Welcome to

Verbal Agility

Please arrange yourselves into teams of 6, 8, or 10 at tables closest to the front for the best experience

Thank you!

Verbal Agility: Facilitation Tips & Techniques

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Alphabetically by:
-Country
-Provence or State
-City
-Street Name

Talker
Choose a subject you are very passionate about. Describe this to the listener for 1 minute.

Listener
Try to feel – or at least show – utter indifference toward the person and the subject. It’s the most boring thing you have ever heard.
Talker

Choose a subject you are very passionate about. Describe this to the listener for 1 minute.

Listener

Try to feel – or at least show – that you truly care about the person and the subject. You are curious to hear more and learn.

Which Way is Your Tact Filter?

NERD  NORMAL


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Team Member
Discuss an issue you’re having

Listener
Respond with only
- **Reflective Listening**
  (“This is what I’m hearing….”)
And/Or
- **Questions** (like “Why might that be true?”
  “What do you think?”
  “How can I help?” )

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**Discussion Toolkit for Meetings**

*Preventing pontificators from hijacking the meeting:*

- Could you summarize that into three or four bullet points for me?
- Who can summarize what Pat just shared?
- Would someone like to share a different viewpoint?
- Does anyone else see things differently?
- Jesse, you look thoughtful. Would you like to share what’s on your mind?
- Let’s do a quick process check. Given our agenda and goals for today, do we need to timebox this discussion?
Discussion Toolkit for Meetings

Staying on topic and out of the weeds:

• Is this discussion helping us to achieve our purpose?
• How does that relate to this topic?
• Can we solve this problem right now?
• Is this the right group to make this decision?
• How much more time do we need to spend discussing this topic?
• Does this need to go in the parking lot?

Discussion Toolkit for Meetings

Miscellaneous:

• What else? (encourages dialogue)
• Anything else? (ends dialogue)
• What don’t we know?
• Why is that important?
• What does your experience tell you?
• What does that word mean to you?
• What just happened here?
• Hold on a second. Let’s pretend I’m in charge for a minute. (smile!)
Discussion Toolkit for Meetings

And don’t forget to be gracious and encouraging:

• Thank you for that suggestion
• This is hard work and I really appreciate how you’re staying focused
• You’ve clearly put a lot of thought into this
• Thanks for remembering our ground rules
• You guys are making great progress—just a few more items and we’ll be finished
• Thank you

Volunteer 1
Facilitate Meeting.
Purpose: Obtain consensus on where to go as a group this evening
Tip: use thumb voting

Volunteer 2
Come up front, collect handouts for everyone at your table
Volunteer 3
Facilitate Meeting.
Purpose: Obtain consensus on new place to go as a group this evening
Tip: use thumb voting

Volunteer 4, 5
Come up front, get special instructions

Sources

- Agile Retrospectives by Esther Derby and Diana Larson
- Behind Closed Doors: Secrets of Great Management by Johanna Rothman and Esther Derby
- Collaboration Explained by Jean Tabaka
- Crucial Conversations by Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, Ron McMillan, and Al Switzler
- Facilitator’s Guide to Participatory Decision Making by Sam Kaner
- The Nonverbal Advantage: Secrets and Science of Body Language at Work by Carol Kinsey Goman
- Project Retrospectives by Norm Kerth
- Sparking Productive Dialogue by Maria C. Birkhead