Module 3

Study text 3

Deliverable   IO1
Date   18 February 2020
Partner(s)   ASTRA, ENTRE
Version   1.0
Status   Final
Dissemination
Comments

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1.   Three levels of facilitation

Let's now look at space, people, and process facilitation. You should consider these three interconnected levels of facilitation for the both off- and online facilitation. However, virtual facilitation requires even more careful and precise preparation.

1.1.   Space facilitation

Consider the settings and the environmental factors. Though you have limited control over these in virtual gatherings, you can ask participants to join the call from a quiet place (and most importantly, with a strong and reliable Internet connection!). Also, breaks are important as people's concentration online is more easily distracted. If you can't give long breaks because of time constraints, a 3-minute breather to drink some water, go to the toilet, or get a breath of fresh air can still achieve a lot.

1.2.   People facilitation

Consider three elements – emotions, relations, and involvement. Because you are not there in person with your participants, it may be more difficult to understand their emotions and what they are experiencing during the virtual gathering. So it's even more important you find other ways to get a pulse on the group, e.g. by doing more frequent "mini check-ins" (thumbs up / down) during the virtual gathering. When it comes to relations, the atmosphere might be quite different depending on whether your participants know each other already or are total strangers. But in any case, it's important you state from the beginning a few rules you'd like them to respect when it comes to interacting with others (e.g. safe space, active listening, openness and vulnerability, not taking too much space…). Finally, though it is a bit more difficult to enact, it is important to involve your participants as much as possible. Use the chat to gather their questions, remarks, or comments; ask them to raise their hands to answer certain questions of yours; divide them in small groups to allow for deeper bonding and sharing… Don't forget you are creating a space for them to connect, learn, and collaborate, rather than a space for you to listen to the sound of your own voice!

1.3.   Process facilitation

Consider three elements – information, operations, and energy. As a virtual facilitator, it is essential that you provide the group with clear and concise information, at the right time and in the right format. For instance, make sure your participants know how to join the virtual gathering and if they need to prepare anything in advance; introduce the flow of the gathering at the start and share tips on how to use the platform you've chosen for the gathering; and be clear on the next steps and follow-up process at the end of the gathering. This is linked to operations and making sure that your virtual gathering runs smoothly – do you have all the necessary technical equipment and material for your activities? Finally, you're also responsible for managing the group's energy. Whilst each participant is responsible and accountable for their own engagement in the virtual gathering (something you should remind them of), you can do a lot as a virtual facilitator to maximize the learning experience through

the programme flow. The best thing you can do is to plan the programme well in advance with the support of your co-facilitators to ensure you have a well-designed flow that avoids energy drops. But remember to keep flexible and adapt your activities if you sense the group needs something different from what you had planned for.

2. Tools and techniques for virtual facilitation

In the following parts of our study text we will provide the more detailed description of the chosen main groups of the tools, techniques, and methods suitable for the virtual learning and events facilitation. Naturally, not all types and all items are covered here.

2.1. Icebreakers

Icebreakers play a significant role in events in which communication and participant comfort level are considered to be important factors. They help to ensure that all attendees are equal and they fully engage participants when you want them to own the outcomes of the meeting or learning session. These activities break down the barriers that exist in a group or workplace through its hierarchy, organization chart, job titles, and various other characteristics. Icebreakers are helpful especially when participants don't know each other. But they can also work very well for warming up the room even for people who are already familiar with each other. An icebreaker can get people talking, generate laughter, and help participants start with an initial level of comfort.

There was once a time when in-person ice breakers were simply deemed 'a fun way to start a meeting'. They would typically last about 2 minutes before the meeting was ushered onto 58 minutes of cold, hard business.

Well, times have changed. Warm-up activities such as these have taken on **far more prominence** as research continues to come out about their benefits. And when meetings moved online in 2020, the importance of virtual meeting ice breakers became even clearer.

► **Benefits of Virtual Meeting Ice Breakers**
– Better engagement – The most well-known benefit of any ice breaker is to help your participants relax before the real meat of the session begins. Encouraging everyone to participate at the start of the meeting sets a precedent for the rest of it. People who are engaged at the start of the meeting are more likely to be engaged throughout. This is crucial in a virtual meeting where it's super easy to tune out.
– Better idea sharing – Not only are your participants more engaged, but they're more likely to give their best ideas. A big reason why your employees aren't sharing their best ideas during in-person meetings is because they're weary of judgement. Online software that allows participant anonymity and that works in conjunction with Zoom can coax the best out of everyone.
– Levelling the playing field – Virtual meeting ice breakers give *everyone* a say. They help to break down the boundaries between different job titles, or in today's global environment, different

cultures. They allow even your quietest participant (the one with his camera off and his microphone muted) to put forward great ideas that will spur engagement for the rest of the meeting.

- Encouraging teamwork from afar – Your team may be feeling pretty disconnected from their co-workers if they've been out of the office for months. There's nothing better to stimulate teamwork online than a virtual meeting ice breaker. You can do this through team-based quizzes, activities or open-ended questions, all of which get your staff back to working together.
- Giving you a better idea of your team – Some people are more adapted to working from home than others – that's a fact. Virtual meeting ice breakers give you a chance to gauge the mood in the room and tailor the rest of the meeting accordingly.

► **When to Use Virtual Meeting Ice Breakers**

Virtual meeting ice breakers leave your team as chill as broken ice. There are a few scenarios in which virtual meeting ice breakers can reap some of the benefits we just mentioned.

- At the start of every meeting **–** Yeah, really, *every* meeting. The activities of the meeting's first 5 minutes are just too beneficial not to have every single time your team gets together online.
- With a new team **–** Zoom meetings with a bunch of strangers are rightly terrifying. If your team are all going to be working together for a while, you need to smash that ice as quickly and effectively as possible.
- After a company merger **–** There's always animosity in the air when two teams from two different companies are forced into an abrupt partnership. A steady supply of virtual meeting ice breakers throughout your online get-togethers helps to remove suspicion about 'the other team' and get everyone on the same page.
- As a closer **–** Who says your ice breakers have to start a meeting? Well, actually, they should, but they can also end a few as well. Having a fun ice breaker at the end of a meeting cuts through the business-heavy atmosphere of the previous 55 minutes and gives your staff a reason to sign off feeling positive.

Do you want to have a closer look at the various types of icebreakers? Check at FAVILLE digital application at https://favilleapp.ht-apps.eu/?wpv-wpcf-phase=Icebreaker&wpv_aux_current_post_id=2&wpv_aux_parent_post_id=2&wpv_sort_orderby=post_date&wpv_sort_order=desc&wpv_sort_orderby_as=string&wpv_view_count=17p

2.2. Energizers

These are short, team-building exercises aimed at overcoming shyness and boosting energy with a group of distributed people. Online warm ups are particularly useful at the beginning of an online meeting, workshop or any virtual collaboration session that takes place in a video call with a group of people. They are useful as an introduction to let people know who they'll be collaborating with during the session.

Engaging participants in an online workshop can be a challenge for all facilitators. Meeting in an online environment and working at a screen all day can be draining and have an effect on the energy level of your participants not to mention on you as a facilitator! In live settings, facilitators often use energizers to increase energy in individuals and groups. Energizers might include elements of physical activity, encouraging fun and laughter, or engaging participants with games.

While teams may need to connect over video chat and collaborate in online tools for workshops, you can still engage and enliven your team by using virtual meeting games and online energizers that have been tailored or adjusted to the remote setting.

In the following section we will focus our attention on various features of online energizers and games for virtual meetings as well as on some tips for using them.

► **Purpose and benefits of online energizers**

Meetings and workshops can only be at their most effective when your participants are engaged and have the energy to get involved and bring their A-game to the session. In an online workshop, maintaining and energizing your remote attendees can be crucial in making it an enjoyable and productive experience.

Particularly for people new to participating in virtual workshops and online meetings, it can be hugely beneficial to help them have fun and engage with one another in a virtual space. Zoom team-building or online meetings can be made instantly more approachable with a simple virtual activity. Online meeting games like those below can help people loosen up and get to know each other while removing some of the awkwardness that can come from meeting on video chat. Online energizers can also be the difference between a workshop being productive or feeling like a waste of time for those involved. Let's look at the various benefits of using these activities before jumping into our collection of energizers!

Online energizers have a variety of benefits, some obvious and others less so. Keeping the energy and engagement levels up in any workshop is important though when working remotely, it's even more vital to include space for this in your agenda. Here are some of the main benefits of using online energizers.

► **Engagement**

Keeping a team engaged in an online meeting is important in ensuring that your team finds them valuable and productive. Meetings that feature lots of unfocused discussion, difficult tasks without sufficient variation, or lots of information heavy sessions can be draining for any team – even more so when participants are all logging in to their computers and chatting over webcam.

In remote settings, it's much easier for participants to become disengaged or distracted, just for the simple fact of not being physically present in the space, and the potential of having other tabs open in their browser. It can also be difficult for a facilitator to effectively gauge the energy levels of the room without the benefit of physical cues and body language.

Using online energizers with an emphasis on engaging different skills, doing physical activity, having fun or injecting energy into a group can be an effective way of keeping participants engaged throughout.

► **Create variation in your agenda**

Some of the best workshops and meetings benefit from variation in the methods or exercises employed. This might mean shifting between creative and critical skill based activities, or encouraging small group discussions after leading a training session. In an online setting, the possibility for meaningful variation is limited, just for the fact that your remote participants are all likely seated at their desk and watching their screen.

A virtual energizer that encourages people to get up from their desk, engage in a game or stretch skills that aren't being worked out during the main workshop can really help keep things fresh and create a dynamic workshop.

Energizers are often a good way to bookmark or prepare for particular tasks: if you need a palette cleanse after a tricky group discussion, do a fun energizer. If you know the next task is going to require your participants be fully engaged, do a more restful activity. While you should try and plan for energizers in your agenda – particularly in longer workshops – it's also good practice to have a few tried and tested energizers in your back pocket, just in case your group needs a lift.

► **Make it fun**

Online meetings can be notorious for being a drag. Particularly under challenging circumstances such as self-isolation, helping inject some fun and creating space for teams to bond and get to know each other can really help elevate a workshop and make a team more cohesive and motivated.

Good online energizers are great not only for boosting energy levels but for helping boost the tone of the entire session and improving the perception of remote meetings in your organization overall. If you are facing tough organizational challenges and have workshop tasks to match, it can be good to provide a counterpoint and balance in your agenda. Fun games for virtual meetings like those below can be the perfect way to achieve that! In remote environments, remember that virtual meetings or online workshops are often the only time your team sees and speaks to one another directly without text. Use this opportunity to bring your team together with a fun energizer that can help them work together more effectively not only in the immediate workshop but throughout their remote career.

► **Relieve awkwardness**

If the participants of your online workshop don't know each other well, working in a remote environment can be challenging. For those introverts or sufferers of anxiety on your team, speaking up in an online meeting with the whole company present can be daunting. Online energizers are great for encouraging people to speak up and engage, and can often help lay the groundwork for more difficult conversations later on.

In some online energizers, you might end up looking a bit silly, but if you're doing so with everyone else on your team, it can be an equalizing force that helps people get on the same page. This can be particularly useful if you have people at different management levels interacting in the same session.

2.2.1 Online energizers

When selecting an online energizer, it's worth looking at your agenda and figuring out what style of energizer will be most effective. If you're doing quite a discussion-heavy workshop, your virtual energizer might benefit from being non-verbal or physical in nature. If your team is made up of a lot of visual thinkers, perhaps try an energizer than involves drawing. You might just decide that your team needs some light relief to have fun and recharge!

Remember that energizers are designed to lift spirits and provide counterpoint. While many of these energizers will work for any remote meeting, it's worth tailoring them to your group where possible. We can divide the online energizers into the following groups: Warm-up energizers, Fun energizers, Skills-based energizers, Energizers for online teambuilding

► Warm-up energizers

These energizers are great to warm a group up or introduce new team members to the larger organization. Get to know you games and online icebreakers share some DNA with this category, though these activities are a little broader in purpose. Though these online warm-ups could be run at any point in your virtual workshop, they're particularly useful for warming up your group and energizing them for the online workshop ahead. For the various types of warms up/ energizer check FAVILLE Digital Application for virtual facilitators.

► Fun online energizers

Games for virtual meetings should be fun! The primary purpose of these online energizers is to have fun, create laughter, energy, and create space between more complex tasks. Fun energizers can be a vital element of meetings for any virtual team and mixing things up with more involved energizers and some designed just to get a laugh can be a good way to go.

► Skills-based online energizers

These virtual energizer games and exercises are great for challenging your team and encouraging the use of certain skills such as active listening, memory or critical thinking. They tend to be more in depth and a little more complicated, but can see great results in longer remote workshops or could even be run as one-off exercises to engage a remote team. You might have a look at FAVILLE Digital Application at the following energizers: Remote pencil pitch, Powerpoint Karaoke or find some more.

► Energizers for online teambuilding

While all online energizers featured here are good for connecting remote workers and teambuilding, these exercises are more in-depth and expressly designed for promoting teamwork or helping your

group get to know one another. Check the following atFAVILLE Digital Applicationto know more: <u>Virtual scavenger hunt</u>, Guess the desk, Doodling Together, or Take a picture of your shoes.

2.3. Teamwork and Team Building Activities

By using facilitation techniques and team building activities we can support teamwork and create better aligned and more effective teams. Foster trust and openness improve collaboration and manage team dynamics effectively. Team building is about providing the skills, training and resources that your people need, so that they can work in harmony. However, to be truly effective, it needs to be a continual process, embedded into your team and organization's culture.

There is a place for team building exercises, but they need to have a clear purpose, such as improving a particular skill, and must be well designed to avoid conflict. Team building is about uniting and encouraging people rather than dividing and demoralizing them. But competitive exercises inevitably produce losers as well as winners, and may lead your team members to work against one another. So, avoid these types of activity – they can easily backfire. You might go to FAVILLE Digital Application to find the examples of the relevant facilitation techniques

► **Getting Started:** Identifying Your Team's Needs

The first and most important step when planning team-building activities is to identify your team's strengths and weaknesses.

- Start by asking the following questions to identify the root of any problems:
- Are there conflicts between certain people that are creating divisions within the team?
- Do team members need to get to know one another better?
- Do some members focus on their own success, and harm the group as a result?
- Is poor communication affecting the group's progress?
- Do people need to learn to work together, instead of individually?
- Do some members affect the group's ability to move forward through resistance to change?
- Does the group need a morale boost?

Set-piece team building exercises are one way to strengthen the bonds within your team, but they are not a shortcut to success. Instead, you need to make team-building part of your group's mind-set.

Think about the team building potential of routine workplace activities, first. Then, use the following four strategies to develop your team's strength, cohesiveness and effectiveness day to day:

► **Get to Know Your Team**

Your team is made up of people with different needs, ambitions and personalities. Getting to know them, and helping them to get to know each other, can build a happy, trusting team.

► **Work toward a Common Goal**

You can unite your people by inspiring them to get behind a shared vision or goal. Having a clearly identified destination can prevent individuals from pulling in different directions, which is frustrating and ineffective.

Creating a Team Charter can provide your people with a written definition of the team's purpose and goals. You can find strategies for bringing a team together to achieve a particular goal in our FAVILLE Digital Application.

► **Develop Strong Team Skills**

Your team needs to develop the right skills and competencies to achieve its goals. Developing stronger skill sets, and matching your people to the roles best suited to them, can result in a more capable, more motivated team.

► **Connect with a Virtual Team**

It can be hard to build rapport among team members who never, or rarely, meet face-to-face. Time zones and cultural differences can present additional challenges when considering team building activities or strategies for remote teams. Your remote team members might feel isolated from their colleagues, so they will likely welcome opportunities for socializing "virtually," improving their skills, and having fun, too!

It is possible to stay in regular and effective communication with virtual team members, given the wide range of online tools that are available. However, the key to building an effective team lies more in how its members communicate than in the technology they use.

2.4. Idea Generation and Innovation Activities

Idea generation techniques can be used at the moment when you need to get your group into creative thinking mode and boost innovation. Help people to find new perspectives and build on the collective inspiration of your group. Ideas are the key to innovation. Without them, there is not much to execute and because execution is the key to learning, new ideas are necessary for making any kind of improvement.

It is obvious that ideas alone will not make innovation happen, as you need to be able to build a systematic process for managing those ideas. The point of ideation is not just about generating huge amount of them but about the quality of the generated ideas. So naturally, it might sometimes be difficult to come up with high-quality ideas. It is not unusual to get stuck in our old habits and routines when we are supposed to be creating something new. Cooperate with your groups, show them that sometimes it is better to give a priority to progression over perfection. Try to explain that ways of looking at challenges and opportunities might colourful and there are no boundaries while we are generating ideas. You also might point out that embracing the unknown is not dangerous but might be fun.

► **What is idea generation and why it is important?**

Idea generation is described as the process of creating, developing and communicating abstract, concrete or visual+ ideas. It is the front end part of the idea management funnel and it focuses on coming up with possible solutions to perceived or actual problems and opportunities.

As mentioned, ideas are the first step towards making improvement. Us making progress as individual human beings depends on new ideas. From the perspective of an individual, new ideas can help you to move forward if you feel stuck with a task or are unable to solve a certain problem. When it comes to your organization, generating and collecting new ideas from your employees or students is the best way to uncover creative, tacit knowledge. The ability to create and develop new ideas allows you to:

- Stay relevant
- Make positive change happen in your organization

Perhaps your organizational goal is to improve your and your team's efficiency or you need new ideas for making your product better? Regardless of your goals or the types of ideas you are looking for; the purpose of new ideas is to improve the way you operate.

On a larger scale, economies depend on innovation to drive growth and increase well-being. Innovation creates new technologies and businesses, which provide new jobs for people.

Therefore, although innovation is not about ideas alone, they are an important part of the equation as there would not be one without the other.

2.5. Issue resolution

Conflict is a natural and normal feature of the team or workplace, even in a virtual environment. Some people say it is even more difficult to resolve a conflict in the virtual setting. For any team that strives to attain its goals, conflict is inevitable. Although differences occur, the outcome does not have to be negative. Conflict can provide opportunities. Conflict challenges us to think harder, to be more creative, to develop greater understanding, and to search for alternative avenues that are more efficient, more effective, and more productive. Unresolved conflict, however, can result in the breakdown of a group. When unaddressed conflict occurs, it can reduce morale, hamper performance, and increase absenteeism. It leads to increased stress among team members, decreased productivity, and at worst, aggression or violence. Studies show that managers spend at least 25 percent of their time resolving workplace conflicts. This affects the output of the work group and can have a profound impact on performance of the group or even organization. Conflict, like any other key business process, must be managed.

► **Components of Conflict**

Conflict arises from a clash of perceptions, goals, or values in a domain where people care about the outcome. The seeds of conflict may be sown in confusion about, or disagreement with, the common purpose and how to achieve it. When it comes to conflict, various differences may be involved. Team members may differ on what the problem is; or, they may agree on what the problem is but have a

different perspective about it; or, they may share the same perspective but have different ideas on how to solve the problem.

- **Communication —** Communication can both cause and remedy conflict. As with other skills, effective communication must be learned. A lack of open communication tends to drive conflict underground, and can create a downward spiral of misunderstanding and hostility. Effective communication (including active listening) is the means by which disagreement can be prevented, managed, or resolved.

- **Inconsistency —** whenever company policies are changed, inconsistently applied, or non-existent, misunderstandings are likely to occur. Associates need to know and understand company rules and policies; they should not have to guess. Inconsistency in the workplace is a common source of conflict.

- **Diversity —** Individuals are individuals, and they differ in many ways. These differences are often a starting point for conflict. There are various styles for the way we deal with people and problems. Team members need to understand their own style and learn how to accept differing styles. Conflict can also be caused by differing personal values. "Factions" can lead to gossip, suspicion, and ultimately conflict. The group must learn to accept diversity and to work as a team. Emphasizing differences helps team members look for common ground. Most teams are diverse in age, gender, culture, experience, and knowledge. They may also be diverse in race, creed, religion, or disability. While all this diversity may result in conflict, teams that learn to embrace their differences and value new ideas can turn conflict into creative collaboration.

- **Perspective —** Just as two or more course participants can have conflicting styles, they can also have conflicting perceptions. They may view the same incident in dramatically different ways. For example, we now have four generations in the workplace. Each generation brings a different perspective.

- **Emotional Intelligence —** Emotional intelligence is a personal attribute that is very useful in reducing conflict. People with high EQs are empathetic and sensitive to the feelings of others. The good news is that anyone can raise his or her EQ by developing the skills to effectively combine professionalism with emotions like sensitivity and empathy.

► **Why Use Conflict-Resolution Games**?

Games can reveal real conflict—along with emotions, personalities, misunderstandings, and reactions. Through games, the team experiences conflict in a safe environment. Competent facilitation is the key. As facilitator, you need to be aware of what is going on, take notes, encourage, redirect, and even stop activities for a mid-activity discussion if necessary. Engaging in conflict can be delicate territory for many on the team, so you need to provide support and encouragement as they practice the skills and get comfortable using them. You will notice many of these games recommend small teams—this is to keep all participants involved in the process. Another way to maximize participation is to use "observers" who can provide excellent "big picture" feedback during the debriefing discussion.

To maintain a high level of participation throughout the game and during the debriefing process, consider passing out the discussion questions found at the end of the games to small teams for a self-debriefing prior to the large group discussion. This will ensure that everyone relates the experience to their situation and contributes to the discussion. Just as important as getting everyone involved in the game is getting everyone involved in the discussion, where the bulk of the learning takes place. When teams learn the benefits of conflict, they begin to lose some of the fear associated with conflict. Team-building games are the perfect way for a team to experience such benefits. The debriefing discussion for many of the conflict-resolution games takes longer than the actual activity, because attendees are changing some core behaviours and beliefs regarding conflict. Make sure you allot plenty of time for the discussion, because cutting it short denies the team the necessary time it takes for some to make the shift.

► **Problem solving activities**

Problem solving activities are primarily designed to help a group or team through a process of first identifying problems and challenges, ideating on possible solutions, and then evaluating the most suitable one.

Finding effective solutions to complex problems is not easy, but by using the right techniques, methods, games and creativity exercises can help your team be more efficient in the process.

Remember that not all problems are the same, and organizations of different sizes, business stages and industries require different problem solving techniques. Solutions are also likely to be different based on the team attempting to deliver them.

► **What is a problem solving process?**

When a team or individual runs into a problem or challenge, it can be tempting to fast track to a possible solution and put in place a quick fix without first considering the nature of the problem and approaching finding a solution in a structured manner. Without a clear process, attempts to resolve issues or challenges can become unstructured and frustrating. End-to-end problem solving processes provides a framework for a group to approach problems of any size or scope and see results

The techniques introduced below provide a solid architecture for problem solving that take a group through all the problem solving steps necessary to go from accurately identifying issues and challenges to developing, rolling out and recording appropriate solutions. And again you can find some techniques atFAVILLE Digital Application.

2.6. Issue analysis

Tools and techniques to analyse and understand complex situations, to unleash creativity and to discover new insights. Make sure your group explores the situation at hand and all participants get a thorough understanding before moving on to make decisions. You need together with your group to develop a shared understanding of the issue and identify those aspects that are most amenable to

intervention. In order to use the tools and techniques for issue analysis participants need to learn all they can about the issue and, in particular, about those causes that lend themselves to intervention. Participants in a collaborative process often come with their own (sometimes conflicting) perceptions of the primary causes and the most effective interventions. Building consensus about the "real" nature of the problem requires not only careful technical analysis but also an exploration of individual views. To arrive at a shared definition of the issue, some groups first develop a shared set of assumptions and then create an "issue map" to graphically depict possible contributing causes and identify which of those might be most amenable to intervention.

Once there is an agreement among participants that the issue is well defined and key assumptions are shared, this stage is deemed complete. The significance of developing a shared understanding is the foundation it provides for the analysis that follows; it is a prerequisite to building commitment for executing whatever strategy is developed by the group. Once stakeholders begin to understand each other's' assumptions, it is easier to reach consensus on what the problem is and what sorts of interventions will be effective.

► **What are the key tasks in issue analysis?**

– **Educate participants about the issue.**
  - Identify, review, and discuss technical analysis of the issue.
  - Share individual perceptions of the issue, including ideas about causation, impact, and optimal intervention.
  - Identify areas of agreement and disagreement.

– **Organize technical analysis as needed.**
  - Identify empirical questions the group has about the significance of the issues, affected populations, causation, etc.
  - Organize processes for answering questions (such as a technical panel) that are perceived as credible in the eyes of participants.

– **Develop a shared definition of the issue.**
  - Come up with a shared set of assumptions about the issue.
  - Co-create a shared definition of the issue that includes contributing causes.
  - Identify those causal factors that are most amenable to intervention.

2.6.1 Dilemmas

► The group could focus on easily identifiable problems or on deeper "root" causes.

In some processes, an immediate fix is a reasonable goal; it may bring temporary relief to deeper, more persistent causes that are not well understood. Focusing on more complex causes in order to develop more sustainable solutions may require more time, resources, technical analysis, and commitment than groups or their sponsors want to or can make.

► The group could focus on current needs or future generations.

Determining whether and how to be responsible to future generations requires attention to the values of the group; technical skills—such as scenario construction and statistical analysis—are needed to assess the implications of those value choices.

► The group could engage in careful analysis of problems or accept narratives from "experts."

One of the ways of reducing analytic costs is to limit the analysis of the problem being addressed. In some cases, a planning process may have to rely on expert 'stories,' old reports, and anecdotes.

► Causes of problems are viewed through a limited lens.

Participants with fixed ideas about the "major" cause of a community problem may try to direct the deliberations back to their view of the most important cause … to the detriment of a broader discussion. Sometimes reframing the problem and extending deliberation can lead to a revised understanding of problem causes.

► Views change regarding which problems are priorities.

Once a process has begun and stakeholders understand the process more fully, some may argue for a different problem focus or emphasis. Proposed changes are sometimes a diversion that slows the process, but until everyone has had an opportunity to explain and defend their conception of the group's work, it is unlikely that everyone will be fully committed to the process.

2.7. Decision Making & Goal Setting Workshop Activities

Using workshop activities focused on decision making, goal setting and implementation you can guide your group through the process of narrowing down ideas and select the best option to execute.

These activities are designed to train participants in how to gain and use important skills like listening, experimenting and strategizing when setting goals. Workshop activities can demonstrate many important lessons, such as how to set achievable goals, how to revise goals, how to prioritize goals and how to assess goal risks. The right tools can help to set continuously effective goals for a team. Goal setting tools are a great way to help you set goals, keep track of, and stay focused on what you're trying to achieve.

2.7.1 How Goal Setting Exercises Works

Goals are our aspirations. When we set a goal, we create an aim for a set of behaviours (Latham and Locke, 2002). Change rarely happens magically overnight. It happens because we make a daily commitment to adapting our behaviours, mind-set, and habits to work towards creating the change we want. Small, daily and consistent changes can lead to big results over time. This is how effective goal setting exercises work. Motivation is key to achieving our goals, and we feel more motivated when we're not 100% certain we can achieve the goal we've set for ourselves. Taking on challenges is highly motivational as it allows us to develop our skills, flex our problem-solving muscles, and gain a deeper sense of personal achievement.

► **What is Group Goal Setting?**

Group goal setting is where a group or team of people come together to agree on a set goal that will benefit them as a group or the wider community that they exist and interacts within. Setting a group goal first requires listening to individual interests and priorities, within the group or from the wider community the group is seeking to serve, and then establishing set and shared actions to help the group achieve the desired end goal. Creating group goals can be very empowering and motivating. Achieving big changes or results is easier with a strong group of individuals working towards a shared aim, especially when there is shared vision and investment in doing so.

► **Creating a Goal Setting Workshop Outline**

Once everyone starts thinking more deeply about their goals, it can be difficult to keep everyone on the same page as you go through the workshop. This is where a workshop outline can come in handy. An outline helps to set a clear structure for the session, alongside any potential learning outcomes or 'take-aways' you want participants to have. You can also add time limits for each section, exercise or activity and set a clear plan at the start for everyone to adhere to. When creating a goal-setting workshop outline, there are a few things to consider:

- How long will the overall workshop be?
- How many activities can you reasonably fit into that timeframe, ensuring they are completed effectively and with value?
- How many participants will be attending your workshop? What are the minimum and maximum numbers required for any activities you want to include?
- What resources do you need for each activity?
- Will you be using one overall goal-setting model or introducing a few different ones? How will your activities need to be adapted to this?
- What are the key learning outcomes/ takeaways participants should leave with? Keep this to a maximum of 3-5 and make sure they are well defined and measurable.

► **How to Make Decisions?**

Some of our decisions will be so routine that we make them without giving them much thought. But difficult or challenging decisions demand more consideration. These are the sort of decisions that involve:

- Uncertainty - Many of the facts may be unknown.
- Complexity – There can be many, interrelated factors to consider.
- High-risk consequences – The impact of the decision may be significant.
- Alternatives – There may be various alternatives, each with its own set of uncertainties and consequences.
- Interpersonal issues – You need to predict how different people will react.

In real-life situations, decisions can often fail because the best alternatives are not clear at the outset, or key factors are not considered as part of the process. To stop this happening, we need to bring problem-solving and decision-making strategies together to clarify our understanding. A logical and ordered process can help us to do this by making sure that we address all of the critical elements needed for a successful outcome.

Working through this process systematically will reduce the likelihood of overlooking important factors. The seven-step approach takes this into account:

- Create a constructive environment.
- Investigate the situation in detail.
- Generate good alternatives.
- Explore your options.
- Select the best solution.
- Evaluate your plan.
- Communicate your decision, and take action.

You can find the support also at FAVILLE Digital Application

3. Tips for proper using of facilitation tools & techniques in virtual environment

Selecting the right online energizer is a great start, but great facilitators know that the right delivery and approach are vital in ensuring an energizer is successful. While every energizer has some unique elements that you should consider, there are some general tips and approaches you can use to help your virtual energizer be a success. Here are our tips for running online energizers.

► **Set good online meeting etiquette**

Many facilitators set the expectations they have for participants both before the meeting and at the very beginning to help things running smoothly and keep everyone happy and productive. Online sessions are no different. Be very clear with your participants on online meeting etiquette by creating a list and distributing it with your invites. Reiterate this at the beginning of the meeting and if possible, have it present in your virtual whiteboard or collaboration tool.

Here are some of the items you should have in your online meeting etiquette.

1. Set microphones to mute when not speaking.
2. Webcams on, where possible – it's nice to see your face! Though bear in mind that in low-bandwidth environments, turning off the camera can help with call quality!
3. Call in from a quiet, well-lit location: everyone should be able to see and hear you clearly.
4. Read the agenda beforehand and come to the meeting prepared.
5. Use nonverbal means to indicate you would like to speak. Use the hand-up feature, icons or raise your hand in your video conferencing software.

6. Arrive on time if not a little early so you can iron out any audio/visual equipment issues before starting. Test your audio so you can be heard just after logging in.

7. Get familiar with the tools you're going to be using. Have a quick tour of the video chat or online whiteboard tool so you can be productive in the session.

8. Be engaged. Listen to whoever is speaking, communicate in the chat channels and use the online collaboration tools. You get out what you put in!

9. Close down extra tabs unless necessary and remove distractions. You might need Google Docs, Mural or another tool for the work of the session, but you probably don't need Facebook open!

10. Shut down other devices taking up bandwidth if possible to help ensure a stable connection.

11. Use a headset or earphones where possible to minimize echo and background noise.

12. When speaking, do so slowly and clearly. Be conscious of time – practice brevity whenever possible.

13. During presentations or longer discussions, try to add questions or thoughts to the chat channel and avoid interrupting. The facilitator will get to your questions and answer them when appropriate.

14. Try not to repeat questions in the chat channel. Read what's already there and add a like or upvote if you have the same question.

15. Smile and nod! Let the speaker know you are listening!

► **Keep it simple**

Simplicity is king in an online workshop. In remote environments, simple activities that are easy to explain, deliver and run can help ensure the efficacy of your workshop and keep participants from becoming frustrated. Remember that facilitation is all about keeping things simple and making them easier!

► **Think remotely**

While you might think this is a given for online energizers, it's always worth bearing in mind that your participants are working remotely and activities should be designed and used with this in mind. Not every energizer is suitable for online workshops, but on the flipside, short activities that encourage people to engage in physical activity shouldn't just be discounted because you're at the computer.Really take the time to consider which online energizers are suitable for your team in this remote setting and tailor your energizers to your tools, set-up and group. A good number of energizers can be adapted to work as well if not better in a remote setting – in fact, virtual meetings have access to lots of interesting tools and approaches live settings simply don't have. Think remotely and use them to your advantage.

► **Clearly explain the instructions before you begin**

Whether your online energizer involves breakout rooms, nonverbal communication or games, it's always important to clearly articulate the instructions before you begin. Most things take additional time in an online environment, and needing to repeat yourself or clarify steps later on can use up precious time and energy.Take the time to very clearly tell participants what they need to do and answer any questions related to the running of an exercise before you begin. It can be useful to prepare a summary of the instructions in your online whiteboard or collaboration tool for people to refer to if they get lost. This is not to say you shouldn't help or correct people during the exercise – just that you should make this an efficient, effective process wherever you can.

► **Time box**

As with all activities in a remote setting, keeping things running on time in an online energizer is important. Some games and exercises have the potential to go on indefinitely and while you should absolutely engage in those and have fun too, set timers and reminders so you can stay on track. It's also worth practicing and running a few of your preferred online energizer activities and timing them. If you find your participants need a boost and you have ten minutes to spare in your agenda, you can pick an appropriate energizer. (Or pick one from our FAVILLE Digital Application)

► **Choose the right tools**

While most online energizers can be run in a variety of formats and with a pinch of creativity, it's worth selecting and developing activities that work well with the online tools you are using. Conversely, if you're still deciding which tools to use, work backwards and see what methods you would like to run in your session first. It might be that an online whiteboard is essential or you can use internal tools.

All that said, every energizer is at its most effective when delivered in the right format by a comfortable and well-prepared facilitator. Some remote energizers will simply be most effective with a visual collaboration space such as Miro where they can draw and move things around in real-time, while others only require that participants are able to see one another. The key is that, where

possible, you try and find a toolset that is sufficient for the task at hand, rather than make do with second best.

In unprecedented times where many of us are working remotely and conducting meetings online for the first time, it's important to remember what works. Energizers are a great way to keep your team engaged, high spirited and to have a little fun while also being productive. This is arguably even more important in an online environment where groups don't get as much face to face time to have fun and feed off one another's energy.

4. Resources

[1] https://www.sessionlab.com/blog/online-energizers/

[2] https://fellowship-europe.ashoka.org/sites/fellowship-europe/files/atoms/files/ChangemakerXchange%20Virtual%20facilitation%20Tips.pdf

[3] https://ahaslides.com/blog/virtual-meeting-ice-breakers-tools/?fbclid=IwAR3QGNiGRvUkQKKPVOtf2U8qFAjP8anD_JGIXbRRWzcejP0_dFOJismK-Ks

[4] https://collaborativeleadersnetwork.org/strategies/collaborative-problem-solving/issue-analysis/

[5] https://www.sessionlab.com/blog/facilitation-skills/#facilitator-resources

[6] https://www.viima.com/blog/idea-generation

[7] https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2070/2016/08/The-big-book-of-Conflict-Resolution-Games.pdf

[8] https://positivepsychology.com/goal-setting-exercises/

[9] https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTED_00.htm

[10] https://positivepsychology.com/goal-setting-exercises/

[11] https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/goal-setting-training-games