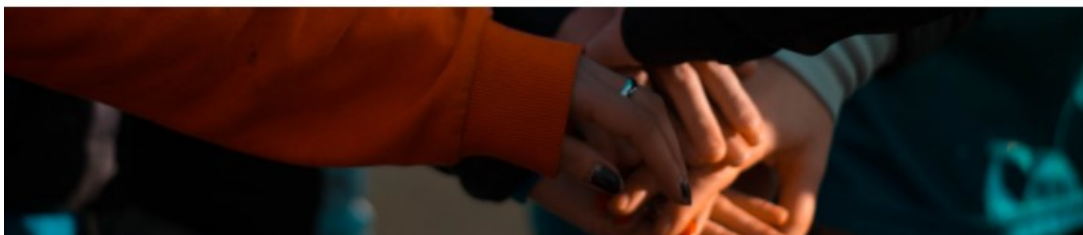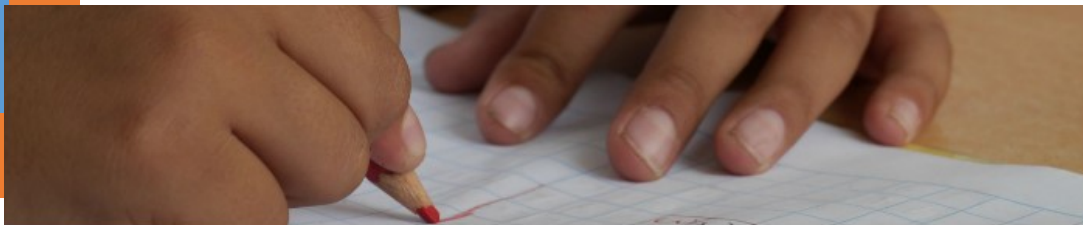# TYES Frontline Workers' Toolkit Series

The Pedagogy of
Facilitation

Methods and Techniques to Transform Spaces

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INTRODUCTION

This toolkit was created by **Letecia Rose** in partnership with the City of Toronto through the **Toronto Youth Equity Strategy (TYES)** and **Youth Employment Partnerships (YEP).**

The **Toronto Youth Equity Strategy** aims to build resiliency and access to supportive systems for youth most vulnerable to involvement in serious violence and crime (MVP youth). TYES includes 28 recommendations and 110 actions the City of Toronto will take to provide better services and outcomes for vulnerable youth. TYES was adopted unanimously by City Council in February 2014.

The **TYES Creative Report** can be found online at: toronto.ca
TYES is on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram at: TorontoTYES

Youth Employment Partnerships is a neighbourhood-based youth employment network that offers job placement and staffing services to organizations throughout Toronto. Supporting hundreds of employers and thousands of Toronto youth annually, YEP connects employers with local or city wide employment services. Striving to improve employment retention,

YEP has the flexibility to offer subsidized or unsubsidized job placements to all eligible Toronto employers with many additional benefits and supports to job seekers and employers for each new hire during the first few months of employment.

Letecia Rose is an award-winning facilitator and community engagement specialist passionate about creating equitable spaces. Working in the area of diversity, social justice and community engagement for the past fifteen years, Letecia has trained thousands of stakeholders across Ontario and has created spaces for individuals to have courageous conversations about issues of discrimination and inequity.

Letecia is a city-builder working along-side groups like Civic Action as a Fellow and has been recognized by the United Way and Toronto Foundation for her contributions to communities. As the Founder and Lead Facilitator of Skill Market, she continues to create memorable spaces, workshops and events for individuals who aspire to gain the skills that will impact their organizations and communities.

PED·A·GO·GY
/ˈpedəˌɡäjē/
Noun

The methods, techniques or approaches implemented in instructional settings. For the purposes of this toolkit, it refers to the strategies used to enable facilitator and participants to relate to each other and transfer ideas and skills.

As a Facilitator, your content is only as good as your ability to translate or transfer the learnings to the group you are working with. Solid pedagogy allows a Facilitator to connect concepts, promote self-directed learning while effectively reaching disengaged audiences and inspiring them to challenge the status quo. It is a great method to actively create safe spaces for strangers to connect, network and collaborate. One really powerful activity can allow a person to feel validated, seen and heard.

Your methods are your most powerful asset.

Henry Ford once said, "under pressure, the mouth speaks when the brain is disengaged, and, sometimes unwittingly, the gearshift is in reverse when it should be in neutral."

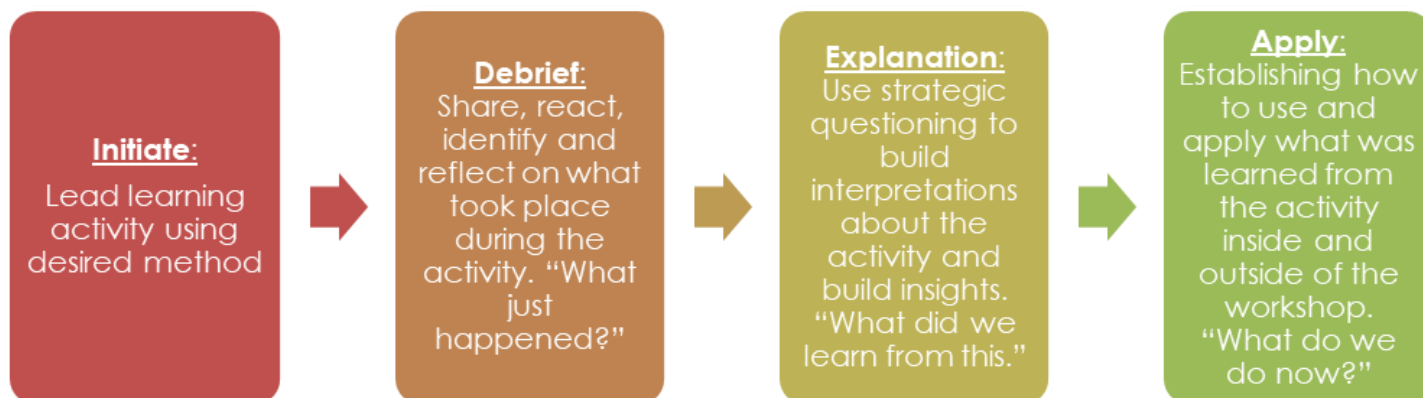When participants are disengaged, disruptive behaviours follow and often individuals begin to mentally 'check-out' of the workshop. Facilitators and trainers need to use different techniques, so that the work can stimulate the different intelligences of the group members and ignite their curiosity to be present. Accessing the strengths of all of the group members contributes to a fuller set of outcomes for your workshops.

ANATOMY OF AN ACTIVITY

In order to deliver an effective method, facilitators can use the **IDEA method**:

Initiate: Lead learning activity using desired method

Debrief: Share, react, identify and reflect on what took place during the activity. "What just happened?"

Explanation: Use strategic questioning to build interpretations about the activity and build insights. "What did we learn from this."

Apply: Establishing how to use and apply what was learned from the activity inside and outside of the workshop. "What do we do now?"

When the **IDEA method** is used, facilitators can create an opportunity for workshop learnings to live beyond the workshop setting. A facilitator's job is not to discover the things that people do not know, but discover what they do know and how they perceive the world. Using the IDEA method during facilitation is about getting people to gain new experiences which provide the space for them to tell their stories. By leading diverse activities and asking pointed, open-ended questions that help to draw out descriptive details from people that they might not otherwise say out loud, facilitators can create sessions that are participatory and transformative.

It is believed that Albert Einstein once said, *"Everyone is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid."* Using a variety of methods and diverse pedagogy allows workshop content to speak in different ways to different people. This toolkit outlines 20 different methods that facilitators can use to foster engaging spaces:

1. Attention Activities
2. Case Studies
3. Community Drawing
4. Cool downs
5. Creative Brainstorming
6. Debates-lines or side
7. Discussion Groups
8. Dotmocracy
9. Expert Panel/Ask the expert
10. Fishbowl
11. Icebreakers
12. Jigsaw
13. Lecture
14. Reflection/Written exercises
15. Scenarios/Role Play
16. Skills practice
17. Tableaus
18. Team-building exercises
19. Think, Pair, Share
20. Video Clips

FACILITATION METHODS

1. Attention Activities

Activities that a facilitator uses to pull groups together and gain their attention, create focus or initiate a new activity.

Why it Works?

⇒   Prevents the facilitator from yelling at the group.

⇒   Allows the facilitator to regain control.

⇒   Can be used to encourage collaboration and connection among the group.

Example Activity: If You Can Hear Me!

Call out, "If you can hear me, clap once." The group will sound off a loud collective CLAP. "If you can hear me clap twice." CLAP CLAP. "If you can hear me clap three times." CLAP CLAP CLAP. By the end of the sequence the group should be silent and focused on the facilitator.

2. Case Study

Encourages participants to analyze situations that they might encounter and to determine how they would respond. A case study is a story written to provide a detailed description of an event and is followed by questions for participants to discuss. The story can range from a paragraph to several pages in length.

Why it Works?

⇒ Encourages participants to explore ideas and to identify alternative behaviours, and possible solutions to situations.

⇒ Exchanges ideas and helps participants share past experiences.

⇒ Provides and opportunity to analyse a problem and reach a decision as a team.

⇒ Facilitates and reaffirms key learning points.

Process

The facilitator hands out a case study that describes a relevant situation or problem to be addressed. Participants read the case study (if they can) otherwise the facilitator reads the story and where necessary, translates into an understandable language. Participants are either broken up into small discussion groups or stay in the larger group to discuss the story. The instructor facilitates questioning and approaches to alternative solutions.

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3. Community Drawing

Encourages active and imaginative input from participants that taps into the knowledge, expertise and creativity of the participants. The facilitator's role is to encourage all participants to visualize a first thing that comes to their minds, put it down on paper and to keep ideas flowing quickly. These drawings can be used to help focus or clarify activities or to generate information that can help jumpstart a topic.

Why it Works?

⇒   Promotes creativity in finding solutions to problems.

⇒   Effective in opening sessions to establish goals, objectives and norms for programs.

⇒   Great for groups of all sizes.

⇒   Helps build group cohesion.

Process

The facilitator asks a question on a topic to be investigated. The participants are asked to draw upon personal experience and respond with as many ideas as possible, by either drawing images or writing words that connect. As participants generate ideas, every idea is added to the drawing. Participants can work individually or together to create this drawing. Once completed, the group can share their creation amongst each other, or share their findings with the larger group.

4. Cool Downs

Interactive activities that allow the facilitator to close the workshop powerfully. Cool downs allow participants to share insights on key learnings, make valuable connections to the outside environment, and share gratitude amongst fellow participants and the facilitator. Ultimately, it creates the space for everyone to "check-out" of the program.

Why it works?

⇒ Serves as a review and demonstration of the participants understanding of key points in the workshop.

⇒ Connects lesson ideas to any previously-learned knowledge

⇒ If done well, activities can hold incredibly beneficial effects that can reverberate hours after the workshop has finished.

Example Activity: One-word check out

Participants will either go around in a circle OR yell-out at random and share 1-word to describe their experience in the workshop.

5. Creative Brainstorming

Traditional group brainstorming typically involves the facilitator taking ideas and writing them in list format. However, Post-It notes can be used to make group brainstorming more personal and interactive. In addition, the note method allows the facilitator to easily organize ideas once they are shared.

Why it works?

⇒ Encourages collaboration by allowing multiple participants to share their ideas at once.

⇒ Creates the opportunity for participants to bounce ideas off one another and seek advice.

⇒ Creates space to include different perspectives and improves the participants' ability to think outside the box.

Materials

- Post-it notes for each group (many different colours, sizes and types)

- Sharpies

- Chart paper, a desk or a blank wall to post

Process

Facilitator will begin by distributing the Post-It notes and markers. Once the issue, problem, or question is shared and explained to the participants, they will be encouraged to write their responses on Post-It notes. There should be one response per note, written in a short phrase or a single word in bold letters. As the participants complete each note, they will post on the wall. Once notes have been posted, the facilitator will work with participants to organize the notes by asking if they see any duplicate or similar ideas. Participants will group ideas together and continue this process until every note is grouped. Each group is given a name that characterizes the group. Taking a picture of the collection of notes before they are removed is one way to record the ideas and the process.
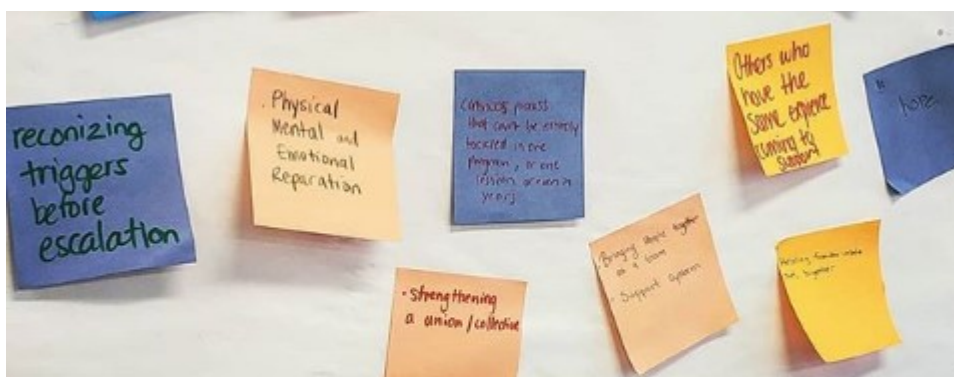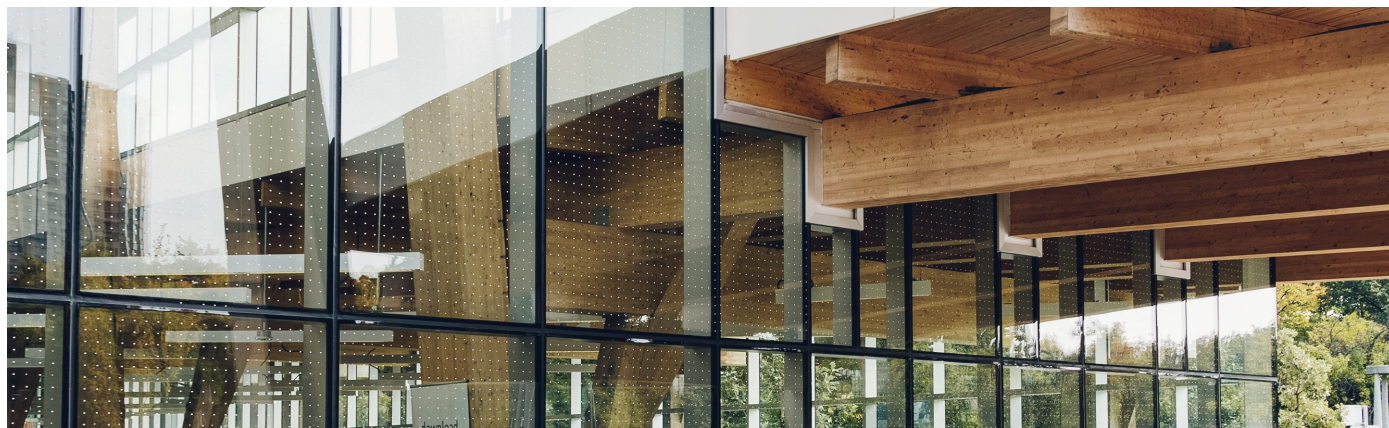
6. Debate Lines

Enables participants to share their opinions by asking them to line up side-by-side based on their position on an issue/topic. This activity is useful for engaging in discussion on an issue which participants have a wide range of opinions.

Why it works?

⇒   Creates an opportunity to get a general sense of a groups thoughts.

⇒   Stimulates discussion and critical thinking.

⇒   Establishes an interactive means for forming diverse groups for further discussion.

Materials

•   Masking tape can be used to identify the line

Process

Give participants a few minutes to reflect on a question or statement that calls for agreement or disagreement. The facilitator will mark a line within the workshop space that represents the various opinions that could be held about the question or statement. Participants will be asked to "take a stand" on the spot along the line that represents their opinion. The facilitator will inform participants that if they stand at either extreme, they are absolute in their agreement or disagreement. They may stand anywhere between the two extremes, depending on how much they do or do not agree with the statement.

Once participants have lined themselves up, the facilitator will ask them to explain why they have chosen to stand where they are standing. Alternating from one end, to the middle, to the other end, helps to avoid too many voices from one stance dominating the conversation. After three or four viewpoints are heard, ask if anyone wishes to move. Encourage participants to keep an open mind; they are asked to move if someone presents an argument that alters where they want to stand on the line. The activity runs until most or all voices have been heard, making sure that no one person dominates.

7. Discussion Groups

An interactive approach that focuses on the exchange of content between the participants, in which the facilitator sets the structure, tone and flow of the conversation.

Why it works?

⇨ Creates space for shared understanding and the opportunity for participants to learn from peer insights.

⇨ Content discussed can feed into other activities.

⇨ Allows participants to articulate their ideas, and gives quieter participants an opportunities to speak and be heard.

Process

a. **Round** - Sitting in a circle(s), participants are selected one at a time and are asked to respond.

b. **Three minutes each way** - In pairs, participants speak for three minutes on a given topic. Be strict with timekeeping. Once competed, one member of each pair shares their thoughts with the larger group.

c. **Popcorn** - In a large group, a question or a statement is posed and once participants have an idea or thought to contribute, they share their ideas in no particular order.

8. Dotmocracy

A quick and simple method for prioritizing a long list of options.

Why it Works?

⇒ Creates a sense of engagement and allows participants to see the decision process in action and understand how the final choice was made.

⇒ Leverages the collective wisdom of the team, and provides an equal way for all the voices on the team to be heard and have accountability in prioritizing key issues.

⇒ Because participants are not required to give a comparative judgment of each option, it allows participants to express a preference for more than one option at the same time.

Process

A list of ideas is charted on walls around the room. Participants rotate among the charts and place a mark or sticker next to the ideas that resonate for them. Once completed, participants can vote for their favourite.
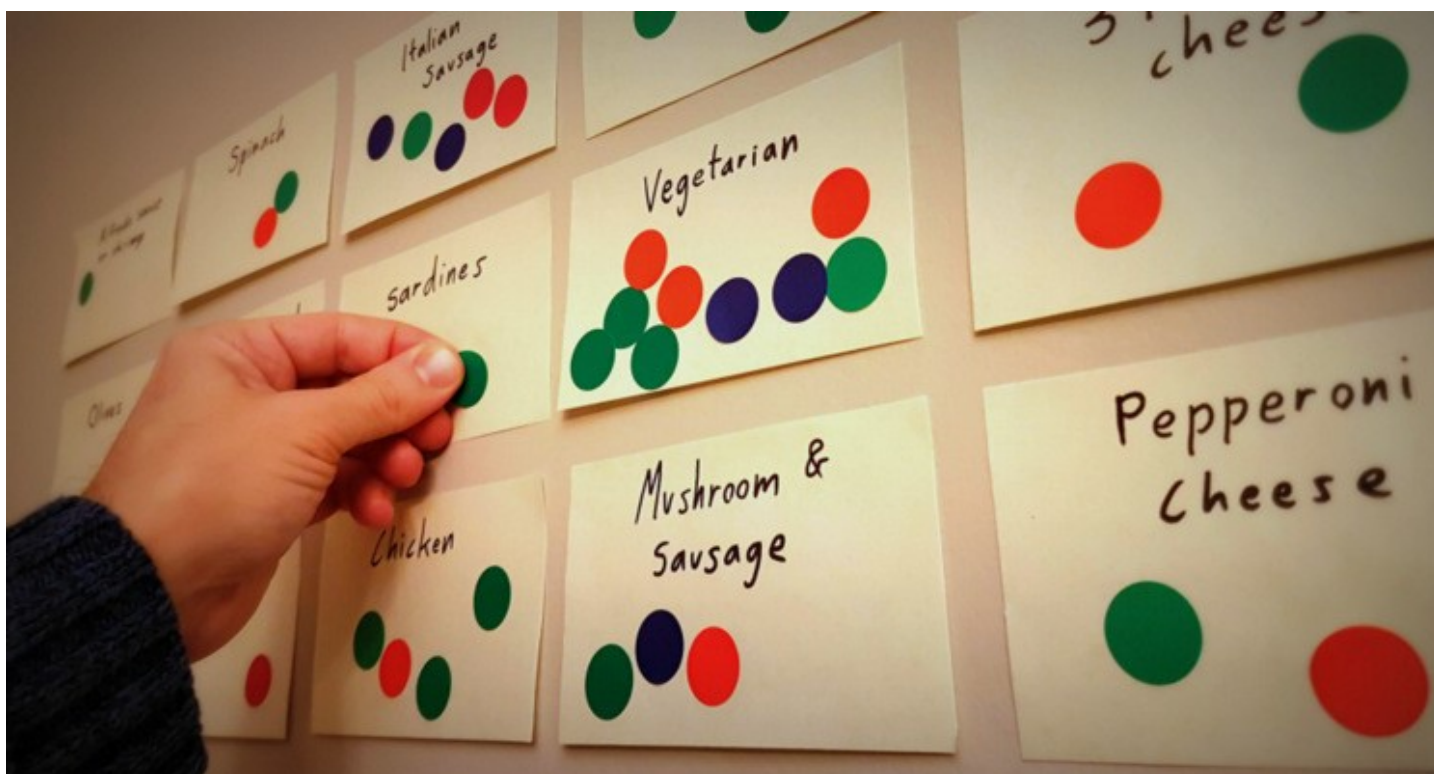

Image from www.dotmocracy.org

The Pedagogy of Facilitation

9. Panel Discussions

Allows participants to gather information on several new topics at a time from visiting 'experts' or 'authorities' in a field. It encourages critical and informed participant questioning and interaction between guest speakers and participants in exploring a given topic.

Why it Works?

⇒ Offers a different format for information transfer and changes the focus of learning from the facilitator to the panel.

⇒ Provides an opportunity to create contacts and references in a field.

⇒ When designed in a way that allows the participants to become the 'resident experts' on a given topic, then they can experience a distinct feeling of validation and accomplishment.

Process

Once 'experts' or 'authorities' are identified, they are invited to share their experience. Typically, the facilitator acts as the moderator of the panel discussion by asking initial questions. Time is allocated to encourage participants to ask questions of their own.

10. Fishbowl

Provides a physical structure that allows participants on the 'outside' to see something being done on the 'inside'. Participants may observe a role play of an actual situation, such as a discussion or a planning meeting, and will report back on what they experienced.

 Why it Works?

⇒ Participants are able to see what is happening and discuss what they see.

⇒ Opportunity for participants to think critically and construct conclusions.

⇒ Enables participants to learn from each other.

Process – Trainer helps break participants into two or more groups. A small group performs some action or activity in the center of a large group. The outer group of participants is asked to observe and analyze the interactions of the inner group.

11. Icebreakers/Energizers

Used to introduce participants, help them to relax, wake up, or recapture their wandering interest. The icebreaker warms the learning environment such that the 'ice' keeping participants from interacting with each other is broken up.

Why it Works? –

⇒ Involves all participants in an active role.

⇒ When used as a opening activity, it sets the tone for the work and topics that are to come.

⇒ Typically fun and create an initial bond between facilitator and participants.

⇒ Used as a strategy to change the temperature in a group.

Example Activity: Toilet Paper Pass

Pass a roll of toilet paper around and have everyone rip off how much they would usually use. When the toilet paper makes it all the way around the circle, have everyone count their squares. The number of squares each person took is the number of fun facts they have to reveal about themselves.

12. Jigsaw

A cooperative paradigm where participants share in the learning process, being responsible for what they learn instead of the facilitator being the sole resource.

Process

Participants are broken into expertise groups. Each group is given a topic to research and discuss. Individual members of the group then break off to act as an expert reporting back to their home group.

Why it Works?

⇒ It takes the role of "expert" away from the facilitator and gives the authority and control of learning to the participants.

⇒ Process encourages listening, engagement, and empathy by giving each participant of the group an essential part to play in the learning.

⇒ Peer training can help participants to network for future cooperation, collaboration and support.

13. Lecturettes

Short versions of lectures, used to highlight key points of content. Lecturettes differ from traditional lectures by incorporating participants' interactions and, at times, giving the impression of a discussion. Useful as an introduction to topics and experiential activities. Lecturettes never last longer than 15 minutes.

Why it Works?

⇒   Lecturettes can provide detailed and specific information in a short amount of time.

Process

An outline is developed on the key information to be presented. Visual aids are considered for the presentation and prepared in advance. Identify points where participants can be involved through questioning, discussion, or other activities. Practice and time lecturette to ensure the content fits the time allotted (i.e. not too much or too little content). When presenting the lecturette (or any lecture) keep an eye on the participants, and make sure that they are attentive and engaged. If participants start to become disinterested, an energizer or another activity can help bring attention back to the presentation. A lecturette is only effective if participants are kept listening, involved, and aware of the points being presented.

14. Tableaus

A frozen image created by participants with their bodies and used to express their ideas. The word Tableau comes from the term *tableau vivant* which means "living picture."

Why it Works?

⇒ Provides a creative opportunity to showcase the participants understanding of key concepts.

⇒ Allow participants to apply content in a new way, evaluate information and draw conclusions.

⇒ Appeals to kinesthetic learners and allows participants to be creative, and venture outside of their comfort zone.

Process

After reading a story or teaching a concept, prompt the participants to convey the meaning by creating a tableau. Explain the parameters of the activity. For example, you may allow them to use or create props. In groups, give participants time to brainstorm ideas for their tableau and rehearse. Once time is up, allow participants to present their final freeze-frame product to the entire group.

15. Reflection/written exercises

A process of thinking that leads to deeper learning. Participants are given a topic or a question and the time to write down their thoughts.

Why it works?

⇒ Allows participants to connect workshop themes to the outside environment.

⇒ Focuses on the participants' interpretation of the content presented.

⇒ Self-directed and allows introverted participants an opportunity to share their thoughts.

Examples of Writing Prompts

- What surprised you today, and why?
- What's the most important thing you learned today? Why do you think so?
- What do you want to learn more about, and why?
- When were you the most creative, and why do you think that is?
- What made you curious today?
- When were you at your best today, and why?
- What can/should you do with what you know?

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16. Scenarios/Role-Play

Encourages participants to explore solutions to situations or problems under discussion. A small, often unrehearsed drama where participants are given roles that they are asked to act out. There is no script that participant-actors must follow, but there is a description of the situation, the roles, suggested actions, or opinions to express.

Why it works?

⇒ Discussion following the role-play can focus on the role, opinions, and actions of the characters, and thus avoid criticism of the participants themselves.

⇒ Entertaining as well as educational.

⇒ Improves participants' skills of expression and observation.

Process

Roles may be set up by the facilitator, or participants may make up their own roles. The description of a role-play can be given orally or in a handout. Participants act out role-play. Facilitator facilitate discussion and analysis of participants' reactions. 'Actors' are given a chance to describe their roles and actions to compare with what participants observed. Participants then discuss how the role-play relates to their own lives and situations they encounter.

17. Skills Practice

Allows participants to watch how a skill should be done and is given the time to practice and develop the skill.

Why this works?

⇒ Participant's active involvement in trying the skill indicates if they understand the information that was provided and makes this information more memorable.

⇒ Appeals to kinesthetic learners, allowing them to be active in their engagement and take their learning into their own hands.

⇒ Provides a space for participants to be challenged and feel accomplished.

Process

The facilitator explains the purpose of the skill and provides a demonstration. Facilitator demonstrates the procedure, new behavior or skill. Participants are encouraged to ask questions and engage in discussion. Participants practice what has been demonstrated.

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The Pedagogy of Facilitation

18. Team-building exercises

A series of fun and motivational activities that often promote communication, planning, problem-solving and conflict resolution.

Why they work?

⇒ Fosters group cohesion by creating opportunities for participants to network, socialize and get to know each other.

⇒ Promotes collaboration while allowing participants to be innovate and creative in their thinking.

⇒ Fosters genuine connections, deeper discussions and processing.

Example Activity

Game of Possibilities

Facilitator gives an object to one person in each group. One at a time, participants demonstrate a use for that object in front of the group. The rest of the team must guess what the player is demonstrating. The demonstrator cannot speak, and demonstrations must be original ideas.

19. Think, Pair, Share

A collaborative learning strategy in which participants work together to solve a problem or answer a question about a concept or issue. This technique requires participants to think individually about a topic or answer to a question and share ideas with the larger group.

Why it Works?

⇒ Maximizes participation by focusing attention and allowing participants to take charge of their learning.

⇒ Provides time for participants to think about an answer and activates prior knowledge.

⇒ Enhances participant's oral communication skills as they discuss their ideas with one another.

Process

Think: Participants take a few moments just to THINK about the question/prompt. Pair: Participants PAIR up to talk about the answer each came up with. They compare notes and identify the answers they think are best, most convincing, or most unique. Share: Pairs SHARE their thinking with the rest of the group.

The Pedagogy of Facilitation

20. Video Clips

A multimedia strategy that allow facilitators to share new types of information digitally.

Why it works?

⇒ Entertaining and easily captures the interest of participants.

⇒ Can capture in a short amount of time, information that might take months to cover.

⇒ Inspires participants by developing deeper learning of a subject and allowing participants to see themselves reflected in the material.

⇒ Can be as good as an instructor in communicating facts or demonstrating procedures to assist in mastery of learning.

Process

Facilitator should select a video according to participants' interests and topics under consideration. Participants should be introduced to the video, and viewing should generally be followed by a discussion.

The **Frontline Workers' Training Series** provides workshops, toolkits and short videos for City and community-based frontline workers on a range of topics designed to increase the capacity of workers to provide impactful services for MVP youth (youth most vulnerable to involvement in violence and crime).

The workshops are coordinated by the City's Toronto Youth Equity Strategy (TYES) and Youth Employment Partnerships (YEP), and delivered in partnership with community agencies.

[Instagram] **@Youth.Toronto @TorontoTYES**

[Twitter] **@YouthToronto @TorontoTYES**

[WWW] **www.toronto.ca/youthworkerstraining**

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