Facilitative Leadership Competencies

Source: Susan K. Sparks, 2010

The following is a *partial* list of methods, skills, and dispositions in facilitative leadership. Circle **one or two competencies in each focus area.** Select those you will commit to work on during team meetings.

Backwards Mapping and Planning (Before the Meeting)

1. Diagnosing the group and the needs/desires
2. Gaining clarity on what the school/team is firm (tight) on with regard to the goals and the work
3. Planning the facilitation with an eye on results and product
4. Matching process and interactive strategies to intended results
5. Articulating and agreeing on your role and the different roles with members and supervisors
6. Determining focus including purpose, non-purpose, and connections to other initiatives
7. Planning discussion for "why are we doing this?"
8. Attending to logistics including creating an ideal environment and meeting and work session conditions
9. Looking for success and planning celebrations

Inside Facilitation (During the Meeting)

1. Initiating a structure for discussion
2. Facilitating the beginning activity
3. Setting a positive tone
4. Consciously choosing to provide input into content; aware when to get involved with content
5. Making a personal connection with the group, being empathetic
6. Establishing and/or co-creating norms and expectations
7. Modeling, monitoring, and confronting the norms consistently
8. Listening, paraphrasing, pausing, clarifying, and reflecting parties' comments
9. Demonstrating an attitude of continuous improvement
10. Knowing how to re-group or break a large group into small groups
11. Determining the amount of time needed for work
12. Recording or assisting the recorder
13. Monitoring group energy
14. Stating examples of specific action and success by team members
15. Using different information gathering techniques including brainstorming
16. Leading a group through an agenda-building process
17. Using more than one method of decision making and naming the types of decision making
18. Using visual dialogue and charts throughout the room
19. Summarizing and facilitating next steps discussions

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Follow-Through (After the Meetings)

1. Looking for action orientation by team members
2. Encouraging and using positive and supportive statements
3. Observing and collecting specific examples of success
4. Planning next steps

Challenging Conversations (Before, During, and After Meetings)

1. Intervening appropriately; handling problems or difficult situations/moments
2. Accurately observing and remembering behavior
3. Summarizing key points
4. Giving accurate and respectful feedback
5. Responding positively and productively to objections and challenges
6. Providing an equitable process
7. Managing tension and conflict
8. Providing support and acknowledging group accomplishments
9. Attentiveness to nonverbal signals
10. Valuing culture differences
11. Providing feedback without creating defensive reactions
12. Using a process to solve problems
13. Leading a team through vision, mission, values, and goals
14. Diagnosing blocks to group effectiveness
15. Evaluating how well the group worked together
16. Being conscious of your level of personal well-being
17. Confronting and challenging with empathy and respect
18. Using strong relational leadership skills

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