

## Community Group Meeting Facilitation

### Tips and Tricks (also refer to butchers' paper facilitation pics)

- Have an acronym list.
- Create working groups with working group leads.
- Rotate minute taker (someone from group commented that they have done this for years and it reduces individual workload within their group and gives opportunity to actively involve more members)
- Hold back and think
- Identify needs of each meeting and prioritise them
- Use humour to keep interest, enthusiasm and also tensions at bay
- When needed defer to someone more experienced to respond to questions
- Alternate which ideas are discussed rather than dismiss ideas in the room
- Define together and then regularly review 'rules of engagement'
- 5 finger voting
  1. I love it
  2. I like it
  3. I'm neutral (vote is abstained)
  4. I have questions / need more info before I can vote
  5. I object
- Look for non-verbal acknowledgements
- Prepare for the meeting
- When conducting remote meetings use Zoom. Be sure to check your quality of internet connection before the meeting and make sure everyone knows the meeting ID and phone in number.
- Do a check in round at the beginning of the meeting. (assists with bringing in focus and everyone becoming an active part of the meeting)

Questions written on sticky notes	Some Answers
<p>What are good ways to maintain / increase participation before next meeting?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing minutes in a timely fashion</li> <li>• Appreciating everyone's attendance at the last meeting</li> <li>• Sending out agenda requests in a timely fashion</li> <li>• Sending out the final Agenda ahead of the next meeting (ideally a min of 24hours before if possible)</li> <li>• Facilitating effective meetings where everyone feels respected and valued, so people feel like coming back.</li> <li>• Setting tasks that are achievable for the team between meetings so small wins are</li> </ul>

	regularly being celebrated
At what point do you call that the meeting is not working and close the meeting / or step down from facilitating?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do your best to hang in there until the end, even if it is a train wreck and address the issues that felt insurmountable in the meeting, after the meeting</li> <li>• This is very personal and also depends on what the challenge is. Safety first is a good motto. Plus having a good balance of recognising that conflict is a sign that people care deeply</li> </ul>
How do you enable others in a group to step up and become doers where the group has a 'hero' leader who others are used to supporting?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The hero leader has a key responsibility here in finding ways to welcome and value others input</li> <li>• Giving people tasks that they can lead on and feel a sense of personal agency can assist with this</li> <li>• Appreciating people's input</li> </ul>
What do you do with a viewpoint that won't budge / make an amendment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding ways to ask about, listen to, understand and empathise with the need behind the viewpoint can reveal options for negotiation</li> <li>• Welcoming objections can go a long way with people feeling valued and then being willing to negotiate.</li> <li>• Setting prior group agreements with regards to 'valid' reasons to block a decision, and what will happen if the 'block' falls outside of this, can assist with addressing the viewpoint and either embracing it or dismissing it in order to be able to move forward</li> </ul>
How do you facilitate active engagement at different levels for different skills and capacity to engage?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on people's strengths and capacity and engage them with relevant tasks. There is always something everyone can contribute. Then appreciate each person's contribution. The confidence and good feeling that comes from meaningful and appreciated contribution leads to more and often leads to a growing of capacity and skill development</li> <li>• Can be great to partner people on tasks, with the most experienced leading on the</li> </ul>

	task and the other supporting. This helps to build capacity in the team.
How do you deal with bullies?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a group agreement about this that everyone in the team has assisted in developing and consenting to, and then refer to when needed.</li> <li>• Remind the team from time to time about the group agreements</li> <li>• Share group agreements with new people</li> <li>• Demonstrate non-violent communication</li> </ul>

## Community Engagement for Community Energy Projects

### Tips and Tricks

- Define timeframes to give you a framework to determine success (and celebration moments)
- Find ways to understand community needs and wants (e.g survey)
- Clarify the actions that are needed to achieve the needs and wants

Questions written on sticky notes	Some Answers
What do you choose first? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery partner</li> <li>• Site</li> <li>• Delivery model</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This varies depending on the project. E.g if a community group own a hall, then it would mostly likely be... site, delivery model, delivery partner OR if the community group have a great relationship with a delivery partner, together they may then go looking for a site then delivery model, or the other way around, choose a delivery model that they are very passionate about and then find a site to suit.</li> </ul>
How do you find the balance between giving all members equal opportunity to contribution and having a vision that can be achieved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remember people having a voice in decision making is a key value of community energy projects, embracing this can be half the battle</li> <li>• Get creative, as the dynamics involved in this challenge are usually unique to each community group.</li> <li>• Set prior group agreements on how to do this</li> <li>• Do surveys etc with plenty of time to reply</li> </ul>

	<p>and then vote on certain people within the group to have the authority to make the final decision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set timeframes on when decision will be made.</li> </ul>
<p>How do you facilitate active engagement at different levels for different skills and capacity to engage?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure you find out clearly what people would like to contribute and what skills and capacity they have. They make different folders for willing volunteers related to different tasks e.g cake maker extraordinaire for fundraising stalls, social media wizzes to get the word out, epic engineer minds for business model design (remember the range of tasks required in building a successful community energy project is vast, therefore so is the range of skills and capacities needed)</li> <li>• Remember to keep it fun and appreciate, appreciate, appreciate</li> </ul>
<p>So much technical knowledge is required in this area. How do you share this knowledge or include / empower non-technical people?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be generous and patient</li> <li>• Be willing to speak about it in layman's terms where possible</li> <li>• Welcome interested folks who want to learn more about the technical side of things to join meetings about it where appropriate. (Take them under your wing)</li> <li>• Share your notes</li> <li>• Remember it's not all about the technical stuff and appreciate what those who don't hold this knowledge contribute.</li> </ul>