FACILITATION

A GUIDE TO APPROACHES IN PRACTICE

BY RIËTTE ACKERMANN

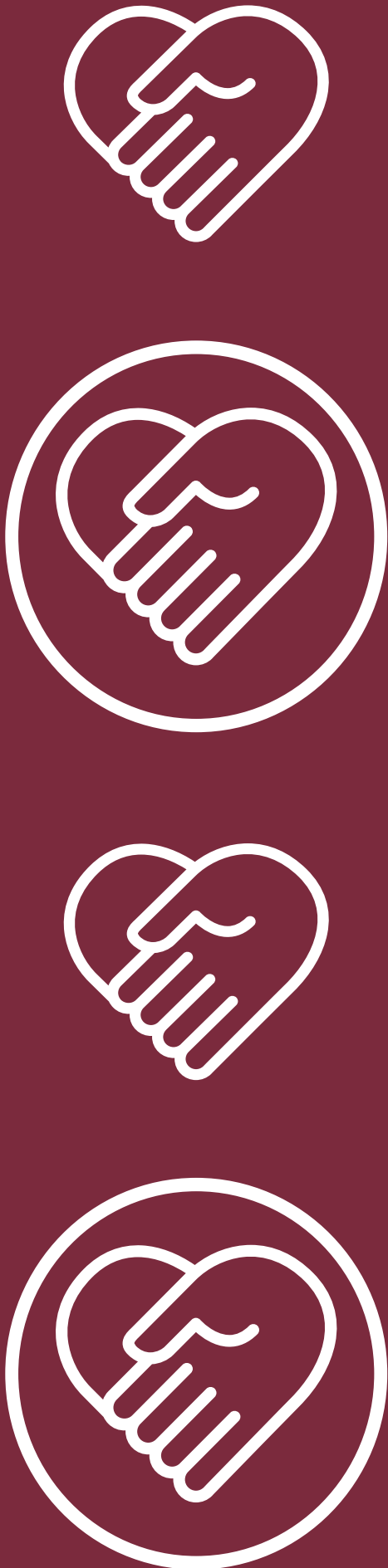**Gordon Institute
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Contents

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About PAL
Personal & Applied Leadership

At GIBS, we take an integrative approach to learning and the Personal and Applied Leadership department is an area established within the business school to be the custodian of expert facilitation and coaching faculty, best practice, and thought leadership in the domains of personal change and transformation. This responsibility also involves disseminating best practice through the other departments in the business school, including how facilitation and coaching is designed into programmes to ensure differentiated, and specialised value by means of the faculty, learning approaches, and learning outcomes for leaders (i.e., personal leadership, integration of learning, and applied change). In addition, the Personal and Applied Leadership unit delivers programmes focused on personal change and transformation using facilitation and coaching direct to the market. This white paper is intended to guide clients on the topic of facilitation and its related approaches, so that they can make informed decisions about how the approaches can be used to add value to their businesses, including their integration into leadership development programmes. This is a commissioned report that presents a useful codification of facilitation approaches and represents PAL's position on facilitation (Alison Reid, head of Personal and Applied Leadership at GIBS).

If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.

~ African proverb

Abstract

The need for groups of individuals, within teams, coming together across various organisational functions, or working collectively within society, to collaborate, solve problems, and make decisions with sustainable long-term impact, has increased significantly in recent years. Facilitation, the act of making a process easier, is a valuable method to achieve constructive results by accessing the collective wisdom, skills, and energy of individuals, teams, and diverse groups of people (Personal and Applied Leadership, 2020).

Due to the process-based nature of facilitation, it can be challenging to know how to best apply it to reach the desired outcomes. The intention of this paper is to provide:

- Clarity on the range of possible facilitation approaches
- A map of facilitation approaches and relevant methodologies
- Useful facilitation tools to consider

1. Introduction

Facilitation as a discipline is frequently applied as part of the implementation of learning and development strategies. Moreover, facilitation is used beyond learning and development to assist in organisational and community processes, including meetings, strategic planning, and collective decision-making (Van Maurik, 1994).

There is a broad variety of facilitation approaches in use today, making it difficult to know which may be the most suited to reach the desired outcome. To add to the complexity, there is an array of methodologies, frameworks, models, and tools that can be utilised across the range of facilitation approaches.

The purpose of this paper is to aid in the process of determining facilitation approaches, make appropriate selections from the multitude of methodologies and tools, and by doing so improve the probability of successfully meeting the required outcomes of facilitated experiences. The paper achieves this by providing an overview of the range of facilitation approaches and mapping out the most relevant methodologies and tools. This paper does not propose that any one approach is more effective or right; rather that a particular approach may be more appropriate in certain situations. By understanding more clearly the nature of the difference between approaches, it will be easier to match the applicable methodologies and tools to the circumstances (Ives, 2008).

An approach can be defined as a way of addressing a situation, a viewpoint, or a belief system. Therefore, an approach is based on assumptions that may originate from a particular theory or philosophy. Applicable methods and tools are generally developed from the theoretical foundations of an approach. This paper provides an overview of facilitation, including a definition, general principles, how facilitation is applied in practice, the role of the facilitator, and the main benefits, followed by a description of the range of approaches and a map of practical application through methodologies and tools.

2. What is facilitation?

Facilitation is a phenomenon that is not easy to define in a simplistic way, even though it is widely used in organisations as a significant tool to support learning processes and resolve problems, come up with new ideas, and make key decisions (Du Toit, 2004; Van Maurik, 1994). Three important aspects of facilitation include:

- A specific outcome is usually agreed upon;
- A group of people are involved; and
- It is process-based.

Facilitation can be defined as the act of making a process easier, based on the Latin origin of the term, *facilis*, which translates to "easy". Consequently, in a business and leadership development context, facilitation is a process of obtaining sustainable results by accessing the collective wisdom, skills, and energy of individuals and teams (Personal and Applied Leadership, 2020). The process-based nature of facilitation often surfaces ambiguity regarding the most appropriate approach to take and the intention of this paper is to provide clarity in selecting an approach to achieve the expected outcomes from a process.

3. Facilitation in practice

3.1 General principles of facilitation

Over time, several principles underpinning facilitation have surfaced. These principles contain many paradoxes or opposing statements that have validity on both sides (Participatory Methods, n.d.), including:

- A balance between the task and going with the flow, also referred to as planned spontaneity – expecting the unexpected and being flexible;

- Paying attention to and meeting the group's objectives (as defined by the group), known as the "What is in it for me?" (WIFM) principle – participants need to experience the benefit of a process to be motivated to participate;

- Respecting all the participants – being inclusive, balancing airtime evenly, and encouraging expression;

- A balance between neutrality and involvement;

- Setting clear containers to create psychological safety, so that participants feel free to raise ideas and make decisions (rules versus creativity);

- Acknowledging one's own weaknesses as a facilitator, hereby modelling a high level of self-awareness; and

- Recognising adult learning as the common thread in the process, not just the outcome.

The adult learning cycle is deeply embedded in the process of facilitation and comprises collective analysis, learning, and action focused on agreeing and achieving shared objectives. Figure 1 graphically displays the cyclical nature of this process.

Orientation and understanding

Analyse
Identify and analyse problems and opportunities

Participation
Partnership
Learning
Empowerment

Review
Evaluate if activities met purpose and objectives. If not, why not? If so, what factors helped?

Plan
Priorities, consider solutions, agree on aims and objectives, and develop plans

Do
Implement planned activities and monitor progress against the plan
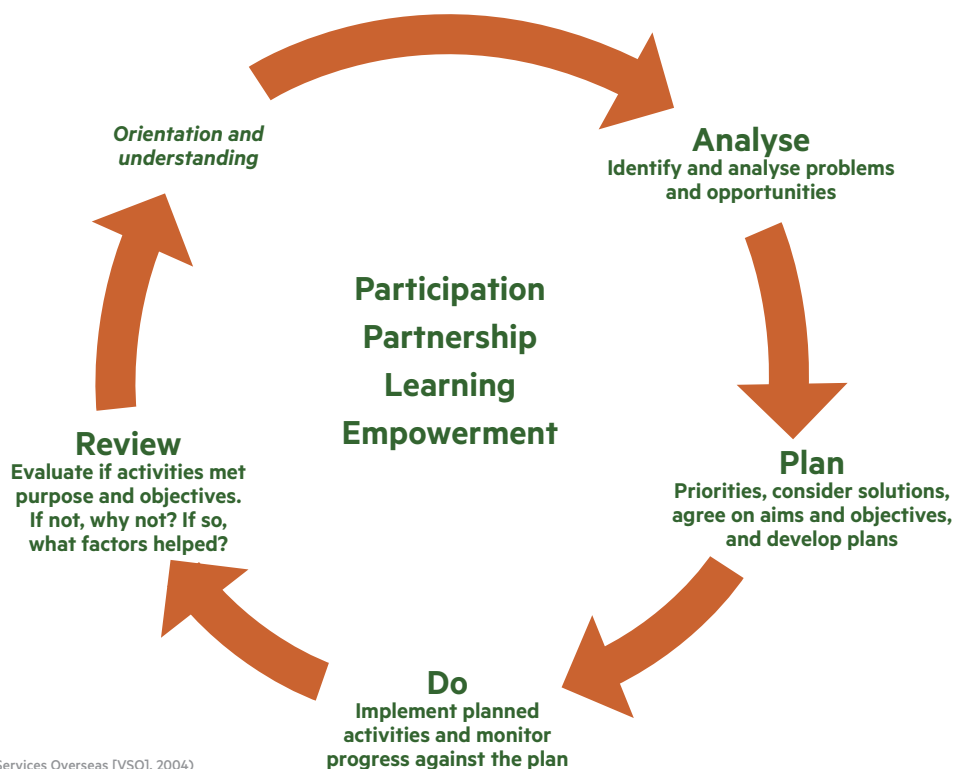
Figure 1: The adult learning cycle
(Source: Adapted from Voluntary Services Overseas [VSO], 2004)

3.2 The role of the facilitator

The facilitator is an integral part of facilitation, and the facilitator's skills and experience can heavily influence the process and how well the agreed outcome is met. Facilitation can be extremely successful when the skills, experience, and objectivity of the facilitator match the skills, experience, and contextual understanding of the group well (VSO, 2004).

Facilitation is about managing how people interact in groups, which means the main role of the facilitator is to: (1) ensure that the group achieves its aims, and (2) encourage active participation from everyone (The South African College of Applied Psychology, 2003).

Facilitation skills include, but are not limited to (Du Toit, 2004):

- Asking good questions to help the group reach answers;
- Guiding the group to surface understanding;
- Tuning into the needs, concerns, and mood of the group and the individuals within the group;
- Adapting to the group;
- Keeping the group on track;
- Acknowledging the different perspectives from within the group; and
- Stimulating meaningful exchange.

3.3 Benefits of facilitation

Facilitation has become a key management and leadership skill, because participants are able to make meaning of a certain situation or challenge due to the experiences that they have through their senses and then applying cognitive reasoning to these experiences (Thomas, 2007). In this way, facilitation helps groups achieve specific outcomes, resulting in larger organisational goals being achieved (Du Toit, 2004). There are "multiple social constructions of meaning and knowledge" that facilitation can help a group explore to reach an appropriate outcome (Mertens, 1998).

4. The range of facilitation approaches

Facilitation approaches are informed by theories predominantly from the fields of psychology and organisational behaviour. These theoretical influences include:

- Theories of the unconscious (Freud and Jung);
- Organisational learning theory (Argyris and Schön);
- Person-centred approaches (Rogers);
- Process-oriented psychology (Mindell); and
- Critical theory (Habermas).

The process of facilitation can vary from being **instructional** or **informative** to being fully supportive of **taking independent action.** Facilitation is based on shared ownership of decision-making – the shared ownership is low when an instructional approach is applied and high when the approach of taking independent action is applied (VSO, 2004). In addition, the allowance for emergent thinking versus being purely focused on task plays a role. Figure 2 displays the continuum along which facilitation can be approached.

Low   Shared ownership   High

| Instruction | Consultation | Shared decision-making | Shared action | Supporting independent action |

Figure 2: The range of facilitation approaches

Considerations to assist in deciding whether to be more instructional versus allowing for independent action include analysing the needs of the group/organisation and ascertaining the level of knowledge already in existence. The approach selected should consider both these factors (Knox, 2010).

4.1 Instructional approach

This approach is directive and informative in nature and used when the task focus is high and there is less scope for shared ownership – for instance, where information needs to be shared, skills training is required, reporting on or presenting a course of action, legal boundaries play a role, or at the start of a process. The instructive facilitator takes on a pedagogical role and needs to have sufficient experience and expertise in the topic.

Traditional teaching or lecturing is an example of an instructional approach. The teachers/lecturers are experts in a specific subject area, such as finance, strategy, or human resources, and share their knowledge and related information to help their audience gain knowledge and understanding. Another example is skills training, where the trainer's role is to work through specific material with participants so that they develop a particular skill, such as using a technology platform or performing a work-related task.

With an instructional approach, the instructive facilitators/ teachers have the authority to give direct feedback, make decisions and/or recommendations as appropriate, and the focus is on one-way communication rather than two-way dialogue. Generally, they can utilise established teaching strategies, such as modelling and direct tuition. Visual and creative methods,

including the use of video content, graphics, and multimedia, are usually more inclusive and powerful (and thus more effective) than typical verbal and written communication, even in a one-way informing situation (Bloom et al., 2005). An instructional approach is appropriate when the group:

- May need professional assistance or direction;
- Does not have the knowledge or skills to get to the required outcome;
- Has a time constraint and action must be taken immediately; and
- May benefit from experiences and motivation from an outside party.

It is important to identify the relevant stakeholders and whether they will be satisfied with information only. Moreover, the information needs to be presented in a way people will understand and relate to. The communication methods need to be tailored to the audience and time available. Another consideration is whether the approach can be changed if the audience requires more than information or instruction. The use of an instructional approach needs to be agreed upon upfront, prior to applying it (Bloom et al., 2005).

4.2 Consultation approach

Consultation is used in circumstances where an existing situation needs improvement, there are clear plans for a project, the range of options is limited, stakeholders can understand and relate to the options, or feedback can be used to choose between or modify options. Whilst the scope for shared ownership might be low, there is an opportunity for emergent thinking. Methodologies may include Appreciative Inquiry, Brainstorming, and Focus Groups, and there are many useful tools, including decision grid, gap analysis, and SWOT analysis.

To ascertain whether a consultation approach is appropriate, the following questions may be helpful:

- Who are the stakeholders/consultants, how will they be reached, and will they be satisfied with the consultation? Is the consultation merely to support an already identified agenda?
- Can options for consultation be presented in a way people will understand?
- Have the consultation methods been tailored to the participants and the time available?
- Will the feedback be welcomed and how will reporting back to those consulted be managed?
- Can the approach be changed if people want more than consultation?

4.3 Shared decision-making approach

Deciding together is the process of formulating options together, choosing between them, and agreeing on the action(s) to take. It requires providing people with the power to choose a way forward. This process may take longer and be more complex, with people needing more confidence to get involved. With this approach, it is important that the process is focused on the required outcome, that those involved take ownership of the process, and that the facilitator can extract wisdom from people's understanding of the situation and context.

Methods that can be considered include information-giving methods to start the process, Arbinger's Outward Mindset, Design Thinking, and Gallery Walk. Introducing a strategy framework and then opening up to a facilitative process may also be an example of this method. To ascertain whether deciding together is appropriate, the following questions may be helpful:

- Will other people's ideas be accepted?
- Have the appropriate stakeholders been targeted? Who needs to be part of the process?
- Are the aims clear, and have constraints and acceptable boundaries been identified?
- Who will have the authority to implement agreed actions?
- Are people of varying levels accessible?

4.4 Shared action approach

Trust and a common vision are required when using deciding and acting together in partnership. It is important to consider the desired goals and whether these are realistic when a shared action approach is envisaged. Goals may range from increasing the impact of actions or projects, building the capacity of the participants, and building working relationships to increasing ownership of a process.

Various methodologies and tools may help the facilitator, who has the right attitude to facilitate rather than lead or direct, as well as the requisite experience, such as Art of Hosting, Circle, and Deep Democracy. Interim structures like working parties and steering groups are methods that can be used as a focus for decision-making and accountability, and longer-term structures through which people can work together. To ascertain whether acting together is appropriate, the following questions may be helpful:

- Are there clear goals and how flexibly can these goals be pursued?
- Have potential partners been identified? Is there any evidence that they share similar goals and are interested in a partnership to achieve it?
- Do the relevant stakeholders trust each other and will they be prepared to share power?
- Is the time and commitment needed available?

4.5 Supporting independent action approach

Supporting independent action and organisational initiatives means helping others develop and carry out their plans. This is the most empowering approach, provided people want to do things for themselves. Shared ownership is high and the outcome is open-ended. The process must be owned by, and move at the pace of, those who are going to take the action. This most facilitative approach is appropriate when there is a commitment to empower individuals or groups within the organisation, people are interested in starting and running an initiative, and supporting conditions (i.e., culture, hierarchy, time) permit this approach to work.

In deciding which methodologies to use, the challenge is to think through what the purpose of the group is and what role they would like the facilitator to play. Change Lab, Future Search, and Open Space are examples of appropriate methodologies for this approach. Team coaching can often be considered a form of shared action facilitation or independent action facilitation. Workshops can also be considered to assist in creating a shared vision, plan actions, and mobilise resources. Workshops may include team-building exercises, cross-visits to similar projects, seminars for project leaders, and interim structures like working parties and steering groups, as well as longer-term structures controlled by organisational interests.

To ascertain whether an approach of supporting independent action is appropriate, the following questions may be helpful:

- Is there an understanding of the different interests in the organisation/project and their needs?
- Have existing organisational project teams been consulted?
- Will the approach be supported?
- Is the role of the facilitator clear, and is there a person with the necessary skills and resources to facilitate the process?

In this instance, individuals in the group will usually have experience, expertise, and wisdom in a particular area, and the facilitator's role is to help surface this wisdom. The facilitator might assist the group to explore specific information or themes around beliefs and behaviours. This role is complex in nature because surfacing deep insight has the potential to invoke debate, conflict, unconscious bias, and numerous other unconscious patterns of thought and/or behaviour that may be triggered

from painful parts of an individual's or group's past experiences. Therefore, this role requires the facilitator to have a deep understanding of individual and group systems psychodynamic processes, to be able to provide psychological safety to the group, and to challenge the group where needed. While complex, if done well, the facilitator has the greatest power to sustain and embed effective group functioning. This approach may draw upon several established strategies, including active listening, probing, and paraphrasing (Bloom et al., 2005).

This approach will add significant value when the group:

- Has significant information or knowledge related to the required outcome;
- Has had training in the specific topic before;
- Has the skills and experience to move forward;
- Has in-depth understanding of the context; and
- Needs to focus or clarify their ideas (Bloom et al., 2005).

5. Mapping facilitation approaches and methodologies

5.1 Map of facilitation approaches

With the understanding that facilitation can vary from being instructional to being fully supportive of taking independent action (i.e., low shared ownership to high shared ownership), and that the focus on task can also vary from being low (emergent) to high (convergent), the decision of which approach to take to support a facilitation process becomes significantly easier. Subsequently, understanding which methodologies may be appropriate for each approach eases the next level of decision-making. Figure 3 maps the approaches along two axes, namely shared ownership and task focus.
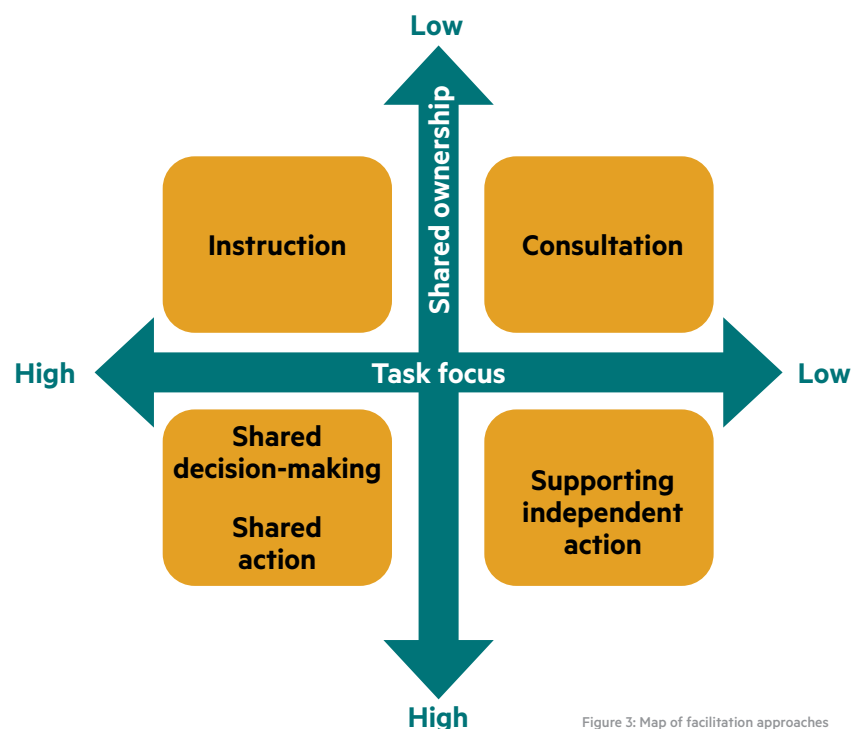
Low

Shared ownership

Instruction

Consultation

High ← Task focus → Low

Shared decision-making

Shared action

Supporting independent action

High

Figure 3: Map of facilitation approaches

5.2 Facilitation methodologies

Table 1 outlines some of the most commonly used methodologies and provides a description of each, including what outcomes it is designed to meet, when it is most appropriate, and whether the facilitator needs particular skills, experience, accreditations, or certifications. It is useful to note that a facilitation process may also be entirely customised to meet the needs of a group or an organisation, which might mean that no specific methodology is used, but rather that a bespoke process is designed. Nevertheless, the key features would still apply: A specific outcome is agreed upon (that reflects the needs of the group), it involves a group of people, it is process-based, and the role of facilitator adapts to the needs of the group. The facilitator may draw on a methodology as outlined in Table 1, may integrate a few approaches, or may customise the process completely to serve the intended outcome. GIBS has created a bespoke form of facilitation called learning integration that is designed to support a group of learners in integrating and making sense of the learning from a programme in a process that meets the group's contextual needs at the time. Learning integration supports the retainment of new knowledge and skills, as well as the application of learning beyond the programme. The learning integration facilitation can also draw from some of the approaches in Table 1, but in its essence is a facilitation approach customised to learning integration needs.

Methodology*	What is it?	What does it do?	When to use?	Who to use?
Action Learning	Groups of 6–10 people work through a process of scoping, researching, and analysing a problem or opportunity to recommend solutions for action.	Surface potential solutions that may otherwise not have been accessible.	When working with a real issue can meet both organisational needs and provide a learning opportunity. *In consultation and shared action approaches.***	Facilitators with a solid knowledge in Action Learning methodology, such as the World Institute for Action Learning (WIAL) training. *Training and accreditations available, but not compulsory.*
Appreciative Inquiry	A process that focuses on identifying the best of what is already in an organisation or community, and finding ways of enhancing this to pursue future goals and possibilities.	Allows for change or developmental growth based on positive inquiry, and for the voice of people at all levels of a system to be heard and included.	For strategic planning, community development, systems change, organisational redesign, vision development, team cohesion, or any other process in which there is a need for change and development. *In consultation and shared decision-making approaches.***	Facilitators with a solid knowledge in Appreciative Inquiry processes. Training and accreditations available, but not compulsory.
Arbinger's Outward Mindset	A five-step process: assess, train, implement, re-assess, and sustain specific needs and objectives.	Leads to mindset and paradigm shifts.	When there is a need for teams to become more cohesive and have a shared language, for large transformation initiatives, and when there are large-scale changes in an organisation. *In a shared Decision-making approach.***	A facilitator trained and certified by the Arbinger Institute.

Methodology*	What is it?	What does it do?	When to use?	Who to use?
Art of Hosting	A suite of conversational processes to assist people to face and address challenges based on powerful questions.	Provides the capacity to respond more quickly and consciously to opportunities, challenges, and changes.	For decision-making, problem-solving, and coming up with innovative ideas. *In shared action and supporting independent action approaches.**	A trained Art of Hosting practitioner.
Brainstorming	A collaborative technique where people think creatively and generate innovative ideas.	Allows the exploration of new ideas and challenges traditional thinking, permits people to share ideas without the fear of being corrected or challenged, and separates the creation of ideas from the evaluation activity.	When there is a need to generate a wide range of potential ideas that are not bound by usual barriers, a need to involve everyone, and a need to create energy. *Suitable to consultation and shared decision-making approaches.**	Anyone can facilitate the steps of a Brainstorming process and there are many processes available online.
Change Lab	A multi-stakeholder change process based on dialogue and designed to generate shared commitment and collective understanding to deliver solutions to complex social problems through the application of the U-process.	Surfaces the wider system issue that may not have been apparent and once the new ideas and insights have been generated, the Lab team stays together to pilot the new initiatives.	In situations where there is a particular problem with no obvious solution. All stakeholders need to be committed to effecting change and have an understanding that they cannot solve the problem on their own. *In a supporting independent action approach.**	Due to the complexity, deeply skilled facilitators are required. Generon Consulting is the key organisation behind Change Lab.
Circle	A gathering to practise deep listening and thinking together as a group.	Allows people to slow down and listen to each other's sharing of thoughts, perspectives, and wisdom. Each person's voice is valued and honoured. Long pauses of silence are an accepted part of the conversation.	For support in respective leadership practices, to solve a specific challenge, and to find the best way to deal with a specific need. *In shared decision-making and shared action approaches.**	Experienced facilitators comfortable with holding a space for a group of people to connect.
Deep Democracy	A methodology that assumes there is wisdom in the minority voice and in the diversity of viewpoints. The process works with the unconscious in groups and focuses on roles and relationships rather than on individuals.	The approach helps to surface and give expression to what is otherwise left unsaid and bring the minority voice into the decision-making process.	Situations where there has been resistance to addressing issues and there is a need to bring it into the open to move on (e.g., polarised views or people being labelled by others). *In a shared action approach**	Facilitator trained in Deep Democracy.
Design Thinking	A non-linear, iterative process that teams use to understand customers, challenge assumptions, redefine problems, and create innovative solutions to prototype and test. Involves five phases: empathise, define, ideate, prototype, and test.	Allows thinking outside the box, helps to uncover new ways to meet customer needs, and generates solutions.	To tackle problems that are hard to define or unknown, also known as wicked problems. *In consultation and shared decision-making approaches.**	A facilitator with a knowledge of the Design Thinking process.

Methodology*	What is it?	What does it do?	When to use?	Who to use?
Focus Groups	This technique is used to collect information through group interaction. The group comprises a small number of carefully selected people who discuss a given topic.	Focus Groups help to identify and explore how people think and behave, and to surface answers to "why", "what", and "how" questions.	To unravel complex processes, identify customer needs, explore a concept, explore and identify issues of satisfaction (or dissatisfaction), and explore perceptions. *In a consultation approach.***	Any facilitator with knowledge of running Focus Groups.
Future Search	A principle-based planning meeting that is task-focused and brings the whole system together in one room or many parallel rooms.	Through working with the past, present, and desired future, common ground is discovered, and the group makes concrete action plans without having to ask permission from anyone who is not present.	When there is a need to agree on a future vision and develop action plans for implementation in a few days. *In a supporting independent action approach.***	Experienced facilitators will be able to apply the structured approach publicly available. Future Search training is available.
Gallery Walk	A participative process to engage a large group of people in productive conversations about specific topics by using the walls in a room to gain a lot of input from many people in a short period.	Creates a safe and anonymous setting for a conversation and allows people to build on each other's ideas.	When there is a need to explore a wide range of topics with a large number of people in a limited time, to energise a group and include everyone in the conversation, and when there is a topic that people may not want to talk about in open conversation. *In consultation and shared decision-making approaches.***	Anyone can set up and facilitate a Gallery Walk process.
Gestalt	Gestalt is a German word meaning "whole", "pattern" or "form". A Gestalt process is focused on an appreciation of the whole. The process works with self-awareness and what is happening from one moment to the next.	It is a powerful way to effect change in individuals, teams, and across organisations, and leads to an increased awareness and understanding of the present; of one's immediate thoughts, feelings and behaviour; and of patterns of relating.	For change processes with groups, teams, and organisations. *In shared decision-making and shared action approaches.***	A Gestalt practitioner.
Open Space	A process where groups, large or small, self-organise to effectively deal with complex issues in a very short time. Participants create and manage their own agenda of parallel working sessions around a central theme of strategic importance.	The greater the diversity, the higher the potential for real breakthrough and innovative outcomes. The process allows for the move from planning to action, where real action is facilitated by people stepping in and taking responsibility for what is important to them.	When there is conflict, complexity, a huge diversity of participants, and the answer is needed yesterday. It is important that participants are personally invested and have a real sense of urgency. *In a supporting independent action approach.***	Any experienced facilitator with a knowledge of a wide range of methods and tools that can be used within this process (e.g., Appreciative Inquiry and World Café).

Methodology*	What is it?	What does it do?	When to use?	Who to use?
Pro-Action Café	A process of action-orientated, creative, and inspirational conversations based on the concepts of World Café and Open Space.	Allows participants to share questions and receive input from others. Brings out creativity and deeper input (questions, knowledge, experience) from others and moves quickly from questions to actions.	When there is a need to tap into the collective intelligence of a group and/or to identify what is behind an issue. When solutions and actions to implement are needed in a short space of time. *In consultation and shared decision-making approaches.***	Any facilitator who also has experience managing depth processes.
Storysharing	A process where people can bring individual personal experiences of their choice to speak to theme.	Knowledge is shared and relationships are strengthened. Stories are also useful in research and in advocacy work, because they highlight the facts and statistics.	To deepen relationships in a team, to share knowledge and experiences, to practise listening and questioning skills, and to create understanding of complex issues existing in another person's life. *In a supporting independent action approach.***	An experienced facilitator who can set a safe container for the process.
Tavistock	A process to identify and work with behavioural and cultural drivers from a systemic perspective to enable change and development. The process integrates theory and practice models from systems psychodynamics, social anthropology, political sciences, complexity theory, and the creative arts.	Assists in organisation design and organisational change and development initiatives. Moreover, it drives culture change and addresses issues of alignment, such as between strategy and operations.	To surface unconscious team, organisational, and system dynamics to identify and address patterns of conflict within and between teams, organisations, and systems to work through the change process. *In shared action and supporting independent action approaches.***	A practitioner trained and certified by the Tavistock Institute.
Theory U	A process of moving through a U-shaped social change process based on the work of Otto Scharmer. There are five movements in the process: co-initiating, co-sensing, co-presencing, co-creating, and co-evolving.	Provides a learning process that enables groups to tune into future possibilities and accomplish them effectively.	When there are complex problems, to foster innovation, and to facilitate deep change. *In shared action and supporting independent action approaches.***	A facilitator with a knowledge of Theory U. Training available, but not compulsory.
Thinking environment®	A process based on the assumption that everything we do in life depends on the quality of the thinking we do first. Founded by Nancy Kline, the Thinking Environment® is underpinned by the Ten Components® (or behaviours) to enable high-quality independent thinking.	Leads to concrete positive business results; produces high-quality ideas in less time; shows team members how to resolve difficulties more easily and understand each other better; and leaves people more enthusiastic about their work together, more hopeful about successes ahead, and with greater buy-in to decisions made by the group.	To surface the value of diversity and inclusiveness throughout an organisation, to recognise people's strengths and achievements, and when there is a need for responsible risk-taking. *In consultation and shared decision-making approaches.***	A facilitator trained in the Thinking Environment®.

Methodology*	What is it?	What does it do?	When to use?	Who to use?
World Café	A process set up like a café, where people are guided to move to new tables as part of a series of conversational rounds concerning questions that matter to them. With each move, a table host remains behind, sharing the essence of the table's conversation. As people move to other tables, cross-pollination of the conversations takes place.	Allows people to think together and intentionally create new, shared meaning and collective insight, come up with ideas to make decisions, solve problems, or have a common understanding.	To generate input, share knowledge, stimulate innovative thinking, and explore action possibilities around real-life issues and questions. The café is less useful if there is a predetermined outcome, there is a desire to convey one-way information, or a group is working on detailed implementation plans. *In consultation and shared decision-making approaches.**	A facilitator with a knowledge of World Café methodology.

Notes: *This is not an exhaustive list; there are many other methodologies to explore. **The application of approaches suggested are where these methodologies are commonly applied, but methodologies may be adapted and applied across the range of approaches.

5.3 Map of facilitation approaches and methodologies

Figure 4 shows a summary view of which methodologies can be applied to the range of approaches.

Speech
Meeting
Presentation
Lecture
Training Session

Due to the traditional nature, these methods were not detailed.

Low

Shared ownership

Instruction

Consultation

Appreciative Inquiry
Brainstorming
Design Thinking
Focus Groups
Gallery Walk
Pro-Action Café
Thinking Environment
World Café

High ◄— **Task focus** —► **Low**

Appreciative Inquiry
Arbinger Outward Mindset
Brainstorming

Gallery Walk
Gestalt
Pro-Action Café
Thinking Environment

Shared decision-making

Shared action

Supporting independent action

Change Lab
Future Search
Open Space
Storysharing
Tavistock
Theory U

Art of Hosting
Circle
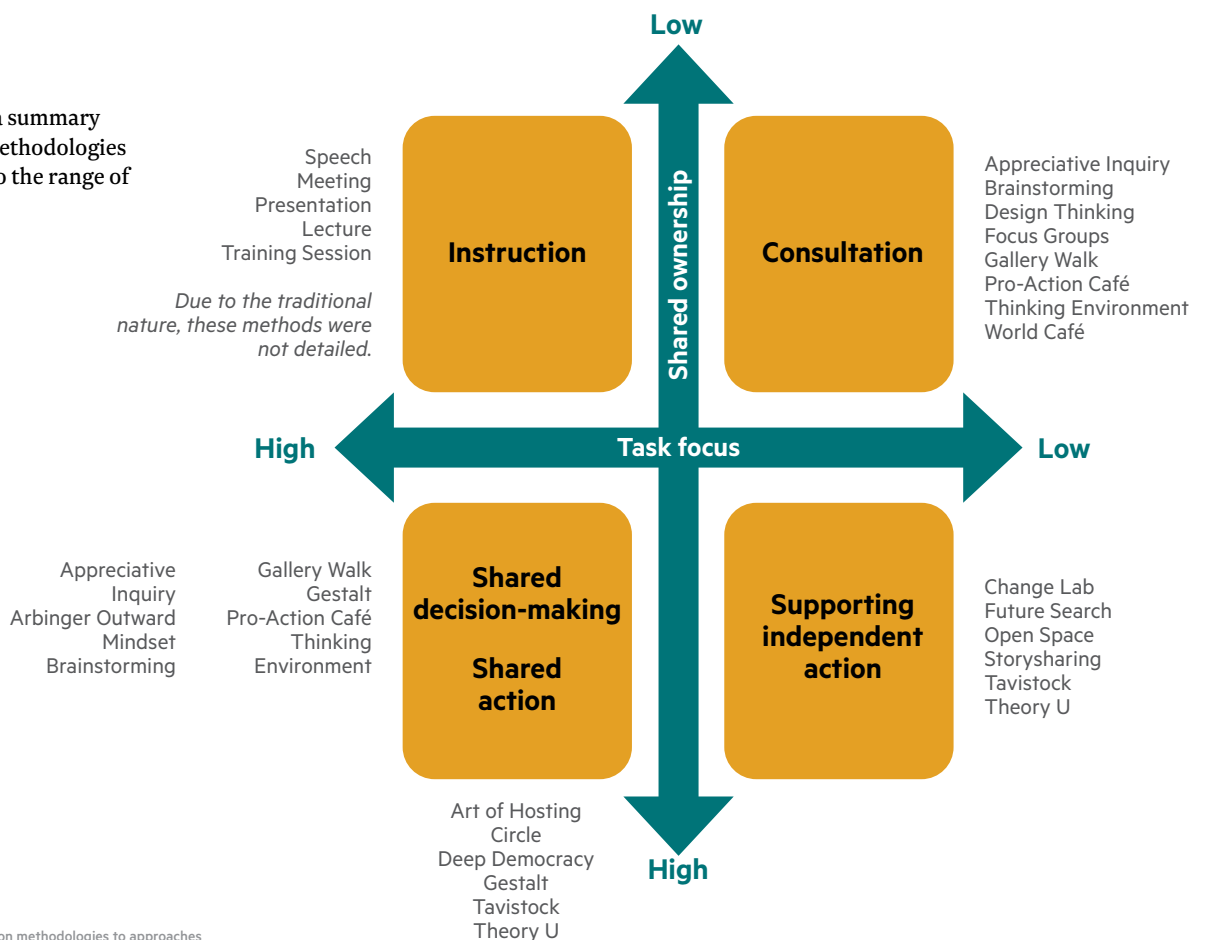Deep Democracy
Gestalt
Tavistock
Theory U

High

Figure 4: Map of facilitation methodologies to approaches

Note: A facilitation process may be entirely customised to meet the needs of a group or an organisation, which might mean that no specific methodology is used, but rather that a bespoke process is designed.

5.4 Useful facilitation tools

Table 2 outlines some of the most commonly used facilitation tools and provides a description of each, including when it is most appropriate and what can be achieved by using it. These tools can be used in conjunction with any of the methodologies and approaches, and are dependent on what needs to be achieved during the facilitation and as an outcome of the facilitation.

Tool*	What is it?	What does it do?	When to use?
Decision grid	A matrix of important criteria to assess ideas and select the best option.	Allows each potential idea to be objectively evaluated against the same set of criteria in a participative process.	To bring objectivity and rigour to a decision-making process.
Exit survey	An anonymous survey posted near the exit to evaluate the climate/ satisfaction levels of a group.	Provides information regarding the effectiveness of a meeting or a workshop so that concerns can be addressed or explored, allows people to release anxieties or concerns, channels concerns into solutions, and empowers a group to resolve its own issues.	At a midpoint in a meeting or a workshop, when there is a need to uncover hidden concerns.
Force field analysis	A structured analysis tool to identify the opposing forces in a situation.	Clarifies resources available and obstacles present, surfaces problems that need to be solved, and helps groups make effective decisions.	When a balanced assessment of a situation is required, and when all factors influencing a situation need to be identified.
Gap analysis	A planning tool to identify action steps to reach a specific goal.	Allows a realistic review of the status quo and creates a shared view of what needs to be done to eliminate the gap and reach the goal.	When there is a need to clarify the gap between the current situation and the desired situation.
Multivoting	A prioritising tool to effectively order a long list of ideas/tasks.	Quickly clarifies priorities in a democratic and participative way, and allows a group to work through a list without having to discuss and compare items.	After idea-generating discussions for team task prioritisation and allocation.
Root cause analysis	A systematic tool to identify the causes of a situation and not get stuck on the symptoms – for example, by using cause-and-effect charting or a fishbone diagram.	Leads to comprehensive solutions.	When there is a need to understand the causes of problems clearly.
SOAR analysis	A strengths-based analysis tool covering Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results.	Creates an upward spiral of thought, action, and behaviour; and encourages creativity and innovative thinking.	To set a positive tone for planning conversations and to reframe a current situation in positive terms in situations where there may be low morale or motivation.
SWOT analysis	An analysis tool covering Strengths, Weaknesses, Threats, and Opportunities	Creates a balanced view of both positives and negatives that need to be considered for planning purposes.	To provide a foundation to work from and to gather data from the environment.
The 5 whys	A simple and powerful tool to understand the cause of a problem.	It uncovers the causes of a problem step by step and gets past the symptoms to the deeper underlying issues.	When a problem needs to be analysed and understood.
Troubleshooting	A tool to identify potential barriers to find ways to overcome them.	Ensures that action plans are well designed to improve the probability of follow-through, less opportunity for surprises related to unknown circumstances, and therefore more control over the work to be done.	When a group is poor at following through on actions, when it is important to identify barriers to success, and to create action plans to address it.
Visioning	A participative approach to goal-setting.	Allows people to put their own ideas forward, everyone is involved and heard, creates energy, and leads to clarifying a common goal.	When there is a need for members of a group to share their ideas to create a collective statement of the desired future.

Table 2: Commonly used facilitation tools

Notes: *This is not an exhaustive list; there are many other tools to explore.

Conclusion

Facilitation is a discipline that provides organisations, groups, and individuals with opportunities to continuously adapt and develop over time, thus leading to growth and development, positive change, and transformation. Facilitation is a means to support dialogue and engage diverse audiences in business and community, allowing collective responsibility and achievement. This paper explored the range of facilitation approaches with the intention of supporting the selection process of which approach to choose along the spectrum of possible application of methodologies, which expertise to select, and to encourage the use of facilitation to promote and sustain positive change.

Perhaps the most effective way to grab a person's attention is to ask them to solve a problem.

~ Ellen Burns-Johnson

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