder should not take on a facilitating role unless co-facilitating has already been discussed with the primary facilitator.

- Use the speakers' words as much as possible.
- If you plan on using "dot voting" at the end of the forum, be sure to leave some space for the dots. You may also want to draw lines between the separate comments.
- When using flip-charts, be sure to follow a number of recommended tips and practices:
  - Check whether or not the pages are adhesive and work with the facilitator to determine whether or not pages will be posted as pages become full
  - Check flip-chart markers before workshop begins
  - Label the sheets before taking them down with the group name and page number
  - Have a pen or pencil handy to write additional clarification comments, if necessary. Have recorders add comments to the sheets before they are taken down.
  - Print in capital letters 2" to 4" tall (easel paper with lines can be very helpful)
  - Write straight up and down
  - Close your letters (don't leave gaps in B's and P's, for example)
  - Use plain, block letters
  - Alternate colors between speakers, but don't use too many colors on one page
  - Don't crowd the bottom of the page
  - Do not bother with people's names; just record their perspectives and ideas.
- If you have decided to audio-record the dialogues, make sure you minimize the chance of technical failures by using the following checklist:
  - ✓ Have you tested your digital recorder before using it?
  - ✓ Is there sufficient space on the recorder to record the whole group?
  - ✓ Is the battery life full?
  - ✓ Is the recorder placed to pick up all the voices (center of the table)?
  - ✓ Are you in a location with minimal ambient noise?
  - ✓ Do you have a back-up digital recorder you can use in case the primary one?
  - ✓ Be sure to reveal the recording to the participants and explain the purpose
- Creating a dedicated physical space where participants can post open questions, concerns, data requests, or slightly off-topic thoughts is an effective way to make sure that dialogues can keep flowing while giving people a chance to voice their questions or concerns unanswered or not addressed. These spaces can be called "Parking Lots" and can be poster-boards placed in the middle or a table or posted on a wall. Participants can write their comments and questions on Post-It notes, and stick these in the designated space. Facilitators should explain to participants what will be done with their Post-It comments and how they will be addressed by the meeting organizers.

## Appendix A. Facilitating and Recording CPA Public Engagement Meetings

### MEETING 1

Time Frame	Driving Questions	Organizers
February – March 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is the RPSD and what is the purpose of the engagement process?</li> <li>What are the key characteristics of the community and what are the community values and priorities?</li> </ul>	FSL, CPA Leads, Consortium Partners

#### I. Meeting 1 Agenda

The purpose of Meeting 1 is to understand community values, challenges, and priorities in a given Community Planning Area (CPA). This information and input on the key values, concerns and visions for the community will inform the focus of the public engagement meetings that follow and, ultimately, the sustainability plan that is created for the CPA and the region as a whole.

An example agenda for Meeting 1 is as follows:

- Welcome by the CPA lead (10 min)
- Review agenda and meeting outcomes by Focus St. Louis (5 min)
- Introduction to the Project from East West Gateway and FOCUS St. Louis (10 min)
- Key Pad Polling Activity (15 min)
- Small Table Discussions led by trained Facilitators (45 min)
- Report Out facilitated by FSL (15 min)
- Next Steps from East West Gateway and FSL (10 min)

#### II. Table Discussions Facilitation and Recording Guidelines

##### Small Table Discussions (Trained Facilitators) – 45 min

*\* Note that meeting facilitators will be provided detailed Facilitators Guide for each of the public engagement meetings. The following description provides a basic outline of the facilitator's main tasks for Meeting 1\**

- Participants will be divided into groups of 10 plus at least one facilitator per group.
- Begin with going over discussion Ground Rules (See Page 14) – (3 minutes). Review a basic list of ground rules and ask the group for support.
- Explain to participants that they can write questions down on the Post-It notes provided and place them in the “Parking Lot”. The “Parking Lot” should be a large paper in the middle of the table upon which participants can stick their notes. Explain that the questions will be collected and addressed by the EWG and FSL meeting organizers either online and/or in the next meeting.
- Go around the table to do participation introductions with an ice-breaker question (this will be provided). Create a seating chart so you can remember names – (5 min)

- Lead the group through Meeting 1 Discussion Questions – (30 min)
  - Take notes of main ideas and comments on the legal pad provided, but make sure you do not become a silent scribe. Remember your main job is to keep the conversation flowing.
- Complete a prioritizing exercise to determine the group’s main takeaways for – (5 min):
  - Things about the community they want to keep or to stay the same
  - Community challenges or things they want to change
  - Ideas for action on how to confront the challenges and desired changes
- Work with the group to select one representative (can be the facilitator) to report to the larger group on the tables priorities for the three categories above – (2 min)
  - Record the agreed upon report out on the Report Out Summary sheet.

#### Report Out (Facilitators and FSL) – 15 min

- A representative from each group will report out to the large group on the three top “keeps”, challenges, and ideas for action in their community.
- An FSL employee will give each group 2-3 minutes (depending on number of groups) to present its report out, keeping time on a clock and giving speakers a 30 second warning by holding up a 30 second card.

#### Next Steps (FSL and CPA Lead) – 10 min

- Be sure to collect all completed Participant Feedback and Demographic Questions Forms from your table.
- Review the notes on your legal pad and collect all Report-Out Summaries. Make sure they are as complete and legible as possible.
- Give all completed materials (Feedback forms, Notes, Parking Lot questions) to the FSL Meeting Organizer.
- Make sure all Key Pad Polling Devices are returned to the EWG Organizer.
- Thank all participants and help clean up

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**III. Example Report Out Summary for Meeting 1**

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**Group Number/Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Facilitator Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Main things to keep the same about the community:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Main community challenges or things they want to change:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Great ideas for action on how to confront the challenges**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

## MEETING 2

Time Frame	Driving Questions	Organizers
June – July 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What do we know so far about the CPA?</li> <li>How do community values and priorities relate to sustainable development?</li> </ul>	FSL, CPA Leads, Consortium Partners

### I. Meeting 2 Agenda

The purpose of Meeting 2 is to gather input on a community's top sustainability priorities, which will inform the development of Alternate Development Scenarios for each CPA. The critical task in Meeting 2 is to link the community's main concerns and priorities (gathered in Meeting 1) to the livability and sustainability principles. Participants will be given a presentation on the livability principles and what their communities will look like in the future in the absence of any change (the baseline development scenarios). They will deliberate on how they want to see changes for their communities now and in the future.

An example agenda for Meeting 2 is as follows:

- Welcome by the CPA lead (10 min)
- Review agenda and meeting outcomes by Focus St. Louis (5 min)
- Introduction to the Project from East West Gateway and FOCUS St. Louis (10 min)
- Key Pad Polling Activity (15 min)
- Small Table Discussions led by trained Facilitators (45 min)
- Report Out facilitated by FSL (15 min)
- Next Steps from East West Gateway and FSL (10 min)

### II. Table Discussions Facilitation and Recording Guidelines

#### Key Pad Polling Activity (EWG) – 15 min

- Facilitators should jot down notes on the outcomes of the key-pad polling for reference during the table discussions.

#### Small Table Discussions (Trained Facilitators) – 45 min

*\* Note that meeting facilitators will be provided detailed Facilitators Guide for each of the public engagement meetings. The following description provides a basic outline of the facilitator's main tasks for Meeting 2\**

- Participants will be divided into groups of 10 plus at least one facilitator per group.
- Begin with going over discussion Ground Rules (See Page 14) – (3 minutes). Review a basic list of ground rules and ask the group for support.
- Explain to participants that they can write questions down on the Post-It notes provided and place them in the "Parking Lot". The "Parking Lot" should be a large paper in the middle of the table upon which participants can stick their notes. Explain that the questions will be collected and addressed by the EWG and FSL meeting organizers either online and/or in the next meeting.

- Go around the table to do participation introductions with an ice-breaker question (this will be provided). Create a seating chart so you can remember names – (5 min)
- Lead the group through Meeting 2 Discussion Questions – (30 min)
  - Take notes of main ideas and comments on the legal pad provided, but make sure you do not become a silent scribe. Remember your main job is to keep the conversation flowing.
  - Ask participants to respond to the livability principles and which ones they care about or are concerned about most (if any).
  - Ask participants to describe how they want their community to look in 15 years?
  - Ask participants to brainstorm the kinds of actions individuals, organizations, and government to take to address the leading concerns and sustainability priorities. How can these different groups take actions that will begin to make that vision a reality? Encourage groups to be specific about their suggestions. For example, a statement like “we should have better transportation” should be followed up by a facilitator prompting: “How?” or “which kind of transportation in particular?”, etc.
- Work with the group to select one representative (can be the facilitator) to report out to the larger group and go over report out content – (3 min)
  - Review the group discussion of the livability principles and main concerns related to these principles.
  - Review the discussion of ideas for action for different groups.
  - Record the agreed upon report out on the Report Out Summary sheet.

#### Report Out (Facilitators and FSL) – 12 min

- A representative from each group will report out to the large group on the main sustainability-related concerns and their ideas for action.
- An FSL employee will give each group 2-3 minutes (depending on number of groups) to present its report out, keeping time on a clock and giving speakers a 30 second warning by holding up a 30 second card.

#### Next Steps (FSL and CPA Lead) – 10 min

- Be sure to collect all completed Participant Feedback and Demographics Forms from your table.
- Review the notes on your recording sheets to make sure they are as complete and legible as possible.
- Give all completed materials (Feedback forms, Notes, Post-It questions) to the FSL Meeting Organizer.
- Make sure all Key Pad Polling Devices are returned to the EWG Organizer.
- Thank all participants and help clean up

**III. Example Report Out Summary for Meeting 2****Group Number/Name:** \_\_\_\_\_**Facilitator Name:** \_\_\_\_\_**Main Sustainability Concerns in the Community:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Key Elements of a Vision of 15 years from now:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Summary of Specific Action Ideas to meet the Vision:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**MEETING 3**

<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Driving Questions</b>	<b>Organizers</b>
October – November 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do we know so far about the CPA?</li> <li>• Based on community values and priorities for sustainability, what kind of development scenario should be adopted in the CPA?</li> </ul>	FSL, CPA Leads, Consortium Partners

**I. Meeting 3 Agenda**

The purpose of Meeting 3 is to gather input on preferred *community* development scenarios to guide the creation of a *regional* plan for sustainability. One of the critical tasks in Meeting 3 is to link Alternate Development Scenarios developed by the Applied Research Collaborative to a given CPA's primary concerns and sustainability priorities (gathered in Meetings 1 and 2). A second critical task is for participants to weigh the tradeoffs and benefits of each of the development scenarios, deliberating on which characteristics are more important for their communities and the region.

An example agenda for Meeting 3 is as follows:

- Welcome by the CPA lead (10 min)
- Review agenda and meeting outcomes by Focus St. Louis (5 min)
- Introduction to the Project from East West Gateway and FOCUS St. Louis (20 min)
- Small Table Discussions led by trained Facilitators (55 min)
- Report Out facilitated by FSL (15 min)
- Next Steps from East West Gateway and FSL (15 min)

**II. Table Discussions Facilitation and Recording Guidelines**Small Table Discussions (Trained Facilitators) – 55 min

*\* Note that meeting facilitators will be provided detailed Facilitators Guide for each of the public engagement meetings. The following description provides a basic outline of the facilitator's main tasks for Meeting 3\**

- Participants will be divided into groups of 10 plus at least one facilitator per group.
- Begin with going over discussion Ground Rules (See Page 14) – (3 minutes). Review a basic list of ground rules and ask the group for support.
- Explain to participants that they can write questions down on the Post-It notes provided and place them in the "Parking Lot". The "Parking Lot" should be a large paper in the middle of the table upon which participants can stick their notes. Explain that the questions will be collected and addressed by the EWG and FSL meeting organizers either online and/or in the next meeting.
- Go around the table to do participation introductions with an ice-breaker question (this will be provided). Create a seating chart so you can remember names – (5 min)
- Lead the group through Meeting 3 Discussion – (35 min)



- Facilitators from each of the table should be near their poster-boards to answer any questions or clarify any handwriting, etc.
- Participants should be given 10-12 minutes to vote, with a 3 minute and 1 minute warning when voting ends.
- FSL Organizer should leave enough time to review the voting when it is nearing an end and be prepared to do a brief 2 minute summary of the voting results.

#### Next Steps (FSL and CPA Lead) – 10-15 min

- Be sure to collect all completed Participant Feedback and Demographics Forms from your table.
- Review the notes on your legal pads to make sure they are as complete and legible as possible.
- Give all completed materials (Feedback forms, Notes, Post-It questions, Poster Boards) to the FSL Organizer.
- Make sure all Key Pad Polling Devices are returned to the EWG Organizer.
- Thank all participants and help clean up

## MEETING 4

Time Frame	Driving Questions	Organizers
February – March 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the preferred development scenarios for each CPA?</li> <li>• How can we as a region ensure that our preferred scenarios all fit together?</li> </ul>	FSL, CPA Leads, Consortium Partners

As the culminating event of the four-part public engagement process, Meeting 4 will take on a different structure from the previous meetings and has yet to be determined. There are a few key activities that we anticipate being a part of Meeting 4:

- Presentation of the Preferred Development Scenario based on Meeting 3 deliberations in the CPA;
- Introduction of the Preferred Development Scenarios from the other 11 CPAs;
- Presentation of Videos from the CPA<sup>4</sup>;
- Deliberation on how the scenarios from the CPAs are/are not compatible with one another; and
- Discussion of next steps for regional sustainable development.

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<sup>4</sup> This project has been funded to purchase and utilize multiple video recorders for public engagement purposes. FSL is currently working with the PE Committee Video Workgroup to determine the best use of these resources and how they can be used to dynamically portray the CPAs.

## RPSD Public Engagement Meeting Facilitator Checklist

[list of things for the facilitator should check before, during, and after each engagement meeting]

### **Before**

- Check any emails or mailings with information from meeting organizers
- Note the location of meeting
- Note the time of meeting
- Note the time that facilitators should arrive
- Note the key contact person at FOCUS
- Review RPSD Facilitator Handbook
- Review Facilitator's Discussion Guide if provided in advance
- Gather meeting supplies (responsibility of FOCUS)
- Gather snacks (responsibility of FOCUS)

Pack with you:

- A Stopwatch or other time-keeping device (preferably not a cell phone)
- 2 Pens
- Water
- RPSD Facilitator Handbook
- Materials sent by Organizers

### **During/When You Arrive at the Meeting Location**

- Check in with the FOCUS Organizer so they know you are there
- Know if you are facilitating with anyone else
- Check in with your co-facilitator (if you have one) to divvy up responsibilities
- Find the location of the table/group you will be facilitating
- Check if recording and participant materials are at the tables
- Make sure you have the Facilitator's Discussion Questions (if these are not distributed prior to the event, make sure you have a copy of all facilitating materials from the event organizers)
- Make sure you have all recording materials, including Report Out Summary Sheets, posterboards and markers (if necessary)

### **After**

- Collect all completed Participant Feedback and Demographics Forms from your table.
- Review the notes on your legal pads and fill in any detail to make sure they are as complete and legible as possible.
- Give all completed materials (Feedback forms, Notes, Post-It questions) to the meeting Organizer.
- Make sure all Key Pad Polling Devices are returned to the EWG Organizer
- Find out the next meeting you will be facilitating
- Thank everyone for coming and participating

## Appendix B: The Why & How of Basic Facilitation Techniques

(Adapted from Kaner's *Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision Making*, 2007)

PARAPHRASING	
WHY	HOW
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Paraphrasing</i> is fundamental to active listening. It is the most straightforward way to demonstrate to a speaker that his or her thoughts have been heard and understood.</li> <li>• The power of <i>paraphrasing</i> is that it is nonjudgmental and, hence, validating. It enables people to feel that their ideas are respected and legitimate.</li> <li>• <i>Paraphrasing</i> provides the speaker with a chance to hear how his or her ideas are being heard by others.</li> <li>• <i>Paraphrasing</i> is especially useful on occasions when a speaker's statements are convoluted or confusing. At such times, it serves as a check for clarification, as in, "Is this what you mean?" followed by the paraphrase.</li> <li>• In sum, <i>paraphrasing</i> is the tool of choice for supporting people to think out loud.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In your own words, say what you think the speaker said.</li> <li>• If the speaker's statement contains one or two sentences, use roughly the same number of words when you paraphrase.</li> <li>• If the speaker's statement contains many sentences, summarize it.</li> <li>• To strengthen the group's trust in your objectivity, occasionally preface your paraphrase with a comment like one of these: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "It sounds as if you're saying..."</li> <li>• "Let me see if I'm understanding you..."</li> <li>• "Is this what you mean?"</li> </ul> </li> <li>• When you have completed the paraphrase, look for the speaker's reaction. Say something like, "Did I get it?" Verbally or nonverbally, the speaker will indicate whether he or she feels understood. If not, <i>keep asking for clarification until you understand what he or she meant.</i></li> </ul>

<b>SUMMARIZING</b>	
WHY	HOW
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good facilitators know the value of encouraging participants to engage in thoughtful discussion. But the most interesting conversations can be the hardest ones to close.</li> <li>• If the facilitator does an effective job of summarizing, people will feel ready to move on to a new topic. However, if the facilitator does a poor job of it, some of the participants will push back and attempt to keep the discussion going. This places the facilitator in an awkward position, which probably could have been avoided with better technique.</li> <li>• Making a deliberate effort to summarize a discussion also helps participants consolidate their thinking. The restatement of key themes and main points provides people with mental categories. These internal categories serve as both memory aids and devices for improving understanding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Summarizing</i> is a five-step process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Step 1.</b> Restate the question that began the discussion: “We’ve been discussing the success of your program.”</li> <li><b>Step 2.</b> Indicate the number of key themes you heard: “I think people raised three themes.”</li> <li><b>Step 3.</b> Name the first theme, and mention one or two key points related to that theme: “The first theme was about your strategy. You explored its effectiveness and suggested some improvements.”</li> <li><b>Step 4.</b> Repeat this sequence for each theme. “Another theme was the validity of your main goal. You questioned whether it was feasible and realistic. Finally, you examined some personnel issues and you created a new staff role.”</li> <li><b>Step 5.</b> Make a statement that bridges to the next topic: “We’ve done some thinking about the effectiveness of the program. Now let’s discuss specific changes that you might want to propose.”</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>STACKING</b>	
<b>WHY</b>	<b>HOW</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Stacking</i> is a procedure for helping people take turns when several people want to speak at once.</li> <li>• <i>Stacking</i> lets everyone know that they are, in fact, going to have their turn to speak. So instead of competing for airtime, people are free to listen without distraction.</li> <li>• In contrast, when people don't know when or even whether their turn will come, they can't help but vie for position. This leads to various expressions of impatience and disrespect, especially interruptions.</li> <li>• Facilitators who do not stack have to pay attention to the waving of hands and other nonverbal messages that say, "I'd like to speak, please." Inevitably, some members are skipped or ignored. With <i>stacking</i>, a facilitator creates a sequence that includes all those who want to speak.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Stacking</i> is a four-step procedure. First, the facilitator asks those who want to speak to raise their hands. Second, he or she creates a speaking order by assigning a number to each person. Third, he or she calls on people when their turn to speak arrives. Fourth, after the final speaker, the facilitator asks if anyone else wants to speak. If so, the facilitator starts another tack. Here's a demonstration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Step 1.</b> "Would all who want to speak, please raise your hands."</li> <li><b>Step 2.</b> "Tyrone, you're first. Deb, you're second. James, you're third."</li> <li><b>Step 3.</b> [<i>When Tyrone has finished.</i>] "Who was second? Was it you, Deb? Okay, go ahead."</li> <li><b>Step 4.</b> [<i>After the last person has spoken</i>] "Who'd like to speak now? Are there any more comments?" Then, start a new stack and repeat Steps 2 through 4.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>TRACKING</b>	
<b>WHY</b>	<b>HOW</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Tracking</i> means keeping track of the various lines of thought that are going on simultaneously within a single discussion.</li> <li>• For example, suppose a group is discussing a plan to hire a new employee. Assume that two people are talking about roles and responsibilities. Two others are discussing financial implications. And two more are reviewing their experiences with the previous employee. In such cases, people need help keeping track of all that's going on, because they are focused primarily on clarifying their own ideas.</li> <li>• People often act as though the particular issue that interests <i>them</i> is the one that <i>everyone</i> should focus on. <i>Tracking</i> makes it visible that several threads of the topic are being discussed. In so doing, it affirms that each thread is equally valid.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Tracking</i> is a four-step process. First, the facilitator indicates that he or she is going to step back and summarize the discussion so far. Second, he or she names the different conversations that have been in play. Third, he or she checks for accuracy with the group. Fourth, he or she invites the group to resume discussion. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Step 1.</b> "It seems that there are three conversations going on right now. I want to make sure I'm tracking them."</li> <li><b>Step 2.</b> "One conversation appears to be about roles and responsibilities. Another has to do with resources. And a third is about what you've learned by working with the last person who held this job."</li> <li><b>Step 3.</b> "Am I getting it right?" Often someone will say, "No, you missed mine!" If so, don't argue or explain; just validate the comment and move on.</li> <li><b>Step 4.</b> "Any more comments?" Now build a new stack.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## LISTENING FOR COMMON GROUND

### WHY

- *Listening for common ground* is a powerful intervention when group members are polarized. It validates the group's areas of disagreement and focuses the group on its areas of agreement.
- Many disputes contain elements of agreement. For example, civil rights activists often argue vehemently over priorities and tactics, even while they agree on broad goals. When disagreements cause the members of a group to take polarized positions, it becomes hard for people to recognize that they have *anything* in common. This isolation can sometimes be overcome when the facilitator validates *both* the differences in the group and the areas of common ground.
- *Listening for common ground* is also a tool for instilling hope. People who believe they are opposed on every front may discover that they share a value, a belief or a goal.

### HOW

- *Listening for common ground* is a four-step process. First, indicate that you are going to summarize the group's differences and similarities. Second, summarize differences. Third, note areas of common ground. Fourth, check for accuracy. Here's an example:
  - Step 1.** "Let me summarize what I'm hearing from each of you. I'm hearing a lot of differences but also some similarities."
  - Step 2.** "It sounds as if one group wants to leave work early during the holiday season, and the other group would prefer to take a few days of vacation."
  - Step 3.** "Even so, you all seem to agree that you want some time off before New Year's."
  - Step 4.** "Have I got it right?"
- Caution: To use this technique effectively, make sure to use it with all parties. People who do not feel validated are likely to continue advocating for their position regardless of the quality of their thinking.

<b>LINKING</b>	
<b>WHY</b>	<b>HOW</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Linking</i> is a listening skill that invites a speaker to explain the relevance of a statement he or she just made.</li> <li>• In conversations about complex subjects, it is hard for everyone to stay focused on the same thing at the same time. People often raise issues that seem tangential—in other words, irrelevant—to everyone else.</li> <li>• When this occurs, it's not uncommon to hear a group member say something like, "Let's get back on track." Or "Can we put this in the parking lot?" Remarks like those are hard to argue with. Unless a facilitator intervenes, the <i>speaker is likely to simply stop talking.</i></li> <li>• Yet ideas that seem unrelated to the main topic can actually be connected with it, often in unexpected ways. <i>The thought that comes from left field is often the one that triggers the breakthrough.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Linking</i> is a four-step process. First, paraphrase the statement. Second, ask the speaker to link the idea with the main topic. Third, paraphrase and validate the speaker's explanation. Fourth, follow with an action from the list below. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Step 1.</b> Paraphrase. A speaker who fears getting off track needs the support and reassurance of paraphrasing.</li> <li><b>Step 2.</b> Ask for linkage: How does your idea link up with [our topic]? Can you help us make the connection?"</li> <li><b>Step 3.</b> Paraphrase, then validate the explanation: "Are you saying... [Paraphrase]?" Then say, "I see what you mean."</li> <li><b>Step 4.</b> Follow with one of these: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Draw out the speaker's idea.</i></li> <li>○ Use <i>balancing</i> or <i>encouraging</i> to pull for other reactions.</li> <li>○ Return to <i>stacking</i>. ("Okay, we have Jim's idea. Whose turn is it to go next?")</li> <li>○ Use a <i>parking</i> lot flipchart for open questions.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>INTENTIONAL SILENCE</b>	
<b>WHY</b>	<b>HOW</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Intentional silence</i> is highly underrated. It consists of a pause, usually lasting no more than a few seconds, and it is done to give a speaker that brief extra “quiet time” to discover what he or she wants to say.</li> <li>• Some people need a brief silence in order to organize a complex thought and turn it into a coherent statement. Others need a bit of time to consider whether to take a risk and make a controversial statement. Still others need the silence to digest what has already been said, in order to understand their own reactions better.</li> <li>• <i>Intentional silence</i> can also be used to honor moments of exceptional poignancy. After a statement of passion or vulnerability, intentional silence allows the group to pause, reflect and make sense of the experience.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ten seconds of silence can seem a lot longer than it really is. The crucial element of this listening skill is the facilitator’s ability to tolerate the awkwardness most people feel during even brief silences. If the facilitator can survive it, everyone else will too.</li> <li>• With eye contact and body language, stay focused on the speaker.</li> <li>• Say nothing, not even, “Hmm” or “Uh-huh.” Do not even nod or shake your head. Just stay relaxed and pay attention.</li> <li>• If necessary, hold up a hand to keep others from breaking the silence.</li> <li>• Sometimes everyone in the group is confused or agitated or having trouble focusing. At such times, silence may be very helpful. Say, “Let’s take a few moments of silence to think about what this means to each of us. “</li> </ul>

<b>EMPATHIZING</b>	
<b>WHY</b>	<b>HOW</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Empathizing</i> is commonly defined as the ability to understand and share the feelings of another.</li> <li>• This involves putting oneself in another person’s shoes and looking out on the world through that person’s eyes. The listener then imagines what the person might be feeling and why—and forms this insight into a statement of acceptance and support.</li> <li>• <i>Empathizing</i> and <i>validating</i> both serve to identify and legitimize feelings. Empathizing goes one step further: The listener attempts to <i>identify with</i> and <i>share the actual feeling</i>. For example, “If it were me I’d be worried!” “That must be really hard.” “I’d be feeling very, very sad.”</li> <li>• Moreover, <i>empathizing</i> benefits the entire group, providing everyone with a fuller, more compassionate understanding of a person’s subjective reality.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Empathizing</i> can be performed using different techniques.</li> <li>• The most basic technique is to name what you think a person is experiencing. For example, “I imagine this news might be quite upsetting to you.”</li> <li>• Another technique is to mention the factors that led up to the person’s experience: “After all the effort you made to keep this project alive, I imagine this news might be quite upsetting.”</li> <li>• A third technique is to speculate on future impacts. “I can see how this news could also play havoc with your other commitments. Has that brought up any feelings yet?”</li> <li>• A fourth option is to identify concerns about communicating these feelings to others. “I can imagine it might be hard to talk about this topic in this group.”</li> <li>• Always ask for confirmation. If the speaker says, “That’s not my experience,” encourage him or her to correct your perception.</li> </ul>

<b>VALIDATING</b>	
<b>WHY</b>	<b>HOW</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Validating</i> is the skill that legitimizes and accepts a speaker’s opinion or feeling, without agreeing that the opinion is “correct.”</li> <li>• Many facilitators wonder whether it is possible to support the expression of a controversial opinion without appearing to take sides. Can we acknowledge someone’s feelings without implying we agree with the speaker’s rationale for feeling that way?</li> <li>• The answer is yes. <i>Validating</i> means recognizing a group’s divergent opinions, not taking sides with any one of them.</li> <li>• Just as you don’t have to agree with an opinion to paraphrase it, you do not have to agree that a feeling is justified in order to accept and validate it.</li> <li>• The basic message of <i>validating</i> is, “Yes, clearly that’s one way to look at it. Others may see it differently; even so, your point of view is entirely legitimate.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Validating</i> has three steps. First, paraphrase. Second, assess whether the speaker needs added support. Third, offer the support. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Step 1.</b> Paraphrase or draw out a person’s opinion or feeling.</li> <li><b>Step 2.</b> Ask yourself, “Does this person need extra support? Has he or she just said something that takes a risk?”</li> <li><b>Step 3.</b> Offer that support by acknowledging the legitimacy of what the person just said. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ “I see what you’re saying.”</li> <li>○ “I know just how that feels.”</li> <li>○ “I get why this matters to you.”</li> <li>○ “I can see how you got there.”</li> <li>○ “Now I see where you’re coming from.”</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Validating</i> often induces the affected individual to open up and say more. If this happens, be respectful. You’re not agreeing; you’re supporting someone to express their truth.</li> </ul>

<b>ACKNOWLEDGING FEELINGS</b>	
<b>WHY</b>	<b>HOW</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People communicate their feelings through their conduct, their language, their tones of voice, their facial expressions and so on. These communications have a direct impact on anyone who receives them.</li> <li>• That impact is much easier to manage when feelings are communicated directly rather than indirectly, and intentionally rather than unconsciously.</li> <li>• Yet the fact remains that human beings are frequently unaware of what they're feeling. In other words, our communications are often driven or shaped by information that we aren't even aware of sending.</li> <li>• By identifying a feeling and naming it, a facilitator raises everyone's awareness. By then <i>paraphrasing</i> and <i>drawing people out</i>, the facilitator assists the group in recognizing and accepting the feelings of its members.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Acknowledging feelings</i> is a three-step process:</li> <li>• First, when a group is engaging in a difficult conversation, pay attention to the emotional tone. Look for cues that might indicate the presence of feelings.</li> <li>• Second, pose a question that names the feelings you see.</li> <li>• Third, use facilitative listening to support people in responding to the feelings you named.</li> <li>• Here are some examples of the second step in action. As the examples suggest, be sure to pose any observations as a question. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ "Sounds as though you might be feeling worried. Am I right?"</li> <li>○ "Seems like this discussion is bringing up something for you. Are you feeling disappointed?"</li> <li>○ "From the tone of your voice, I wonder if you're feeling...?"</li> <li>○ "Looks as if you have some feelings about that. Are you at all frustrated?"</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## MAKING SPACE FOR A QUIET PERSON

### WHY

- *Making space* sends the quiet person this message: “If you don’t wish to talk now, that’s fine. But if you *would like* to speak, here’s an opportunity.”
- Every group has some members who are highly verbal and others who speak less frequently. When a group has a fast-paced discussion style, quiet members and slower thinkers may have trouble getting a word in edgewise.
- Some people habitually keep out of the limelight because they are afraid of being perceived as rude or competitive. Others might hold back when they’re new to a group and unsure of what’s acceptable and what’s not. Still others keep their thoughts to themselves because they’re convinced their ideas aren’t “as good as” those of others. In all of these cases, people benefit from a facilitator who makes space for them to participate.

### HOW

- Keep an eye on the quiet members. Be on the lookout for body language or facial expressions that may indicate their desire to speak.
- Invite them to speak. For example, “Was there a thought you wanted to express?” or “Did you want to add anything?” or “You look as if you might be about to say something...”
- If they decline, be gracious and move on. No one likes being put on the spot, and everyone is entitled to choose whether and when to participate.
- If necessary, hold others off. For example, if a quiet member makes a move to speak but someone jumps in ahead, say, “Let’s go one at a time. Terry, why don’t you go first?”
- If participation is very uneven, consider suggesting a structured go-around to give each person a chance to speak.

<b>BALANCING</b>	
<b>WHY</b>	<b>HOW</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The direction of a discussion often follows the lead set by the first few people who speak on that topic. Using <i>balancing</i>, a facilitator helps a group broaden its discussion to include other perspectives that may not yet have been expressed.</li> <li>• <i>Balancing</i> undercuts the common myth that silence indicates agreement. It provides welcome support to individuals who don't feel safe expressing views they perceive as minority positions.</li> <li>• In addition to the support it provides to individuals, <i>balancing</i> also has a positive effect on the norms of the group. It sends the message, "It is acceptable for people to speak their mind, no matter what opinions they hold."</li> <li>• When a group appears caught between two polarized positions, <i>balancing</i> often reveals the presence of alternative positions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Here are some examples of balancing in action:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ "Are there other ways of looking at this issue?"</li> <li>○ "Does everyone else agree with this perspective?"</li> <li>○ "Okay, we have heard where three people stand on this matter. Does anyone else have a different position?"</li> <li>○ "Can anyone play devil's advocate for a few minutes?"</li> <li>○ "Let's see how many people stand on each side of this issue. We're not making a decision, and I'm not asking you to vote. This is just an opinion poll to find out how much controversy we have in the room. Ready? How many people think it would be good if...?"</li> <li>○ "So, we've heard the X point of view and the Y point of view. Is there a third way of looking at this?"</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

ENCOURAGING	
<p><b>WHY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Encouraging</i> is the art of creating an opening for people to participate, without putting any one individual on the spot.</li> <li>• There are times in a meeting when some folks may appear to be “sitting back” or “letting others do all the work.” This doesn’t necessarily mean that they are lazy or irresponsible. Instead, it may be that they are not feeling engaged by the discussion. With a little encouragement to participate, they often discover an aspect of the topic that holds meaning for them.</li> <li>• <i>Encouraging</i> is especially helpful during the early stage of a discussion, while members are still warming up. As people get more engaged, they don’t need as much encouragement to participate.</li> </ul>	<p><b>HOW</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Here are some examples of the technique of <i>encouraging</i>:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ “Who else has an idea?”</li> <li>○ “Is there a student’s perspective on this issue?”</li> <li>○ “Does anyone have a war story you’re willing to share?”</li> <li>○ “Jim just offered us an idea that he called a ‘general principle.’ Can anyone give us an example of this principle in action?”</li> <li>○ “Are there comments from anyone who hasn’t spoken for a while?”</li> <li>○ “Is this discussion raising questions for anyone?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• A related technique is to begin by restating the objective of the discussion and then using <i>encouraging</i> to increase engagement:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ “We’ve been looking for the root causes of this problem. Any other possibilities?”</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>DRAWING PEOPLE OUT</b>	
<b>WHY</b>	<b>HOW</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Drawing people out</i> is the skill that supports people in clarifying, developing and refining their ideas.</li> <li>• It sends the speaker this message: “I’m with you; I understand you so far. Now tell me a little more.” This message allows people to express more of what they’re thinking. It helps them go deeper into exploring what matters to them.</li> <li>• <i>Drawing people out</i> is the tool of choice for handling two awkward circumstances:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ When someone is having difficulty clarifying an idea.</li> <li>○ When someone thinks he or she is being clear but the thought is actually vague or confusing to the listeners.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• When deciding whether to draw someone out, ask yourself this question: “Do I think I understand the core of what he or she is trying to say?” If the answer is no, then draw the speaker out.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The most basic technique of drawing people out is to paraphrase the speaker’s statement, then ask open-ended, nondirective questions. Here are some examples:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ “Can you say more about that?”</li> <li>○ “What do you mean by...?”</li> <li>○ “What’s coming up for you now?”</li> <li>○ “Can you give me an example?”</li> <li>○ “How is that working for you?”</li> <li>○ “What does this bring up for you?”</li> <li>○ “What matters to you about that?”</li> <li>○ “Tell me more.”</li> <li>○ “How so?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Here is a less common method that also works well. First, paraphrase the speaker’s statement; then use <i>connectors</i>, such as, “So...” or “And...” or “Because...” For example, “You’re saying to wait six more weeks before we sign the contract, because...”</li> </ul>

## Appendix C: Classic Facilitator Challenges: Typical Mistakes and Effective Responses

(Adapted from Kaner's Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision Making, 2007)

PROBLEM	TYPICAL MISTAKE	EFFECTIVE RESPONSE
Quibbling about trivial procedures	<p>Lecture the group about wasting time and "spinning our wheels."</p> <p>Space out, doodle and think to yourself, "It's their fault we're not getting anything done."</p>	<p>Have the group step back from the content of the issue and talk about the process.</p> <p>Ask the group, "What is really going on here?"</p>
Someone becomes strident and repetitive	<p>At lunch, talk behind the person's back. Tell the person-in-charge that he or she must take more control.</p> <p>Confront the person during a break. When the meeting resumes, raise your eyebrows or shake your head whenever he or she misbehaves.</p>	<p>People repeat themselves because they don't feel heard. Summarize the person's point of view until he or she feels understood.</p> <p>Encourage participants to state the views of group members whose views are different from their own.</p>
Someone discovers a completely new problem that no one had previously noted	<p>Try to come up with reasons to discourage people from opening up this new can of worms.</p> <p>Pretend not to hear the person's comments.</p>	<p>Wake up! This may be what you've been waiting for: the doorway into a new way of thinking about the whole situation.</p>
Two people locking horns	<p>Put the focus exclusively on the interaction between the two disputing parties, as though no one else in the room has an opinion on the issue at hand.</p> <p>Or, treat the two like children. "Come on, you two, can't you get along?"</p>	<p>Reach out to others: "Who else has an opinion on this issue?" or "Are there any other issues that need to be discussed before we go too much further with this one?"</p> <p>Remember: When the majority is passive, focus your attention on them, not on the overactive few.</p>

<p>One or two silent members in a group whose other members participate actively</p>	<p>“Mr. Z, you haven’t talked much today. Is there anything you’d like to add?”</p> <p>This may work when a shy member has nonverbally indicated a wish to speak. But all too often, the quiet person feels put on the spot and withdraws further.</p>	<p>“I’d like to get opinions from those who haven’t talked for a while.”</p> <p>Breaking into small groups works even better, allowing shy members to speak up without being pressed to compete for airtime.</p>
<p>Side conversations and whispered chuckles</p>	<p>Ignore the behavior and hope it will go away.</p> <p>Chastise the whisperers, in the belief that humiliation is an excellent corrective.</p>	<p>With warmth and humor, make an appeal for decorum:  “As you know, those who don’t hear the joke often wonder if someone is laughing at them.”</p> <p>If the problem persists, assume there’s a reason. Has the topic become boring and stale? Do people need a break?</p>
<p>Several different topics being discussed at the same time</p>	<p>“Come on, everyone, let’s get back on track.”</p> <p>“Focus, people, focus!”</p> <p>Select the topic you think the group would most benefit from discussing, and do your best to sell your point of view:  “I’m not at attached to this, but...”</p>	<p>Use tracking: Name the various topics in play. “Let me see if I can summarize the key themes being discussed.”</p> <p>Use linking: “Can you help us link your idea to the central issues before us?”</p> <p>Create a parking lot for ideas and issues to return to later.</p>
<p>Many people interrupting one another in competition for airtime</p>	<p>Take control. Don’t be shy about interrupting the conversation yourself in order to exhort people to be more respectful.</p> <p>Select one person to speak, but give no indication of whose turn will come next. That would undercut spontaneity.</p>	<p>If you must interrupt in order to restore decorum, say, “Pat, I’m going to cut in here. First, let’s make sure your point is being heard. Then, I want to suggest a process that will cut down on further interruptions.</p> <p>After you complete your paraphrase, use stacking, tracking and sequencing to organize the group.</p>

<p>People treat one another disrespectfully</p>	<p>Ignore it altogether. No sense throwing fuel on the fire.</p> <p>Pretend that posting a ground rule imploring people to “be respectful” will somehow create respectful behavior.</p>	<p>Increase the frequency of your paraphrasing. People under pressure need support.</p> <p>If proposing a ground rule, be sure to create time for the group to reflect on what’s happening and what they want to do differently.</p>
<p>Domination by a highly verbal member</p>	<p>Inexperienced facilitators often try to control this person. “Excuse me, Mr. Q, do you mind if I let someone else take a turn?”</p> <p>Or, even worse, “Excuse me, Ms. Q, but you’re taking up a lot of the group’s time...”</p>	<p>When one or two people are over participating, everyone else is under participating. So focus your efforts on the passive majority. Encourage them to participate more. Trying to change the dominant participants just sends even more attention their way.</p>
<p>Goofing around in the midst of a discussion</p>	<p>Try to “organize” people by getting into a power struggle with them. Raise your voice if necessary. Single out the individuals who seem to be the ringleaders.</p> <p>“All right, everyone, let’s get back to work.” (Or better yet, “Focus, people, focus!”)</p>	<p>Often a break is the best response. People become undisciplined when they are overloaded or worn out. After a breather, they will be much better able to focus.</p> <p>Alternatively, ask for advice: “Is there something we ought to be doing differently?”</p>
<p>Low participation by the entire group</p>	<p>Assume that silence means consent. Don’t ask whether everyone understands the key issues and agrees with what’s being said. (That just wastes time unnecessarily.)</p> <p>Praise the group for all the work that’s getting done, in the hope that flattery will motivate more people to participate.</p>	<p>Always be suspicious of low participation. Dependency, anger, or fear are often factors in play. The group, however, may not want to let those feelings surface. If not, shift from open discussion to a format that lowers the anxiety level. Work in small groups, or build a list, or try a highly structured activity like a fishbowl or a jigsaw.</p>

## Appendix D: A Recipe for a Great Moderator: A Self Assessment Tool

Skill Area	Poor (1) ←	Great (10) →	Personal Score (1 – 10)	Adaptation Strategies
<b>Listening</b>	Poor listening skills including the inability to hear what others are saying and inability to track the line of thought being expressed or pick up on the subtext of the conversation. Short attention span. Cuts people off mid-sentence. Distracting or closed off body language.	Ability to hear <i>beyond</i> what is being said to identify the core meaning. Can answer the questions: What does this person's statement say about what they <i>value</i> ? What is the main point they are trying to make? What are they trying to say that others might miss?		
<b>Objectivity</b>	Biased on the subject matter, Biased about groups and/or persons involved with or affected by the subject matter. Unable to refrain from commenting about the subject matter or inserting personal opinion into the conversation. Seen as having a position or agenda with regard to the issue at hand.	Reflects good "behavioral neutrality" on the subject. Ability to refrain from making personal comments about the subject matter. Does not reveal one's personal position on the subject. Remains unbiased and neutral in conversation and when moderating.		
<b>Self Awareness</b>	Not self aware regarding the group's perception of and reaction to one's self. Rigid or inflexible style of delivery and speech.	Sensitive to the group's perception of and response to oneself. Can flexibly adapt speech and method to best suit the situation.		
<b>Group Awareness</b>	Poor awareness of group dynamics. Inability to read body language including when participants are confused, uncomfortable with the conversation or are tuning out.	Aware of the group dynamics including body language. Ability to sense how participants are responding to turns in the conversation. Knows when it is time to move on in the conversation, or when more elaboration is needed on an issue.		

Skill Area	Poor (1) ←	Great (5) →	Personal Score (1 – 10)	Adaptation Strategies
<b>Responsive Control</b>	Either over-controlling or insufficiently assertive. Not able to maintain an appropriate level of control of the group, or to moderate the tenor of the discussion. Inability to reign in dominant or aggressive speakers or to elicit comments from silent participants. Intimidated or “cowed” by experts, politicians, and loudmouths.	Knows when, and when <i>not</i> to intervene in order to reinforce ground rules, and to keep the conversation on track. Can effectively ensure that all participants have an opportunity to speak, by drawing out silent participants or managing dominant or aggressive speakers.		
<b>Sense of Humor</b>	Either excessively dour or serious, or inappropriately or excessively comedic.	Appropriately able to use humor to set a relaxed, informal tone for the conversation, or to defuse a difficult or awkward situation.		
<b>Adaptability</b>	Overly dependent upon scripted, predictable environments. Does not handle last-minute changes well.	Able to adapt to unexpected situations with grace and humor, while keeping the key principles and objectives in mind.		
<b>Public Speaking</b>	Poor verbal communication skills. Either intimidated by speaking in front of groups, or has a need to be the center of attention.	Comfortable and eloquent when speaking in public settings, sets a relaxed and respectful tone. Uses language appropriate for the audience. Able to verbally synthesize information well.		
<b>Image</b>	Perceived as either elitist/alooof, or as overly charismatic. Seen as unprepared or disorganized, short-tempered, manic, or volatile.	Seen as warm, calm, approachable, can ‘connect with’ people from a wide range of backgrounds, ages, experiences, etc.		





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