The Facilitation Process: The Art and Science of Creating Learners and Self-Growers

WORKSHOP

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Abstract:	Facilitation is at the center of what faculty do in a Process Education environment since learners must construct their own knowledge and meaning and take responsibility and ownership of their learning and growth. The facilitation process, facilitation planning, and then the execution of an improve approach to meet the needs of the current specific audience is what a quality process educator does. This workshop will share how the theory can be used to increase the performance of facilitation. A profile of a quality facilitator will be examine with multiple practices shared for each important facilitator characteristic. The shared experience in the room will address 10 hardest situations for facilitation and how to go about making those situations work.

Learning Outcome:

1. Develop a strong working understanding of the profile of a quality facilitator and common practices that they use
2. Use the facilitation process and facilitation plan to pre-think a facilitation to increase real-time performance of facilitation
3. Innovative practices to address facilitator nightmares

Facilitation Plan:

Create three categories among the participants (Experts, Practitioners, Novices) based upon the distribution. Make sure that each team has at least 1 of each type in their team, a gender balance, and no two people from the same discipline.

Activity One: Share current understanding about facilitation process and facilitation planning (IJPE special edition). Be ready to share one new discovery by someone in the team (15 min)

Activity Two: Have each person self-assess current performance as a facilitator (2-S; 2-I; 1-I) using the Profile of a Quality Learning to Learn (L2L) Facilitator (see page 65 in this notebook): 15 minutes

Activity Three: Each team identify the area in which the team would like to grow their performance as a facilitator (5 minutes).

Activity Four: A master list is produced on the board and each team takes an area in which to help improve performance and through past experiences, resources available, and researching the conference experiences come up with three techniques/practices/tools/approaches to help increase that area of facilitation (20 minutes to produce and share from each team).

Activity Five: Brainstorm worst scenarios based on past experiences. Then for each scenario – 3 minutes to take suggestions of how to approach that specific situation effectively. (20 min)

Activity Six: Collect what people have learned to go into the proceedings (10 min)

Resources Needed:

1. Anatomy of a Model Facilitation Plan (found on the following pages)
2. Facilitation Methodology (found on the following pages)
3. Profile of a Quality Learning to Learn Facilitator (see page 65 in this notebook)
4. Learning to Learn Camp Facilitator's Guide: Training the Trainer (available on the secure site: www.processeducation.org/peconf/2016/secure)

(excerpted from *Faculty Guidebook* module 3.2.3 Facilitation Methodology)

Facilitation Methodology

Step 1—*Define the key measurable outcomes.*

When defining these measurable outcomes (two or three are sufficient), assess what your students need most in order to improve their learning performance.

Step 2—*Design and prepare for every activity.*

Choose an activity that will help achieve the learning outcomes from Step 1. Be sure to plan for contingencies that may arise during the facilitation. What individual or team behaviors are expected?

Step 3—*Decide which strategies, processes, and tools are appropriate for each specific activity, including roles.*

In this step the facilitator must decide what activity format is best suited to engage the participants based on the activity content and meeting the outcomes of the activity.

Step 4—*Pre-assess to determine participants' readiness.*

To ensure that all participants are sufficiently prepared to perform well during the activity, it is important to determine their level of preparation and the extent of their prior knowledge about the activity content.

Step 5—*Set up each specific activity.*

This is another highly critical step during which the facilitator ensures that participants know why they are doing the activity, and that they understand the learning objectives, performance criteria, resources, and general tasks for the activity.

Step 6—*Release individuals/teams to pursue the activity.*

Here we give control to the participants to start working on the activity and strive to promote learner ownership. In other words, participants should feel in control of the quality of their performance and the outcomes they produce.

Step 7—*Assess team and individual performances.*

This step involves gathering information by listening to and observing the dynamics between individuals, based on verbal interchanges, body language, and writing done during the activity. The goal is to foster independent learning.

Step 8—*Provide constructive interventions based on process, not content.*

During this step, the facilitator uses the data collected during the last step to determine when to intervene, but avoids doing things for participants that they could do themselves, even if it may be the easiest way to remedy the situation.

Step 9—*Bring all the individuals and/or teams back together at the conclusion of the activity.*

This is not easy because teams work at different speeds. It may be necessary to assign enrichment exercises to some teams and stop others before they have fully completed the activity.

Step 10—*Provide closure with the sharing of collective results.*

Have the teams share quality performances that others can benefit from as well as areas where performance needs improvement. Identify star performances and areas that need more discussion and discovery. Summarize what has happened and what has been learned, but do not spend time on what participants already know.

Step 11—*Use various assessments to provide feedback on how to improve everyone's performance.*

Realize that participants want assessment feedback based on the activity performance criteria that will help them improve future performance.

Step 12— *Plan for follow-up activities.*

The written team products should be assessed and returned with comments to each team at the next class. The facilitator should assess his or her own performance, striving for continual improvement.

Experience Outcomes are the proficiency and experiential goals for students who complete the experience.

Instructor Preparation **contains a list of tasks instructors should accomplish prior to facilitating the experience in order to be ready to maximize student**

Tips for assessing learning readiness are available here, including an answer key for the Reading Quiz.

EXPERIENCE

1   *Performing Like a Star*

Experience Outcomes   *Students who complete this experience will:*

1. Understand that the class culture assumes that they will come to class prepared, with a list of tasks completed, and ready for a very strong classroom experience through active learning.

2. Understand the Theory of Performance and what the performance of a college student really looks like.

3. Accept and agree to the idea that this experience will allow them to achieve growth outcomes that will exceed any past expectations.

4. Begin producing quality writing in three areas: answers to the set of questions posed, reflection and assessment writing, and the writing of their life vision.

ON MY OWN

This is the work that students do before class: reading, an exploration activity, with questions to answer. The in-class activity builds upon this learning.

Instructor Preparation

- Read Cody's Self-growth paper and identify five things you would like from every one of your students (attitudes, behaviors, etc) and how they are modeled in the self-growth paper
- Review the materials that students have read
- Think through the Exploration Questions that the students answered in their preparation for class
- Review the classroom activity

Notes on Preparation and Activity Set-Up

> **Space is left for instructors to make notes about preparation and activity set-up.**

IN MY CLASS

This in-class learning is active and collaborative. It builds on what they learned on their own and prepares them for the post-class part of the experience.

Assess Readiness   time allotted   *5 – 10 mins*

- Reading Quiz (sample follows the Answer Key)   **Correct answers: 1abc 2ac 3ab 4d 5a**
- Have the students share their discoveries from ON MY OWN

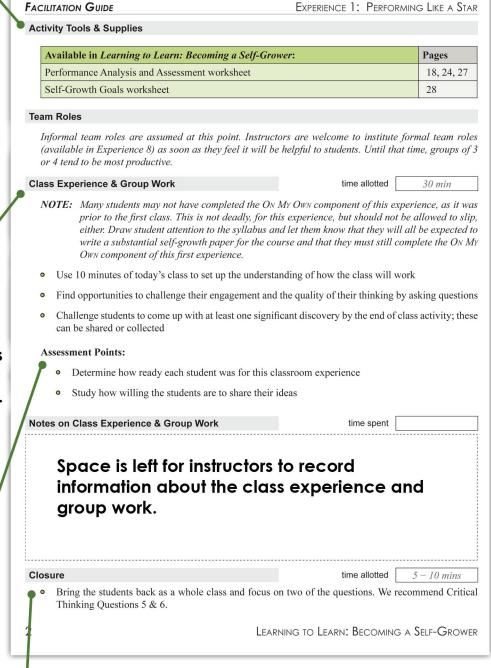LEARNING TO LEARN: BECOMING A SELF-GROWER   1

Allotted time for each portion of the class is suggested.

The required tools (forms, worksheets, and resources) are noted here, along with their location.

Information about team roles (required or suggested) is available for each experience.

Suggestions for how to proceed with the in-class portion of the experience is available here. At times, tips and ideas for engaging students are offered.

Assessment Points **notes where opportunities for assessment of learning are likely to occur.**

FACILITATION GUIDE   EXPERIENCE 1: PERFORMING LIKE A STAR

Activity Tools & Supplies

Available in *Learning to Learn: Becoming a Self-Grower*:	Pages
Performance Analysis and Assessment worksheet	18, 24, 27
Self-Growth Goals worksheet	28

Team Roles

Informal team roles are assumed at this point. Instructors are welcome to institute formal team roles (available in Experience 8) as soon as they feel it will be helpful to students. Until that time, groups of 3 or 4 tend to be most productive.

Class Experience & Group Work   time allotted | *30 min* |

NOTE: *Many students may not have completed the ON MY OWN component of this experience, as it was prior to the first class. This is not deadly, for this experience, but should not be allowed to slip, either. Draw student attention to the syllabus and let them know that they will all be expected to write a substantial self-growth paper for the course and that they must still complete the ON MY OWN component of this first experience.*

- Use 10 minutes of today's class to set up the understanding of how the class will work
- Find opportunities to challenge their engagement and the quality of their thinking by asking questions
- Challenge students to come up with at least one significant discovery by the end of class activity; these can be shared or collected

Assessment Points:

- Determine how ready each student was for this classroom experience
- Study how willing the students are to share their ideas

Notes on Class Experience & Group Work   time spent | |

Space is left for instructors to record information about the class experience and group work.

Closure   time allotted | *5 – 10 mins* |

- Bring the students back as a whole class and focus on two of the questions. We recommend Critical Thinking Questions 5 & 6.

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Closure **provides suggestions for tying it all together at the end of class and preparing learners for not only the work they will do after class, but in preparation for the next class meeting.**

Instructors can record the amount of time spent on achieving closure to the in-class portion of the experience.

FACILITATION GUIDE

- Review the components of the MY LEARNING AND GROWTH for this experience (Challenge, Preparation, Problems to Solve, and My Life Vision) so learners are ready to tackle that section

- Remind learners that the ON MY OWN section of Experience 2 must be completed before the next class meeting

Notes on Closure   time spent [   ]

Space is left for notes on closure.

Any special requirements for the post-class portion of the experience are noted.

MY LEARNING AND GROWTH

In this portion of the experience, students practice and apply what they've learned before and in class.

NOTE: Students will be selecting their Self-Growth Goals for the course in the Problems to Solve section. They will revisit those goals four times over the course of the term.

Reconciliation & Data

What evidence demonstrates that outcomes were met? Use data from group work to document.

Space is left for instructors to record evidence that the learning outcomes were met.

Instructor Assessment of Class Period

Space is left for instructors to record their assessment of the class period.

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For each Exploration and Critical Thinking Question, criteria for responses is provided.

FACILITATION GUIDE   EXPERIENCE 1: PERFORMING LIKE A STAR

ANSWER KEY   *Sample answers are in italics.*

EXPLORATION QUESTIONS

1. How does the Classification of Learning Skills impact level of performance?

    Responses should indicate thinking about how an increase in specific learning skills will impact level of performance.

    In teaching, listening to learners to hear what they are trying to say allows you to adjust your practice to address specific needs. Each process area and the associated set of learning skills impact just about any performance - whether we look at information processing, constructing understanding, applying knowledge, problem solving, research, communication, etc - many of the over 275 individual learning skills come into play often during a performance.

For most questions, sample student responses are also included. *These are always in italics.*

CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

1. How would you describe the aspects of the Theory of Performance to another student?

    Responses should include naming the components or explaining how the components comprise a way of describing different aspect that affect performance.

2. What are the elements found in the Performance Analysis worksheet?

    Responses should include naming the components: Identity, Level of Knowledge, Strength of the Learning Skills, Number of contexts (experiences), Personal Factors affecting current performance, and Fixed Factors

3. What are some of the key characteristics of a high-quality learner ("honor student")?

    Student responses will vary.

    self-motivated; set their own goals; self-assessor; team player; communicator; generalizes knowledge; uses methodologies; takes ownership; takes risks; uses failure productively; proactive; plans their own future

READING QUIZ QUESTIONS

Correct answers: 1abc   2ac   3ab   4d   5a

The Answer Key for the Reading Quiz is available here as well.

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