



How to Create a Participant Centered Group Session Guide

Step 1: Identify the session focus

Target Audience: Who is the primary audience the session is designed for? Secondary audience?

Session Goal: Why are you offering the session to your target audience? What is the primary focus of the session?

Key Content Points: What key information would the participants need or want to know by the end of the session?
(Aim for three main points or less.)

- Point 1:
- Point 2:
- Point 3:

Session Objectives: What is the session for? What do you want participants to be able to do by the end of the session?
What would they have to do in order to achieve the session goal?

(Limit the scope by estimating 1 objective for every 10 to 15 minutes scheduled.)

- Objective 1: By the end of the session, participants will (insert action verb)
- Objective 2:
- Objective 3:

Step 2: Plan the session

Learning Activities: How will participants meet the session objectives? Use the table in Step 3 to draft ideas for learning activities.

Draft Session Title: What will you call your session so people want to attend? Will it help market the session?



Location Considerations: Where will this session be held? How does that impact the session? What will you need to do to make the environment conducive to learning?

Materials Needed and Their Location: What supplies or learning materials will you need to complete the activities in the session? Where are they normally located or stored?

- Audiovisuals or PowerPoint?
- Written materials?
- Activity supplies (e.g. pens, paper)?

Preparation Needed: What tasks need to be done prior to the session to be ready to go when the participants arrive?

- Food purchase or prep?
- Gather materials or make copies?
- Room set up?

Time Needed: When will the session be offered? How long should be scheduled for this session?

Facilitator Considerations or Expertise Needed: What special expertise, if any, does this session require of the facilitator? What content knowledge and/or facilitation skills might be needed to handle what could be brought up during this session? What resources might the facilitator find useful to review before the session?

Step 3: Refine your session outline to ensure activities meet your objectives

Use the table to outline the content and learning activities in your session that ensure you meet your session objectives.

- What is the logical order for the activities and content?
- What are key phrases, open ended questions, introductions, or transitions you want to include to keep on track?
- What key concepts or major content do you want to be sure is covered?
- What are the instructions for activities you are planning?



- **?** This symbol can identify key open ended questions to be used to facilitate discussion and involve participants.

Key points to remember about open ended questions:

- Are asked in a way that is open and inviting;
- Are asked without expectation of a set, correct answer;
- Explore participant’s thoughts, feelings, or plans;
- Invite dialogue and engage participants.

Facilitator notes: What tips or hints would you offer to someone else using this session guide?

Time	Learning activity (Supports participant centered content/instruction) - Key Open Ended Questions – Important concepts to cover	Objective covered
2 min	<p>Opening the session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome/greeting • Introduce yourself • Set the stage (time, topic, safe environment) • Permission to start 	
5 min	<p>Warm-up activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite participation and focus the conversation • Instructions for activity • ? Open ended question? • Transition to next topic/activity 	
X min	<p>Activity 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ? Open ended question? • List important concepts that you want to remember to address if not brought up during discussion or activities 	



Time	Learning activity (Supports participant centered content/instruction) - Key Open Ended Questions – Important concepts to cover	Objective covered
X min	Activity 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ? Open ended question? • Learning activities address Adult Learning (Respect, Immediacy, Safety, Engaging) • Learning activities focus on different learning styles (See, Hear, Do, Read) 	
X min	Optional Activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ? Open ended question? • Add activities as needed 	
X min	Closing the session: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of key points in session • Opportunity for last questions or reflections from participants • Identify resources for more information after session • Affirm and express confidence in their ability to succeed • Opportunity to evaluate session • Logistics for voucher pick-up • Thanks for attending and participating 	

Step 4: Facilitator review – Assess how it went and what would you change

- How well does the session support the “talk less, listen more” philosophy? (Lecture less, involve more)
- What have I included in the activities to help participants be involved in their own learning?
- How do I allow for participants to have a potential ah-ha moment?
- How do I include time for the participants to digest and reflect on what was covered?
- What was the participant’s reaction to the session?
- Consider making changes to the guide as you experiment. After you try it, ask yourself - What went well? What would I change next time?

