
From the Chair: The Many Hats We Wear



May is a month that holds deep meaning for many of us. Around the world, it's a time when we honor mothers and maternal figures—those who nurture, support, guide, and champion others, often wearing more hats than any job description could ever capture. As we celebrate them, it feels only fitting to also pause and reflect on the many roles we take on as facilitators, often within the course of a single session.

Facilitation is rarely a one-dimensional task. It is a discipline of nuance and agility. We come into the room as a guide, but what the group needs from us may shift moment to moment. One minute we are helping clarify decisions, the next we are translating unspoken tension into actionable insight. We are not just neutral third parties—we are empathetic listeners, boundary-holders, connectors, and sometimes even peacekeepers. And like those we honor this month, we do much of it quietly, without seeking credit.

Consider the moments when you've helped a group reach clarity—not by giving them the answers, but by helping them find their own. That's the role of

the guide, offering direction without taking over the journey. Or the times you've gently drawn out the quiet voice in the room, ensuring that diverse perspectives shape the outcome. That's the advocate, lifting others so they can lead.

We often serve as referees too—holding the space when fairness is at risk or when the conversation drifts into unsafe territory. We step in when needed, not with power, but with principle. We enforce agreements, reinforce ground rules, and do so in a way that preserves dignity while restoring order. These moments aren't glamorous, but they're foundational to trust.

There are the roles that demand speed—interpreting the group's energy, synthesizing ideas on the fly, or adjusting an agenda in real time when it's clear the group needs something different. These are the moments that require not only preparation, but presence. It's not enough to follow the plan. We must read the room, follow the signals, and sometimes make decisions in seconds that protect hours of progress.

And then there are the creative, connective roles—the bridge-builders, helping groups see common ground across disagreement. The meaning-makers, turning disparate thoughts into shared insight. The energizers, infusing levity when the room is heavy or sparking engagement when momentum wanes. These roles require us to bring our full selves—not just our tools, but our humanity.

If all of this sounds like a lot, that's because it is. Facilitation is a dynamic craft, and our ability to shift roles fluidly is one of our greatest assets. But it's also why community matters. Just as the people we celebrate this month need support, so do we. At INIFAC, we remain committed to being that support system for each other. Through credentialing, standards, mentoring, and connection, we help one another grow stronger in every role we take on.

So this month, whether you are celebrating a mother, are a mother, or simply reflecting on those who've guided you along the way, take a moment to honor the many roles you play in service to others. And let's remember: while we often work behind the scenes, the impact of our presence is lasting and profound.

With deep respect and admiration,

Diana Gurwicz
Chair, INIFAC





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