

Traditional Facilitation vs. Dynamic Facilitation

(www.DynamicFacilitation.com)

	Traditional Facilitation	Dynamic Facilitation
The thinking process	<i>... is primarily decision-making.</i> Discussion components follow an order, which may include dialoging, visioning, defining the problem, gathering data, analyzing, brainstorming, weighing the options, selecting a strategy, planning, etc. Key is the maintenance of psychological distance between thinker and the problem. It's transactional thinking.	<i>... is primarily choice-creating.</i> People face a difficult issue creatively and collaboratively, seeking what's best for all. Whatever comes to mind is incorporated into the conversation until there is a shift or breakthrough where all just know what to do. It's a heartfelt, creative, transformational dynamic of thinking.
The issue	<i>... is solvable.</i> Issues that are "impossible" are avoided. Complex issues are broken into smaller, more manageable pieces.	<i>... is high-care.</i> It's OK if the issue is impossible, complex, conflicted or personal. The caring energy leads to "the real problem" and what to do.
The facilitator	<i>... follows the agreed process.</i> S/he helps people keep agreed-to guidelines of behavior and is neutral in a conflict, helping all be heard equally. S/he uses interventions and exercises like brainstorming to stimulate different perspectives, and promotes thoughtful deliberation to build decisions.	<i>... follows the energy.</i> S/he supports people to speak authentically, S/he helps them voice what is arising for them — solutions, frustrations, concerns, passion for change etc. In this dynamic, s/he helps people achieve shifts and breakthroughs through reflection.
Participants	<i>... self-manage.</i> They are expected to restrain their passions and prejudices in favor of polite listening and thoughtful remarks. Diverse passionate views hinder agreement.	<i>... are authentic.</i> They speak what they really think, from the heart. The DF'er takes responsibility for assuring safety and integration. Diversity and passion make breakthroughs possible.
Results are	<i>... group decisions.</i> Consensus is sought by addressing each person's concerns. Failing consensus, decisions are made through voting or other means. Commitment and team-spirit are often built separately.	<i>... unanimous choices.</i> These choices are often win/win breakthroughs. The process yields greater understanding, commitment to the result, personal growth, trust, and a strong, empowered sense of "We."
The time required	<i>... is often more.</i> The time feels productive because issues are smaller, the process is manageable and the progress is track-able, until hitting a snag.	<i>... is often less.</i> With DF progress may feel slower because the issue is larger and the process more chaotic, yet shifts and breakthroughs provide leaps forward to whole new perspectives.
A big benefit is	<i>... progress can be very quick.</i> The traditional facilitator helps people manage progress using an accepted pattern of thought.	<i>... DF can solve impossible issues.</i> Often a deep systemic perspective is created, where one out-of-the box action can solve many issues at once.
Relationship between the two:	<i>... Choice-creating may arise naturally.</i> In a deliberation, for example, people may start speaking from the heart, or in a dialog start discussing solutions.	<i>... Traditional facilitation may be called on.</i> For instance, traditional facilitation can help elected representatives in an open meeting, where it's not safe to be authentic.