

What are Facilitated Workshops?

A Facilitated Workshop is an intensive, structured meeting led by an impartial session leader or facilitator. It is designed to enable you, the participant, to specify your business needs or requirements, according to the published objectives. The aim is for all participants to come to a consensus on the information discussed.

The process replaces lengthy interview and analysis methods that gather information from individuals separately. Instead, there is a facilitated, interactive environment in which all key players contribute to the information gathering and decision making process. In this way issues are highlighted or resolved quickly and the business people can contribute very practically to the design of the solution.

The process uses an intensive Workshop environment. During the Workshop, participants will work very hard in developing a consensus of ideas and decisions. Your facilitator is there to keep the group on track and ensure that the objectives are met. This saves time and ensures that nothing is missed. You have been invited to contribute your knowledge and experience to achieving these objectives. You will also be asked to agree decisions, which may need to be taken during the session.

The Workshop Owner

The Owner has responsibility for the project and Workshop from the perspective of the business. They ensure attendance by all of the critical people. The Owner often has the responsibility for making final decisions, which are effectively delegated to the Workshop participants. They underwrite decisions made at the workshop and invite other participants to represent other views and skills necessary to meet the objectives.

Working together

A facilitated workshop has a set agenda, each item has definite goals. The session is put together in such a way as to maximise your contribution and to ensure that all is documented in a productive and effective manner. Some typical rules for effective working are given below.

- ✓ One meeting - all discussion via the facilitator
- ✓ Make points as a headline - be brief
- ✓ Focus on priorities
- ✓ Agree - then move on
- ✓ Stay within the scope
- ✓ Stick to the point - no war stories
- ✓ Be constructive - propose solutions not roadblocks
- ✓ What is agreed within the meeting stands
- ✓ Enjoy it!

By using this process you are much more likely to achieve your objectives. Creative ideas are more likely to surface. Through questioning issues become clearer misunderstandings are cleared up there and then. Actions are agreed by everyone not just a few.

A facilitator is there to ensure this does not become an ineffective discussion and to diffuse arguments and ensure it's a constructive not destructive process.

If you think Facilitation is a tool you could use in your business then contact us today.