

WHAT IS A

LEARNING FACILITATOR?

Learning Facilitators specialize in creating an appropriate environment for learners to feel comfortable to consider new ideas and are not threatened by external factors. The facilitator helps learners learn at their own pace and in a way that is relevant and personal to them. Learning facilitation is less about presenting or lecturing, and more about allowing participants to find their own information and answers with minimum guidance. Often participants will learn through trial and error during the session while the learning facilitator is very hands off. That requires the learning facilitator to have full trust, faith and confidence in the participants and their ability to find the right answers.



Learning Facilitators are:

- Less protective of their design, agenda, and beliefs than a teacher might be
- Good listeners, especially to the needs and feelings of the learners
- Pay attention to their relationship with learners and the content of the course
- Accept feedback, both positive and negative and to use it as constructive insight into themselves and their behavior
- Educators who encourage self-learning
 - learning is by trial-and-error
 - allowing participants to find their own information and answers with minimal guidance

Learners in a session are:

- Encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning
- Provided insights and experiences for learning to occur
- Motivated to reflect on their own experiences to create applications for their new learning
- Encouraged to consider the most valuable evaluation is self-evaluation and that learning needs to focus on factors that contribute to solving significant problems, creating solutions and achieving significant results




What are the most essential skills for a learning facilitator to master and why?

- **Psychological Safety** – Beware of the emotional environment of the room /cultural differences.
- **Being attentive** – communicate, accurately listen, and look for meaning and feelings behind the words.
- **Understanding** – having empathy for others' frames of reference.
- **Respectful** – valuing each learner as being unique.
 - Knowledgeable
 - Subject matter
 - Using a variety of instructional strategies
 - Serving as a resource person
- **Communicative** – possessing effective interpersonal skills.

What are the INIFAC Competencies for a Learning Facilitator?

- **Program Design**
 - Learning goals
 - Collaborative learning techniques
 - Different learning styles and preferences
 - Help internalize learning
- **Using adult learning methods**
 - Projects confidence
 - Fosters openness by creating and maintaining a safe and inclusive environment
 - Motivates learners
- **Communication**
 - Delivers instructions in a way that the learner understands the purpose, process steps, and deliverables
 - Open to different perspectives and opinions on the topic
 - Build relationships and promote learning.
 - Detect and address dysfunctional behavior
 - Identifies and summarizes learning points.
- **Program Evaluation Methods**
 - Uses appropriate and fair evaluation methods to verify the extent learning outcomes have been achieved.
 - Displays self-awareness and understands its impact on learners
 - Adapts style when needed
- **Professional Standards and Ethics**
 - Respects the privacy of individuals
 - Informs learners of the limits of confidentiality
 - Does not share any private or confidential information without specific authorization
 - Sources information
 - Exhibits a concern for the learner's privacy and experiences by creating a respectful & trustworthy environment.
 - Protects against discrimination and promotes
 - diversity (invitation to session)
 - equality (giving everyone equal time to speak)
 - inclusion (involving everyone)
 - equity (treating with fairness)



If INIFAC could offer one piece of advice to Learning facilitators when designing sessions what would that be?

Remember you are

- helping people develop their critical thinking skills ...
 - *incorporating reality*
 - *non-judgmental*
- by creating a Learning Loop- See /Do feedback (be realistic on your learning loops)
 - *Reflect / Feedback / Challenge Conclusions / What New Conclusions are made*
 - *making conclusions and self-learning on what does it mean to me*
- which in turn helps retain knowledge



If INIFAC could offer one piece of advice to Learning Facilitators for delivering sessions, what would that be?

- Be prepared to individualize your sessions to match the group you are working with
 - being patient and allowing for buy-in (sometimes spending more time on one topic and less on another depending on the group)
 - allow participants to explore ideas and experience failure



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