

What is Virtual Facilitation Skill?

Remote facilitation is not just the future: it’s happening right now. As companies become more and more distributed, teams and organizations will spend more time in online workshops and remote meetings.

Synchronous facilitation (same time, different place) - Online meetings and workshops are great examples bringing remote team members together to discuss relevant topics in real time. Asynchronous facilitation (different time, different place) - Email communication is asynchronous in nature. Although the respondents can reply immediately, they do not have to.

Benefits of Virtual Facilitation

- Inclusivity – even the shyest team member
- Extended co-creation – sharing experiences before, during, after and in between workshops.
- Once place for discussions - Sharing ideas, comments, thoughts, and conclusions at the same time
- Reduced logistical effort - saves time and makes it easier to focus on the process

How to Improve Virtual Facilitation?

1. Set a common goal – make sure that the team is working towards a common goal created together.
2. Manage expectations - ask them about the participants’ expectations to help you plan future interactions and manage expectations.
3. Design the process carefully - each and every interaction has its unique purpose, and that it’s your job to find the right facilitation method to match that purpose.
4. Act on feedback - By constantly collecting feedback from the participants, you’ll be able to adjust to their pace and find better ways to facilitate the process.
5. Tools and Tech

<p>→ Pre- and post-workshop questionnaires Free survey tools like SurveyMonkey, Typeform, and Google Forms and great for creating short questionnaires.</p>	<p>→ Resource management SharePoint, OneDrive, Google Drive, and Dropbox allow you to share documents and materials with the participants.</p>
<p>→ Virtual meetings If it’s virtual meeting you’re after, tools like Skype, Hangouts, or Zoom can go a long way.</p>	<p>→ Documentation PowerPoint and Google Slides are great ways to report your findings and share information with the participants.</p>
<p>→ Instant messaging Messaging tools like Yammer, Slack, and Flowdock are great for activating participants between workshops.</p>	<p>→ Project management Project management tools like Trello, Basecamp, and JIRA help you document your progress and manage the schedule.</p>