

Certificate Program in Group Facilitation

Continuing and Professional Education

DePaul University

Comments on Design, Sequence and Assessment

There are seven two-day seminars or modules in the series that comprise the Group Facilitation Certificate Program. They are:

1. Introduction to the Art and Science of Group Facilitation
2. Facilitating Basic Team Work
3. Facilitating Project Action Teams
4. Technology Supported Facilitation
5. Facilitating Adult Learning
6. Facilitating Organizational Change
7. Advanced Facilitator Applications

A participant may take any seminar at any time in the sequence. In order to receive the DePaul Certificate in Professional Achievement, a total of five of the seven seminars will have to be completed, with the first two being required and remaining three could be selected (as electives) from the other five.

A certificate of completion will be given for attendance at each seminar. To receive the Certificate of Professional Achievement, however, will require participant's attendance at five modules. In addition, the participant will have assembled a "portfolio" throughout their participation in the program that will be used to assist in the assessment for the certificate.

The "portfolio" will include a section on each seminar in the program as well as a documentation called "Statement of Experience" described later. For each seminar, the participant will record: an introductory statement of their intent for the seminar, any documentation gathered during the seminar, a reflective analysis of the seminar, and a concluding statement. The introductory statement expresses the participant's orientation to the seminar and is reveals the participant's thinking on what constitutes an appropriate learning experience, on what the participant's learning needs are, and on how the seminar can be seen to contribute to those needs. Providing a list of questions, for example, proves useful on the front end of any seminar, such as:

- What do you hope to learn from this seminar?
- What kinds of assignments do you expect?
- What kinds of learning experience best accommodate your learning needs?

The documentation element will include the seminar workbook provided by the trainers with any notes the participant took recorded within it. The workbook constitutes the "artifact" of the seminar. The reflective component is the heart of the portfolio segment of each seminar, giving participants the opportunity to interrogate their learning experience in light of the goals they've developed in the introductory statement. Participants may simply provide a brief narrative account. The concluding statement asks participants to discern aspects that are consistent with their initial orientation as articulated in the introductory statements and the extent to which the seminar and the portfolio contributions have been instrumental in their development as critically reflecting practitioners.

When delivering the elective seminars in the series, modules 3 -7 , each one will contain time in the program for participant sharing and reflection on their “real world” facilitating experiences for the purposes of feedback and skill enhancement. A certificate candidate participant will capture the feedback received and record it in their portfolio.

Commensurate with certificate programs in professional achievement given through DePaul’s Continuing and professional Education (CEP), the assessment criteria used coincides with the Level 2 in the Kilpatrick Training program Evaluation scheme. The participants’ portfolio will be used to determine the knowledge, attitudes and skills the participant has attained. The key question be asked of the participant’s portfolio will be; “What principles and techniques of facilitation were understood and absorbed by the participant?”

The assessment component for the Certificate will also entail a candidate to provide a “Statement of Experience” in which the candidate identifies four events they have facilitated during the time they began the certificate program as part of their portfolio. They would list for each a description of the event or workshop, the length of the workshop, and their role and responsibilities in the workshop. They would also include comments as to which skills they acquired from the program they employed during their engagements. The candidate would also provide a letter from their client verifying their role as facilitator in the event

For one of these events a candidate facilitated, the candidate would compose an essay that would be a summary of the event (between 1500 to 2500 words in length) that would answer such questions as:

1. What were the workshop’s objectives?
2. What was the agenda for the workshop?
3. How many participants did that workshop include?
4. What were your responsibilities as the facilitator of the event?
5. Description of the workshop which would highlight the following:
 - a. Their preparation for the event
 - b. Session design considerations/approach
 - c. Facilitation techniques used
 - d. Tools, equipment, visual aids, etc. used
 - e. Results achieved
 - f. Difficulties encountered and their solutions/lessons learned

In assessing these aspects of the portfolio, the assessor will refer to the International Association of Facilitators (IAF) “Foundational Facilitator Competencies” as a criterion. The IAF is the leading professional association within the field of group facilitation and have established their own “Certified Professional Facilitator” assessment and process, which the DePaul CPE process draws upon, thus easing a CPE certificate holder to better fulfill the criteria for the IAF certification as well.

The IAF’s Foundational Facilitator Competencies

- A. Create Collaborative Client Relationships
 1. Develop working partnerships
 2. Design and customize applications to meet client needs
 3. Manage multi-session events effectively
- B. Plan Appropriate Group Processes
 1. Select clear methods and processes that

2. Prepare time and space to support group process
- C. Create and Sustain a Participatory Environment
1. Demonstrate effective participatory and interpersonal communication skills
 2. Honor and recognize diversity, ensuring inclusiveness
 3. Manage group conflict
 4. Evoke group creativity
- D. Guide Group to Appropriate and Useful Outcomes
1. Guide the group with clear methods and processes
 2. Facilitate group self-awareness about its task
 3. Guide the group to consensus and desired outcomes
- E. Build and Maintain Professional Knowledge
1. Maintain a base of knowledge
 2. Know a range of facilitation methods
 3. Maintain professional standing
- F. Model Positive Professional Attitude
1. Practice self-assessment and self-awareness
 2. Act with integrity
 3. Trust group potential and model neutrality

DePaul CPE will contract with Millennia to provide a mentor-assessor to each certificate candidate early in their journey to provide guidance, serve as a coach, as well as final assessment. Upon submission of the portfolio and its acceptance by the assessor, the assessor will formally notify DePaul CPE of the candidates have met all the prerequisites for the granting of the Certificate of Professional Achievement in Group Facilitation.