

Workshop Components

There are many ways to design a workshop, using a variety of techniques and activities to engage participants in a meaningful, interesting learning experience. The following structure can assist you in designing a workshop.

- 1. Preparation** - Before you begin, prep-work.
 - Be clear about the objectives of each session, whether a full day or 40 minutes. What is the goal of the time you have with participants and how do the activities get you to that goal?
 - Know what materials you will need for the activities you will be implementing.
 - Connect with co-facilitator and review roles, if applicable.
- 2. Introduction** - Although the introduction is the shortest part of the workshop, it involves several vital pieces which set the tone for your entire workshop.
 - Introduce yourself, your co-facilitator(s), guests, and—if necessary—the participants to one another.
 - Introduce the topic, but don't feel that you need to explain everything in advance.
 - During the introduction you may also choose to review the agenda with participants as well as the goals of the workshop.
 - Lastly, have the group establish group norms/agreements (e.g. things they promise to do so to ensure that the workshop flows smoothly and everyone enjoys the experience). The group agreements set the tone for your time with participants. Common guidelines include:
 - “one mic” (only one person talks at a time)
 - respect or safe space (make sure that participants respect each other and the space by not using derogatory language, no verbal/physical/emotional attacking of participants, agreeing to disagree when necessary)
 - participate at your level (share your voice and be as actively engaged in the activities as possible understanding that your participation is voluntary)
 - limited usage of cell phones/digital devices
- 3. Warm Up/Icebreaker** - A warm up activity usually gets everyone immediately involved, bringing the group together to begin the workshop. The warm up should help participants to get to know one another, build trust, and focus on the subject at hand. Sometimes, key concepts are introduced.
- 4. Transition** - Transitioning from one activity to the next by simply explaining the connection between the activities. This is done so it seems like a smooth continuation of the activities as opposed to a choppy switch to the next topic/activity.

5. **Main Activity** - This is the core of the workshop, which may consist of one or more activities, each designed to meet the workshop objectives. A main activity helps participants learn key concepts or skills and explore an issue through an experience. Activities can include role plays, small group discussions, brainstorming, webs, working in pairs, art activities, and cooperative group games.
6. **Group Processing/Debriefing** - A group discussion allows participants to analyze what they've experienced, share perspectives on main ideas, and summarize what they've learned. Processing questions are often based on the objectives and can get participants to think more deeply about issues.
7. **Closure** - A closing activity allows the group to summarize key ideas, share last reflections, relax after an intense workshop, or simply end with a sense of bonding and closure. It's important to send people away feeling hopeful and "finished for the day."
8. **Facilitator Debrief**: Soon after the session, while you can still easily recollect specific activities and participant behaviors, it's useful to take time to debrief with yourself (and/or a co-facilitator). Review feedback forms/surveys so that you can make any needed adjustments for next time.