



Organizing a Peer Assist

Step by Step

Before the Meeting

- Develop a clear definition of the challenge or problem to be addressed and define the objectives of the peer assist.
- Enlist participants with different skills and interests. The procedure works best in groups of 4-7 persons. Consider including people from outside, but only if it will not disrupt internal sharing.
- Give the participants some preliminary material, so that they can prepare the meeting in advance.
- Organize the space with chairs in a circle around a flipchart.
- Identify an external facilitator and note-taker to ensure that the session moves in a positive direction. The [Facilitator's Role](#) is important.
- Schedule enough time for the group to socialize, discuss, analyze and give feedback. Time will vary according to the subject and the outcome expected. In general one and a half day is time enough.

During the Meeting

- Spend time creating the right environment for real sharing.
- Present the issue at hand, including a description of the context, history and ideas. This description should be done in an open and flexible manner, so that it can enable redefinition.
- Let participants discuss the problem : telling, asking, and analyzing.
- Let participants present their feedback to the learning team. The learning team has to listen for understanding and for how it might improve its own activity by asking specific questions about the options presented.
- Let the learning team acknowledge the contribution of the participants and commit to deliver a list of the lessons learned, and of what the learning team is going to do differently as a result.



After the Meeting

- Update participants with the list of [lessons learned](#) and actions to be taken.
- Consider who else might benefit from the lessons learned. Always look out for opportunity to share and re-use knowledge and learning.

Facilitator's Role

The facilitator keeps track of the discussion on the flipchart and provides an environment conducive to sharing experiences. He plays three main roles as follows:

Leadership role

- To focus on providing a direction to the group when the leader fails to fulfill his/her role
- To stimulate and encourage constructive debate between group members
- To support members of the group, helping them to bring information and to build new ideas
- To participate when the group is interacting poorly or in the wrong direction, promoting new discussion
- To promote team building in a cohesive, interactive, and productive way

Referee role

- To regulate and maintain order of the group discussion, discouraging participants from talking at the same time
- To protect members and ensure that all contributions to the discussion are treated equally
- To deal with problems and to control people within the group, allowing everyone to participate freely
- To manage the time and adhere to the meeting timetable ensuring completion of the agenda

Neutral role

- The facilitator is neutral and pragmatic as he takes a detached look at the discussion
- He encourages feedback, promoting discussion of each point which was the subject of the Peer Assist.



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