Facilitation Skills

Facilitation is:

➔ The art of bringing adults together with the learning, by helping adults learn through self-discovery.
➔ For facilitation to be effective, the emphasis must be on both the acquisition and the use of the new knowledge, skills, attitudes, and abilities.

What's the Difference?

Facilitators are: guides to the learning destination, "with" the learners, but not one of them; responsible and accountable to the group. Their goal is to equip the learners for self-development and continual learning.

Presenters are: positioned as the expert with a clear separation from the learner; learners are passive recipients of the knowledge. The goal is to transmit information.

Three areas differentiate facilitators and presenters:

	Facilitator	*Presenter*
Focus	On the learner	On the presenter
Control	Shared control	Presenter in control
Credibility	Based on ability to create and sustain a supportive learning environment.	Based on content knowledge, expertise, control of content and delivery.

Facilitators:

➔ Are learner-centered
➔ With the learners, not observers
➔ Make learning happen
➔ Create opportunities for learners to share own experience
➔ Protect and affirm ideas
➔ Create a safe and comfortable learning environment
➔ Remove obstacles to learning.

Facilitation Skills

Facilitator Roles	Key Facilitator Skills
Group Leader	• Modeling appropriate communication skills: listening; repeating and summarizing • Ensuring a safe and conducive learning environment for all learners • Helping learners apply content to their jobs • Providing complete feedback during discussions and activities • Managing group involvement processes • Promoting the development of action plans
Agenda Manager	• Practice to ensure planned timing is adequate for content • Keep discussion on track and balanced among participants by monitoring time spent • Return discussion to the topic at hand when necessary • Establishes timing • Starts and ends on time • Manages the time to ensure content is covered
Content Expert	• Asking in-depth questions • Answering questions in depth and detail • Sharing experiences that enhance credibility • Using appropriate terminology for the topic and learners • Accurately representing expertise • Sharing relevant knowledge
Role Model	• Maintaining positive, professional demeanor • Modeling behaviors being taught
Consultant	• Helping participants understand and apply the concepts • Identifying environmental factors that support (or hinder) transfer to the job • Helping learners manage the above factors to ensure transfer