

The Advanced Facilitator

Facilitating is a demanding undertaking, whether it's an ongoing peer-to-peer roundtable, a one-time, high-stakes meeting or a large group interaction. During the process you may encounter anxiety, frustration, anger and bruised egos from group members. In this advanced course, experienced facilitators will gain a deeper understanding of the psychological and social forces that affect their ability to be effective. You'll become more confident at managing both small and large group dialogue — and be able to address a wider range of group needs.



Participant feedback

"The foundation's training has strengthened my facilitating skills. I learned more in the three days than I did an entire semester of my Ph.D. program. Facilitators need to learn to see and feel beyond the words being said at the table and watch for subtle clues in body language and tone. For the health and sustainability of the group, that sometimes means calling attention to the elephant in the room.

"Becoming an expert in facilitation not only requires a dedication to the process, but it also requires the ability to be fully present in the moment and have a deeper understanding of human nature."

— Karen Widmar, director of small business and entrepreneurship at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College

"The foundation's facilitator training is incredibly important to us. The Edward Lowe experience manages to create a common bond, though people may attend different sessions in different years.

"There is no other place in the world like the Edward Lowe Foundation. It's incredibly peaceful and a great space for learning. And there is no one like Dino Signore. In addition to his expertise in facilitation and group process, he really understands entrepreneurs and our organization's mission."

— Susan Diamond, vice president of chapter chairs and chief learning officer at Women Presidents' Organization

What you'll learn

- The difference between content (what people are saying) and process (what they're not saying and the underlying meaning of their behavior).
- How to ask the right questions and refine your listening skills.
- How conflict manifests itself in different ways and how to transform negative conflict into productive conflict.
- How to become the group's barometer and recognize when the weather is changing and whether group dialogue is effective or ineffective.

Why it matters

- You'll be able to better interpret group behavior, recognize unexpressed needs and instinctively know when the timing is right to drill down deeper into an issue.
- The role of a facilitator is never neutral. It's all about appropriate intervention. You can't take a group where it doesn't want to go, so it's critical to learn how to stay with the group — and when the time is right for a shift.
- Facilitation is a different process than training. Training is about teaching someone to do something; facilitation is about bringing out the best thinking from a group.