Facilitation Hints for Group Leaders

1. **Initiate** agenda items or proposals for members to consider, and bring matters before the group on which they may want to take action.

2. **Facilitate** deliberations of the group in order to make it easier for them to conduct the business that has brought them together.

3. **Keep things moving:** Know and use Parliamentary Procedure, if applicable.

4. **Avoid long explanations and speeches:** Your job shouldn’t usually be to give facts; if you do have information to give, wait until all others have spoken.

5. **Turn over the chair** if you must speak or have a conflict of interest on an item.

6. **Watch for non-verbal cues** indicating people’s readiness to speak, agreement or disagreement, boredom, anger, etc.

7. **Use your authority** when appropriate; don’t hesitate to use your influence if things get bogged down or difficult.

8. **Handle business by general consensus** where appropriate; people tend to support action when their opinion is heard and they have contributed to the decision-making process. Resist voting prematurely; allow everyone to express their opinion and encourage alternative points of view. Don’t accept silence as agreement; push group for comments and opinions.

9. **Encourage** a free and complete discussion of matters before the group.
   a. Keep the discussion balanced.
   b. Try to give every member a chance to speak once on an issue before another member is permitted to speak twice.
   c. Keep speakers on the subject when their comments have wandered. Interrupt when needed.
   d. When the group is too large for everyone to speak or too intimidating for some, consider breaking into smaller groups for discussion.
   e. If the subject is complex and more facts are needed to reach a high quality decision, consider delegating it to a committee for more intense review.

10. **Summarize, clarify and restate** the main points of discussion to reduce redundancy and keep discussion moving.