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### **Procedural technology of public relations in tourism: facilitation**

In the article the practical aspects of using in the tourism business a procedural technology of public relations such as facilitation are discussed; the model and the basic steps of a process of facilitation were described; as one of the main tools of the facilitation process the «brainstorming» and its types and especially its application in practical activities of enterprises in the article are discussed in details; the classification of the facilitators, as well as those professional skills, which specialists of this profile should have were described.

*Key words:* public relations, facilitation, tourism industry, tourist enterprise, the recipient country, «brainstorming», the facilitator.

Tourism is now one of the world's largest industries and one of its fastest growing economic sectors. For many countries tourism is seen as a main instrument for regional development, as it stimulates new economic activities. Tourism may have a positive economic impact on the balance of payments, on employment, on gross income and production, but it may also have negative effects, particularly on the environment.

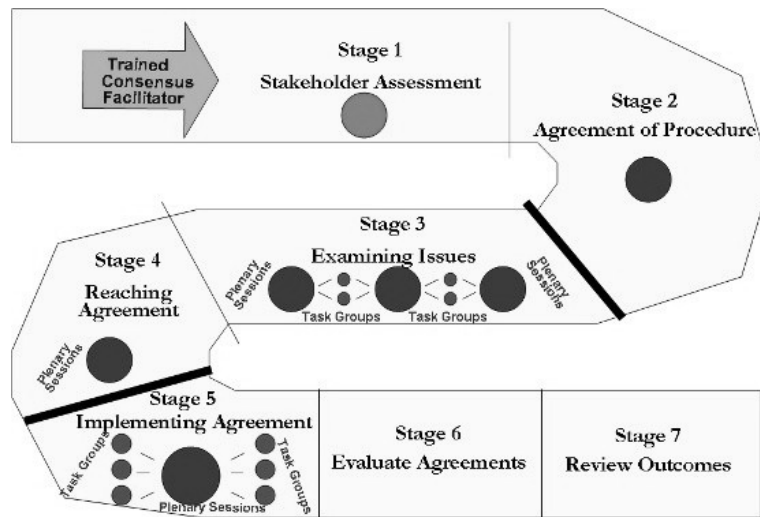
For the most successful operation of tourism enterprises in the recipient country, companies need to use different effective technologies of Public Relations. In this special role may have the process of facilitation is a nonstandard management style, simplifies and accelerates the achievement of the goal of the tourist enterprises.

Facilitation is a process that trainers, team builders, meeting leaders, managers, and communicators use to add content, process, and structure to meet the needs of an individual, group or team. Facilitation is provided by a person, called a facilitator, who leads pairs or groups to obtain knowledge and information, work collaboratively, and accomplish their objectives (Picture 1).

To facilitate means to make something easier. It is a broad term that includes a variety of skills and functions. Working with a group of people can often be difficult, thus, it is often useful to have a facilitator manage the process of discussion and problem solving.

In a typical facilitation process, the facilitator is primarily involved in guiding a group through one or more meetings. The organization or group itself is responsible for deciding who to invite and how to follow up the facilitated sessions. In some cases, as in a facilitated Strategic Planning process, this works well.

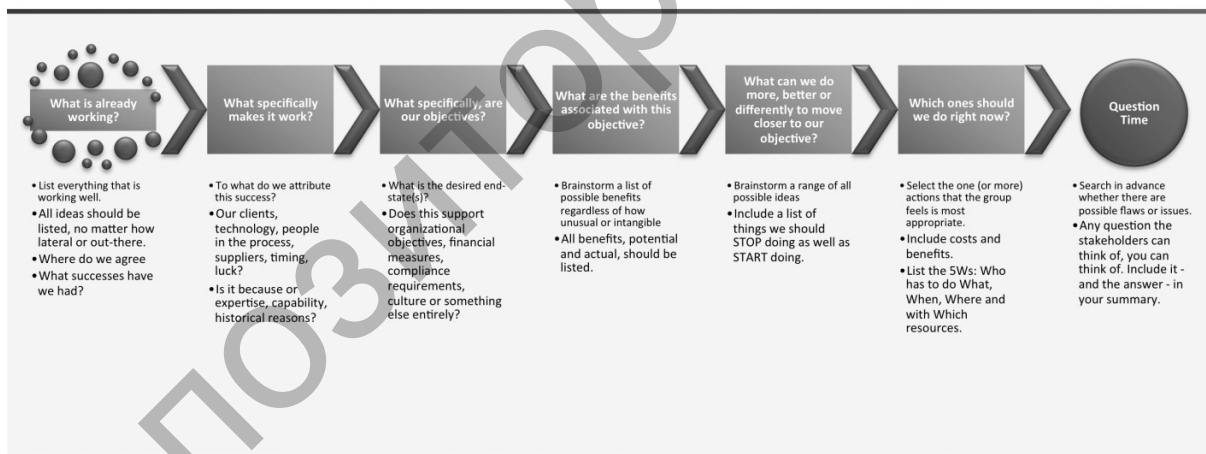
Highly complex issues (such as tourism industry, environmental cleanup, land use, human rights, minority inclusion or community-engagement processes) that require the long-term involvement of a diverse group of multi-sectorial stakeholders, require a more comprehensive approach. For these situations, scientists created the Consensus Facilitation Model (Picture 1). This is a process led by a highly skilled facilitator who designs, organizes and convenes the stakeholders, focuses them on specific issues leading to agreements and continues to be involved throughout the implementation phase, monitoring compliance and reconvening the stakeholders as needed (Picture 2) [1; 200–203].



Picture 1. Consensus Facilitation Process

Facilitation for groups or teams is provided by internal or external people who are skilled in:

1. Presenting content and information.
2. Designing and formulating a process that helps a group achieve its objectives.
3. Providing an appropriate structure to a meeting, training or team building session, or other work event, so that the mission of the group is accomplished in the session.
4. Promoting shared responsibility for the outcome of the meeting.
5. Drawing forth from participants the answers to their questions, necessary decisions, and solutions to problems [2; 118–119].



Picture 2. 7 Step of the Facilitation Process

With similar objectives to those listed for group facilitation, facilitation for individuals is most frequently provided when two or more employees are experiencing conflict, disagreement, a need to set mutual goals, or the desire to debrief a project, process, or experience.

A skilled facilitator can provide the structure, content and process needed by the individual employees to reach a mutually satisfying solution to their issues.

Facilitation is a learned skill that comes most comfortably to individuals who demonstrate characteristics such as:

1. Strong group leadership skills.
2. Deep knowledge about group processes and structures.
3. Knowledge of group and interpersonal dynamics and an understanding of verbal and nonverbal communication.

4. The ability to creatively and participatively present training and team building content.
5. Empathy for people and their situations.
6. Powerful listening and communication skills
7. The ability to structure group interventions and events to produce the desired results for the group.

Facilitation is a powerful tool that is used to help individuals and groups more effectively and efficiently achieve their purpose. Under the leadership of a skilled facilitator (one who provides facilitation services), meetings, team building sessions, and training classes achieve results not possible without facilitation. Left to their own devices, group and team participants often lack the skills, permission, and support needed to effectively facilitate their own work processes.

Consider in more detail the basic steps of the facilitation process and also the brainstorming, which is the one of the main tools of the facilitation.

Brainstorming is a group or individual creativity technique by which efforts are made to find a conclusion for a specific problem by gathering a list of ideas spontaneously contributed by its member (s). Alex Faickney Osborn popularized the term in the book «Applied Imagination» (1953). Osborn claimed that brainstorming was more effective than individuals working alone in generating ideas, although more recent research has questioned this conclusion. Today, the term is used as a catch all for all group ideation sessions.

Advertising executive Alex F.Osborn began developing methods for creative problem solving in 1939. He was frustrated by employees' inability to develop creative ideas individually for ad campaigns. In response, he began hosting group-thinking sessions and discovered a significant improvement in the quality and quantity of ideas produced by employees. Osborn outlined the method in his 1948 book «Your Creative Power» on chapter 33, «How to Organize a Squad to Create Ideas».

Osborn claimed that two principles contribute to «ideative efficacy» these being:

1. Defer solving.
2. Reach for quantity.

Following these two principles were his four general rules of brainstorming, established with intention to:

1. reduce social inhibitions among group members;
2. stimulate idea generation;
3. increase overall creativity of the group.

«Focus on quantity»: this rule is a means of enhancing divergent production, aiming to facilitate problem solving through the maxim quantity breeds quality. The assumption is that the greater the number of ideas generated, the greater the chance of producing a radical and effective solution.

«Withhold criticism»: in brainstorming, criticism of ideas generated should be put 'on hold'. Instead, participants should focus on extending or adding to ideas, reserving criticism for a later 'critical stage' of the process. By suspending judgment, participants will feel free to generate unusual ideas.

«Welcome unusual ideas»: to get a good and long list of ideas, unusual ideas are welcomed. Looking from new perspectives and suspending assumptions can generate them. These new ways of thinking may provide better solutions.

Combine and improve ideas: Good ideas may be combined to form a single better good idea, as suggested by the slogan «1+1=3». It is believed to stimulate the building of ideas by a process of association.

Osborn notes that brainstorming should address a specific question; he held that sessions addressing multiple questions were inefficient.

Further, the problem must require the generation of ideas rather than judgment; he uses examples such as generating possible names for a product as proper brainstorming material, whereas analytical judgments such as whether or not to marry do not have any need for brainstorming.

Osborn envisioned groups of around 12 participants, including both experts and novices. Participants are encouraged to provide wild and unexpected answers. Ideas receive no criticism or discussion. The group simply provides ideas that might lead to a solution and apply no analytical judgment as to the feasibility. The judgments are reserved for a later date (Picture 3) [3].

Consider the basic techniques are used in this instrument.

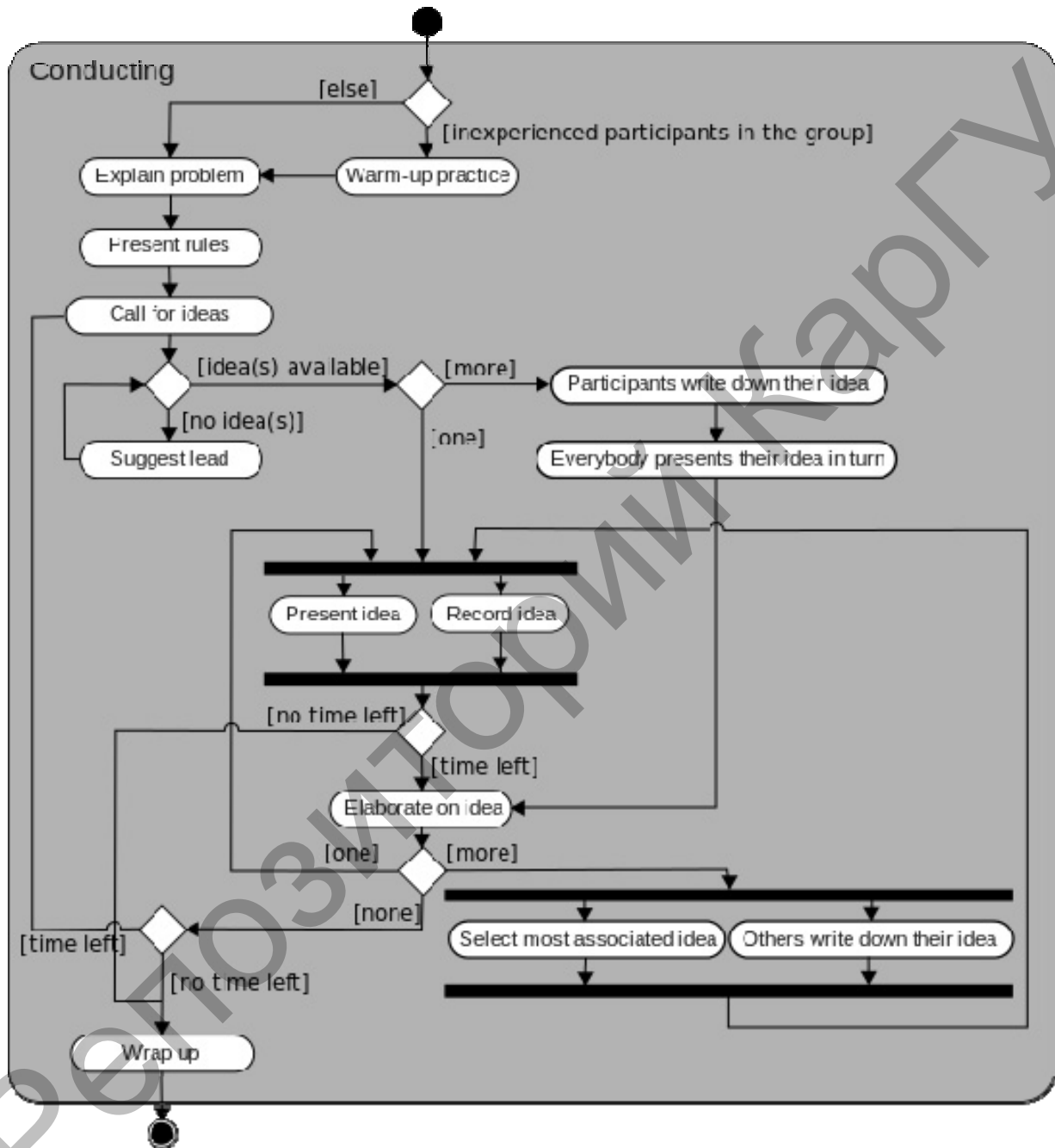
1. Nominal group technique.

Participants are asked to write their ideas anonymously. Then the facilitator collects the ideas and the group votes on each idea. The vote can be as simple as a show of hands in favor of a given idea. This process is called distillation.

After distillation, the top ranked ideas may be sent back to the group or to subgroups for further brainstorming. For example, one group may work on the color required in a product. Another group may work on

the size, and so forth. Each group will come back to the whole group for ranking the listed ideas. Sometimes ideas that were previously dropped may be brought forward again once the group has re-evaluated the ideas.

It is important that the facilitator be trained in this process before attempting to facilitate this technique. The group should be primed and encouraged to embrace the process. Like all team efforts, it may take a few practice sessions to train the team in the method before tackling the important ideas.



Picture 3. Brainstorming activity conducting

## 2. Group passing technique.

Each person in a circular group writes down one idea, and then passes the piece of paper to the next person, who adds some thoughts. This continues until everybody gets his or her original piece of paper back. By this time, it is likely that the group will have extensively elaborated on each idea.

The group may also create an «idea book» and post a distribution list or routing slip to the front of the book. On the first page is a description of the problem. The first person to receive the book lists his or her ideas and then routes the book to the next person on the distribution list. The second person can log new ide-

as or add to the ideas of the previous person. This continues until the distribution list is exhausted. A follow-up «read out» meeting is then held to discuss the ideas logged in the book. This technique takes longer, but it allows individuals time to think deeply about the problem.

### 3. Team idea mapping method.

This method of brainstorming works by the method of association. It may improve collaboration and increase the quantity of ideas, and is designed so that all attendees participate and no ideas are rejected.

The process begins with a well-defined topic. Each participant brainstorms individually, then all the ideas are merged onto one large idea map. During this consolidation phase, participants may discover a common understanding of the issues as they share the meanings behind their ideas. During this sharing, new ideas may arise by the association, and they are added to the map as well. Once all the ideas are captured, the group can prioritize and/or take action.

### 4. Breaking the rules technique.

In this method, participants list the formal or informal rules that govern a particular process. Participants then try to develop alternative methods to bypass or counter these established protocols.

### 5. Directed brainstorming.

Directed brainstorming is a variation of electronic brainstorming (described above). It can be done manually or with computers. Directed brainstorming works when the solution space (that is, the set of criteria for evaluating a good idea) is known prior to the session. If known, those criteria can be used to constrain the Ideation process intentionally.

In directed brainstorming, each participant is given one sheet of paper (or electronic form) and told the brainstorming question. They are asked to produce one response and stop, then all of the papers (or forms) are randomly swapped among the participants. The participants are asked to look at the idea they received and to create a new idea that improves on that idea based on the initial criteria. The forms are then swapped again and respondents are asked to improve upon the ideas, and the process is repeated for three or more rounds.

In the laboratory, directed brainstorming has been found to almost triple the productivity of groups over electronic brainstorming.

### 6. Guided brainstorming.

A guided brainstorming session is time set aside to brainstorm either individually or as a collective group about a particular subject under the constraints of perspective and time. This type of brainstorming removes all cause for conflict and constrains conversations while stimulating critical and creative thinking in an engaging, balanced environment.

Participants are asked to adopt different mindsets for pre-defined period of time while contributing their ideas to a central mind map drawn by a pre-appointed scribe. Having examined a multi-perspective point of view, participants seemingly see the simple solutions that collectively create greater growth. Action is assigned individually.

Following a guided brainstorming session participants emerge with ideas ranked for further brainstorming, research and questions remaining unanswered and a prioritized, assigned, actionable list that leaves everyone with a clear understanding of what needs to happen next and the ability to visualize the combined future focus and greater goals of the group.

### 7. Individual brainstorming

«Individual brainstorming» is the use of brainstorming in solitary. It typically includes such techniques as free writing, free speaking, word association, and drawing a mind map, which is a visual note taking technique in which people diagram their thoughts. Individual brainstorming is a useful method in creative writing and has been shown to be superior to traditional group brainstorming.

Research has shown individual brainstorming to be more effective in idea-generation than group brainstorming.

### 8. Question brainstorming

This process involves brainstorming the questions, rather than trying to come up with immediate answers and short-term solutions. Theoretically, this technique should not inhibit participation, as there is no need to provide solutions. The answers to the questions form the framework for constructing future action plans. Once the list of questions is set, it may be necessary to prioritize them to reach to the best solution in an orderly way. «Questorming» is another term for this mode of inquiry [4; 98–103].

Although the brainstorming can take place online through commonly available technologies such as email or interactive web sites, there have also been many efforts to develop customized computer software that can either replace or enhance one or more manual elements of the brainstorming process.

Early efforts, such as Group Systems at University of Arizona or Software Aided Meeting Management (SAMM) system at the University of Minnesota, took advantage of then-new computer networking technology, which was installed in rooms dedicated to computer supported meetings. When using these electronic meeting systems (EMS, as they came to be called), group members simultaneously and independently entered ideas into a computer terminal. The software collected (or «pools») the ideas into a list, which could be displayed on a central projection screen (anonymized if desired). Other elements of these EMSs could support additional activities such as categorization of ideas, elimination of duplicates, assessment and discussion of prioritized or controversial ideas. Later EMSs capitalized on advances in computer networking and Internet protocols to support asynchronous brainstorming sessions over extended periods of time and in multiple locations.

Proponents such as Gallupe et al. argue that electronic brainstorming eliminates many of the problems of standard brainstorming, including production blocking (i.e. group members must take turns to express their ideas) and evaluation apprehension (i.e. fear of being judged by others). This positive effect increases with larger groups. A perceived advantage of this format is that all ideas can be archived electronically in their original form, and then retrieved later for further thought and discussion. Electronic brainstorming also enables much larger groups to brainstorm on a topic than would normally be productive in a traditional brainstorming session.

Computer supported brainstorming may overcome some of the challenges faced by traditional brainstorming methods. For example, ideas might be «pooled» automatically, so that individuals do not need to wait to take a turn, as in verbal brainstorming. Some software programs show all ideas as they are generated (via chat room or e-mail). The display of ideas may cognitively stimulate brainstormers, as their attention is kept on the flow of ideas being generated without the potential distraction of social cues such as facial expressions and verbal language. Electronic brainstorming techniques have been shown to produce more ideas and help individuals focus their attention on the ideas of others better than a brain writing technique (participants write individual written notes in silence and then subsequently communicate them with the group). The production of more ideas has been linked to the fact that paying attention to others' ideas leads to non-redundancy, as brainstormers try to avoid replicating or repeating another participant's comment or idea [5; 443–448].

Some web-based brainstorming techniques allow contributors to post their comments anonymously through the use of avatars. This technique also allows users to log on over an extended time period, typically one or two weeks, to allow participants some «soak time» before posting their ideas and feedback. This technique has been used particularly in the field of new product development, but can be applied in any number of areas requiring collection and evaluation of ideas.

Some limitations of EBS include the fact that it can flood people with too many ideas at one time that they have to attend to, and people may also compare their performance to others by analyzing how many ideas each individual produces (social matching).

Some research indicates that incentives can augment creative processes. Participants were divided into three conditions. In Condition I, a flat fee was paid to all participants. In the Condition II, participants were awarded points for every unique idea of their own, and subjects were paid for the points that they earned. In Condition III, subjects were paid based on the impact that their idea had on the group; this was measured by counting the number of group ideas derived from the specific subject's ideas. Condition III outperformed Condition II, and Condition II outperformed Condition I at a statistically significant level for most measures. The results demonstrated that participants were willing to work far longer to achieve unique results in the expectation of compensation.

A good deal of research refutes Osborn's claim that group brainstorming could generate more ideas than individuals working alone. For example, in a review of 22 studies of group brainstorming, Michael Diehl and Wolfgang Stroebe found that, overwhelmingly, groups brainstorming together produce fewer ideas than individuals working separately.

Several factors can contribute to a loss of effectiveness in group brainstorming.

Blocking: because only one participant may give an idea at any one time, other participants might forget the idea they were going to contribute or not share it because they see it as no longer important or relevant. Further, if we view brainstorming as a cognitive process in which «a participant generates ideas (generation

process) and stores them in short-term memory (memorization process) and then eventually extracts some of them from its short-term memory to express them (output process)», then blocking is an even more critical challenge because it may also inhibit a person's train of thought in generating their own ideas and remembering them.

**Collaborative fixation:** exchanging ideas in a group may reduce the number of domains that a group explores for additional ideas. Members may also conform their ideas to those of other members, decreasing the novelty or variety of ideas, even though the overall number of ideas might not decrease.

**Evaluation apprehension:** evaluation apprehension was determined to occur only in instances of personal evaluation. If the assumption of collective assessment were in place, real-time judgment of ideas, ostensibly an induction of evaluation apprehension, failed to induce significant variance.

**Free-riding:** individuals may feel that their ideas are less valuable when combined with the ideas of the group at large. Indeed, Diehl and Stroebe demonstrated that even when individuals worked alone, they produced fewer ideas if told that their output would be judged in a group with others than if told that their output would be judged individually. However, experimentation revealed free writing as only a marginal contributor to productivity loss, and type of session (i.e., real vs. nominal group) contributed much more.

**Personality characteristics:** extraverts have been shown to outperform introverts in computer-mediated groups. Extraverts also generated more unique and diverse ideas than introverts when additional methods were used to stimulate idea generation, such as completing a small-related task before brainstorming, or being given a list of the classic rules of brainstorming.

**Social matching:** one phenomenon of group brainstorming is that participants will tend to alter their rate of productivity to match others in the group. This can lead to participants generating fewer ideas in a group setting than they would individually because they will decrease their own contributions if they perceive themselves to be more productive than the group average. On the other hand, the same phenomenon can also increase an individual's rate of production to meet the group average [6; 506–508].

Because the, as we have said earlier, a facilitator is someone who helps a group of people understand their common objectives and assists them to plan to achieve them without taking a particular position in the discussion. Some facilitator tools will try to assist the group in achieving a consensus on any disagreements that preexist or emerge in the meeting so that it has a strong basis for future action.

There are a variety of definitions for facilitator:

1. «An individual who enables groups and organizations to work more effectively; to collaborate and achieve synergy. He or she is a 'content neutral' party who by not taking sides or expressing or advocating a point of view during the meeting, can advocate for fair, open, and inclusive procedures to accomplish the group's work».

2. «One who contributes structure and process to interactions so groups are able to function effectively and make high-quality decisions. A helper and enabler whose goal is to support others as they achieve exceptional performance».

3. «The facilitator's job is to support everyone to do their best thinking and practice. To do this, the facilitator encourages full participation, promotes mutual understanding and cultivates shared responsibility. By supporting everyone to do their best thinking, a facilitator enables group members to search for inclusive solutions and build sustainable agreements».

Consider some types of facilitators:

1. **Business facilitators** work in business, and other formal organizations but facilitators may also work with a variety of other groups and communities. It is a tenet of facilitation that the facilitator will not lead the group towards the answer that he/she thinks is best even if they possess an opinion on the subject matter. The facilitator's role is to make it easier for the group to arrive at its own answer, decision, or deliverable. This can and does give rise to organizational conflict between hierarchical management and theories and practice of empowerment. Facilitators often have to navigate between the two, especially where overt statements about empowerment are not being borne out by organizational behaviors.

2. **Training facilitators** are used in adult education. These facilitators are not always subject experts, and attempt to draw on the existing knowledge of the participant (s), and to then facilitate access to training where gaps in knowledge are identified and agreed on. Training facilitators focus on the foundations of adult education: establish existing knowledge, build on it and keep it relevant. The role is different from a trainer

with subject expertise. Such a person will take a more leading role and take a group through an agenda designed to transmit a body of knowledge or a set of skills to be acquired. (See tutelary authority above.)

3. **Conflict resolution facilitators** are used in peace and reconciliation processes both during and after the conflict. Their role is to support constructive and democratic dialogue between groups with diverse and usually diametrically opposite positions. Conflict resolution facilitators must be impartial to the conflicting groups (or societies) and must adhere to the rules of democratic dialogue. They may not take parts or express personal opinions. Their most usual role is to support groups develop shared vision for an ideal future, learn to listen to each other, and understand and appreciate the feelings, experiences and positions of the 'enemy'.

4. **Wraparound facilitators** are facilitators in the social services community. They originally served disabled teens, which were transitioning into adulthood. Now they include facilitators serving children between the ages of 0–3 years who are in need of services. Outside the meetings, the facilitator organizes meetings, engages team members and conducts follow through. During meetings the facilitator leads and manages the team by keeping the participants on track and encourages a strength-based discussion addressing the child's needs. The facilitator encourages equal participation among team members.

5. **Small group facilitation.** Facilitators can be appointed to accommodate the engagement of participants of small and medium sized groups who aim to work through a particular agenda. In order to ensure the successful working of the group, the facilitator is appointed in place of what would once have been a chairperson's role. Along with other officers the facilitator is appointed at the group's AGM to fill the role for the year ahead. Groups that have adopted this model include prayer groups, men's groups, writing groups and other community organizations.

The basic skills of a facilitator are about following good meeting practices: timekeeping, following an agreed-upon agenda, and keeping a clear record. The higher-order skills involve watching the group and its individuals in light of group dynamics. In addition, facilitators also need a variety of listening skills including ability to paraphrase; stack a conversation; draw people out; balance participation; and make space for more reticent group members. It is critical to the facilitator's role to have the knowledge and skill to be able to intervene in a way that adds to the group's creativity rather than taking away from it [7].

A successful facilitator embodies respect for others and a watchful awareness of the many layers of reality in a human group. In the event that a consensus cannot be reached then the facilitator would assist the group in understanding the differences that divide it.

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## Туризмдегі паблик рилейшенздің рәсімдік технологиялары: фасилитациялау

Мақалада туристік бизнесте паблик рилейшенздің фасилитациялау сияқты рәсімдік технологиясын қолданудың тәжірибелік аспектілері қарастырылды; фасилитациялау үрдісін іске асырудың негізгі қадамдары мен моделі сипатталған; басты құралдардың бірі ретінде жан-жақты «миға шабуыл» және оның түрлері, сонымен бірге оны кәсіпорынның тәжірибесінде қолданудың ерекшеліктері зерттелді; фасилитатордың жіктемесі ұсынылып, бейінді маман иеленуге тиіс кәсіби қасиеттер белгіленді.

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## Процедурные технологии паблик рилейшенз в туризме: фасилитация

В статье рассматривается практический аспект использования в туристском бизнесе такой процедурной технологии паблик рилейшенз, как фасилитация. Описаны модель и основные шаги реализации процесса фасилитации. В качестве одного из главных инструментов подробно рассматриваются «мозговой шторм» и его виды, а также особенности его применения в практической деятельности предприятий; предложена классификация фасилитаторов. Описаны те профессиональные качества, которыми специалист данного профиля должен обладать.

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