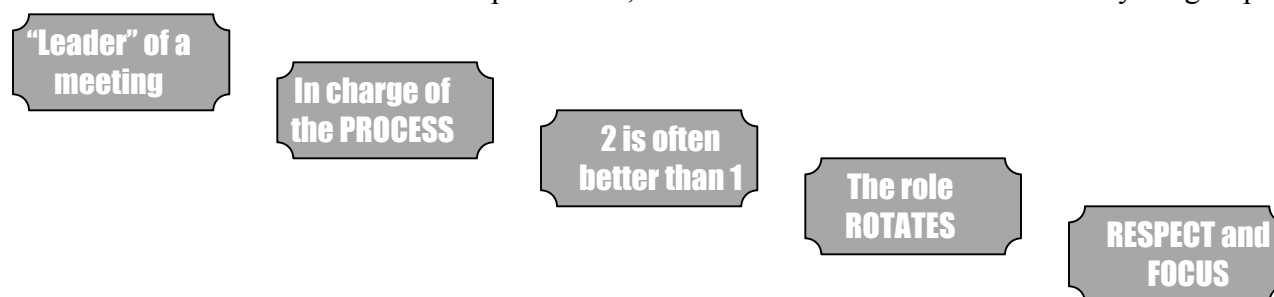# No More Boring Meetings: Facilitating Participatory Meetings

I. Introductions & Ice-Breaker (5min)

Welcome/Go over agenda
Name Game

II. What is a facilitator? (5min)

- Leader of a specific activity or meeting. Discuss definition of "Leader."
- The facilitator leads the *process* of a meeting, not the ideas or decisions being discussed.
- It's often good to have a team of 2 co-facilitators.
- The facilitator also maintains respect and keeps everyone focused.
- It is best if this role is not permanent; it should rotate between members of your group.

"Leader" of a meeting

In charge of the PROCESS

2 is often better than 1

The role ROTATES

RESPECT and FOCUS

III. Why do we need facilitation? (5min)

1. To help everyone in the group do their best thinking
2. To make everyone feel comfortable sharing ideas
3. To keep the flow of a meeting – keeping things organized: NO MORE BORING MEETINGS!
4. To help the group find creative solutions
5. To assure that decisions are fair, clear, and democratic
6. Facilitators can help make our groups less racist, less sexist, and more sensitive to minority groups.

IV. Facilitator's Do's and Don'ts (20min)

Do's	and	Don'ts

Do's	Don'ts
DO have one person speak at a time	DON'T let people interrupt each other
DO encourage youth and quieter voices to be heard	DON'T let adults and louder people control the meeting
DO keep the group on task, follow the agenda	DON'T interrupt people (only as last resort)
DO propose the best path for the discussion	DON'T be wishy-washy ("do we want to do this, or this, or maybe we should do this…?")
DO stay neutral on the issue being discussed	DON'T control the content of the discussion
DO raise the energy of the group	DON'T let long tangents make the meeting boring!

GAME: Do's and Don'ts bingo
>   The bingo boards are passed out randomly.
>   Three actors read out loud the "Do's and Don'ts Scenarios" enacting one of the Do's or Don'ts
>   Players mark off the Do or Don't they suspect the scenario showed.
>   First one to get four across (and are all correct) wins. Game can be played to 3rd/4th place.

V. Role Play (45min)

A. Facilitator's Checklist: (5min)

☐ **1. Introductions/Ice-breakers:**

If people do not know each other well, propose a creative way of people at the meeting to introduce themselves, an activity that builds trust in the group. Ice-Breakers are more than just fun, they loosen people up and make them more ready to participate.

☐ **2. Make an Agenda:**

An agenda is basically a "to-do" list for your group to get through during the meeting.
Set time limits if you can!

☐ **3. Finding Helpers**:
  ☐ a) *Notetaker* – someone to take notes. It is important to include: decisions made, who said they'd do what, next meeting info, and opportunities for those who were not at the meeting to get involved.

  ☐ b) *Timekeeper* – to make reminders about the time limits that are decided by the group; someone with a watch who does not feel shy about jumping in.

  ☐ c) *Vibeswatcher* – peacemaker, keeps an eye on the vibes of the group (looks out for: boredom, violent language and rudeness, participation, the need for a break, if old people or men are dominating the discussion)

  ☐ d) *Stacker* – when lots of people want to speak at once, someone to make a list of speakers.

B. Self-facilitation? (5min)
List of questions to remind people to be respectful.
1. Am I conscious of how long I speak, how many times I speak, and the volume of my voice?
2. Do I interrupt others?
3. How many men are speaking? How many women?
4. Am I being constructive with my participation? Or do I ever say things just to get a defensive reaction?
5. Am I being open-minded? Do I accept diverse points of view?
6. Am I actively listening? (Body language and encouraging words)
7. We're working to make change, but are we acting out the change?

C. Scenario (5min)
D. Role Play (25min)
E. Judges Reports (5min)

VI. Wrap Up & Evaluation (5min)