

40+ CREATIVE METHODS OF FACILITATION



WHAT ARE METHODS?

Methods are highways which lead us to cities (objectives). They aid the facilitator in helping the participants understand learning objectives.

Whatever method we use, they must be appropriate to the learning objective/s.

In all our methods we strive to do two things:

- *Increase learner involvement*
- *Delegate content through the “discovery approach”*

What does it mean to delegate content?

WHEN I DELEGATE CONTENT, DO I LOSE CONTROL OF THE CLASS?

1. Delegating content does not mean withdrawing control of the processes happening in the class. *Control is maintained through the design of the activity.* It is therefore essential to know what you are hoping to gain from the activity. In other words, what principles do you want the class to discover and apply or what conclusions do you want the class to draw.
2. Do not fear losing control of the “truth” in the sessions. We encourage you to design your lesson plan so that adult learners can discover “truths” for themselves. We will all agree that this makes for a richer learning experience and will make life application and *life change* – the goal of our instruction – easier!

HOW LONG CAN THE CLASS CONCENTRATE ON ANY ACTIVITY?

1. The average adult can sit and just listen for about ten minutes. After that, any lecture tends to lose its impact.

2. What's a facilitator to do? Talk faster? Simply mention the highlights?
No, of course not. By building active learning techniques into the structure of the class, any facilitator can improve his or her class.

A LOOK AT SOME SPECIFIC METHODS

Remember that adults must have a degree of ownership of the learning process; they want to invest their previous experience in those processes.

Such ownership and investment are achieved by designs in which the learners actively talk about what they have done in the past, or what they are thinking and feeling right now as they experiment with new behaviors during the learning process.

Although we have included a few ideas below, do feel free to experiment with other creative ways of facilitating learning. Also you may adjust any of the activities to fit the situation or content that you are communicating.

1. **Question for Another Group** – In this activity, participants are divided into groups of 4 – 7 people. Together, they develop between 1 and 3 questions for another group to answer based on material presented. Once all of the questions are written, they are switched among groups and then answered.
2. **How to Use this at Work** – In groups of 2 – 7 people, have participants list ways that they will use the materials presented back at work. If the group cannot come up with any application, you can throw their problem out to the whole group. If nothing develops, move on. Be aware of the anomaly, however. If this happens repeatedly, it may indicate the course is not appropriate for the audience.
3. **“Comments/Questions in a Basket”**
This is an extremely helpful method of allowing people to make comments or suggestions in safety. The class is asked to submit written questions or comments about a certain subject. They have the option of writing these down and placing them in a “basket”. The facilitator then reads each comment or

question and opens it up to the class for discussion.

This is especially a helpful tool when you are trying to get learner's opinions on how they feel about the course, the outreach events etc.

4. **Case Studies** –This method helps us to avoid talking in theory but applying theory to real life.

Divide the class into groups of 2 – 7 people. Have them answer between 1 and 3 case studies prepared by you, based on the material covered. Typically, learners are given a printed case study with sufficient detail for them to draw conclusions.

Control of the discussion which follows comes through:

- The amount of detail provided in the material.
- Time limits.
- A clear description of the desired out come of the exercise.
- A list of questions for the group to answer on their way to the final product.

5. **Stump the Trainer** – Either in groups or individually, have the participants develop questions based on material presented for you to answer. They may either be basic or more complex. This activity will give you a good idea of how much detail and the level of difficulty they can handle.



6. **Action Mazes**

This is a case study which is given out one part at a time. The participants usually receive a printed description of the case, with enough detail to take them to the first decision point. The description gives them options from which to select.

After the group discusses these alternatives, they request the leader to supply them with the next part of the case study. This will describe the consequences of their decision in terms of the case.

*This is an extremely useful tool to help learners understand complex situations which call for course adjustments e.g. building a movement in a target area. A simple case study could centre on: **The Need to Sow Broadly**. A case study could be formulated where a team in a target area has a choice to sow broadly or not. The learners make a choice. The*

next part of the case study will highlight the impact of the choice to sow broadly or not.

This takes preparation from the facilitator but is an excellent way to help learners think through long term consequences of choices which they make today.

7. **Turn to Your Neighbour** – When a portion of your lecture has ended, have participants turn to each other and discuss the two or three main points learned. This works best if you have them write down their answers. Most people will write when you tell them to. Writing the answers will keep them focused on the task of learning.

8. **Quick Quiz** – After a portion of your lecture has ended, pass out a short quiz of no more than 5 or 6 questions based on materials covered. Have participants answer the questions. Then go over the answers. For maximum interaction, you can then have them work in groups for a group answer before reviewing the answers yourself.

9. **Fill in the Blank** – This technique is a good one to use while you are lecturing. Simply leave blanks in your workbook or pass out worksheets with blanks for participants to fill in as you lecture. Most people don't like to have empty spaces on their pages, so they will fill in the blanks with the information you provide.

10. **Brainstorming**

This is a specialized form of discussion. It can be used to teach learners to suspend judgment until a maximum number of ideas have been generated.

A second use is to train people to listen positively to the ideas of others, refraining from negative comments which might cause the creative process to dry up.

You need a minimum of five or six learners in a class to ensure a good brainstorm.

Facilitator needs to give the following instructions clearly:

- Generate, don't evaluate. There will be a time for evaluation later.
- Create new ideas by amending those which have already been suggested.
- Post all suggestions on a visible list before participants.

An effective brainstorm has three main elements:

1. <i>Generation of ideas.</i>	(As per the guidelines above.)
2. <i>Analysis of ideas.</i>	This includes evaluation . 1. Participants ask contributors to explain strange terms or an unfamiliar idea. 2. Participants establish criteria for selecting the best ideas, then test each idea against those criteria. The group is then left with a workable list of ideas. From these they can select the best solution.
3. <i>Action planning based on ideas.</i>	This consists of outlining the steps needed to put the adopted solution into operation.

Example for a brainstorm: What are some momentum events we can host to reach our target area?

11. **Crossword Quiz** – After a lecture segment, hand out a crossword puzzle quiz to each participant. Wait an appropriate amount of time for participants to complete the puzzle. The amount of time allowed will vary depending on the group’s education level and complexity of the puzzle. Consider giving a prize to the first correctly completed puzzle. To ensure participation or if you have a mixed group, you may want to have participants complete this activity in groups or pairs.

You can find worksheet generators, fill in the blank, etc., at

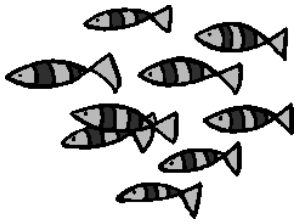
<http://school.discovery.com/teachingtools/worksheetgenerator/index.html>

<http://puzzlemaker.school.discovery.com>

<http://teachers-pet.com>

12. **Find the Question | Find the Answer** – In this activity, you give each participant either a question or its corresponding answer on an index card. Hand them out randomly. Next, instruct participants to stand up move around and find the person holding the matching question or answer.

13. **You Read It. You Teach (Present) It** – To add variety to your lecture modules, divide your participants in groups of 3-5 people. Pass out 2-3 pages of information to each. Allow between 12 and 20 minutes for groups to prepare their “mini lectures” on the material. Finally let each group present the material. You can then add in any needed information. This works well with non-technical topics. Using the word “teach” can be intimidating.



14. **Buzz Groups**

Divide the class into groups of 3 -5. Give them a task. Ensure that each task is clearly communicated, preferably in writing.

Whatever the task, the small group reports their results to the class.

You need to get creative and use several methods for the report back:

- Flip chart paper (one piece per group to record their findings)
- Overhead film (one piece per group to record their findings and display using overhead projector)
- SNOW [Sticky Notes On Whiteboard] (one pad of sticky notes per group. They record one word ideas per note. They explain these ideas to the class as they stick them up on a board.)

Feel free to give time limits to buzz groups. This encourages learners to think fast.

15. **Put It Together** – When teaching a process, hand out cards with a step of the process handed out to each participant. Next, ask the participants to get themselves in order from beginning to end. Once they are in line, review each step of the process and make any adjustments that are needed. If the group is large, use a piece of cardstock with a keyword printed on the front and select a small number of people to complete the exercise in front of everyone else. The cardstock with the keyword will help those in the audience to stay involved in the process.

16. **Safari** – Post four flipcharts around the room, each with a different question. Divide your class into three or four groups. Instruct each group to stand next to one of the flipcharts. Next, give each a different coloured marker and five minutes to answer their question. When the time is up, the groups rotate to the next question and add any additional information to the next chart with their coloured marker. This activity will provide a physical pattern interrupt and cut down on duplicate answers.

17. **What I Find Most Difficult** – This exercise is similar to “four questions.” However, instead of posting questions on the flipcharts, you list topics covered in your lecture. You then instruct participants to go stand next to the chart that lists the topic they find most difficult. Once at the appropriate chart, ask the participants to write down what is particularly difficult. When they are done, instruct them to sit down. Then go through each chart clarifying and reviewing areas of difficulty. This activity has the added benefit of telling you where your teaching is effective and where roadblocks are popping up.

18. **Most | Least Useful** – List six to seven uses for the information you have provided during your lecture on separate pieces of flipchart paper. Hang them around the room. Next, ask participants to stand next to the use they think is most applicable to them. Have them list why that is on the paper. Review the responses. Then, have them choose the use which is least applicable to them and repeat the exercise. During the second part, you can clarify misconceptions or gaps in learning regarding why a fact or application might be valuable.

19. **Picture or Video** – A picture is worth a thousand words. A demonstration or a video is a worth a million. To illustrate your points, where appropriate, consider adding a demonstration or video segment. If appropriate allow participants to take part in the demonstration. At the very least, have them answer questions about the demonstration or video seen.

20. **Cogent**

This is short for **cognitive networks**. All participants do some reading and answer the same questions before they gather – but only several people read the *same* material. When they gather, those who had the *same* reading assignments form groups and prepare group answers which they share with the whole group.

This is an excellent method to introduce learners to new information which allows them to work individually and in teams as well.

21. **Best Summary** – Divide participants into groups of 4-7 people. Pass out an index card to each group. Have them summarize the information you shared during your lecture on the card. Review each of the summaries when all groups are done. Write out a composite on a whiteboard, flipchart, or overhead projector and have the class copy it down in their notes. When using a

workbook, leave space for this information.

22. Demonstrations

Demonstrations are merely illustrated lectures or presentations.

Good demonstrations:

- Analyze the process, breaking it into small sequential steps.
- Have all their materials in place.
- Check the operation of all equipment just before they start the demo!
- Position the models so that all the learners can see all the participants in the demo all the time.
- Explain the goals of the demo at the beginning, hopefully in a two-way discussion with the learners.
- Present the operation one step at a time, based on the task analysis completed earlier.
- Allow participants to try-out the demonstrated skill as soon as possible.
- Reinforce everything learners do in their try-outs.
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Expected Format for Demonstrations

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| <u>Step 1</u> | “Set the stage” for the demo. Tell the class exactly what you are going to do in the demo. (Step by step explanation)
[THEY HEAR IT] |
| <u>Step 2</u> | Do the demo. [THEY SEE IT] |
| <u>Step 3</u> | Debrief - Ask class: “What did you observe?” (Revise the demo, by getting the detail steps from the class) [THEY TELL IT] |
| <u>Step 4</u> | Give clear instructions: two-by-two practice. [THEY DO IT] |
| <u>Step 5</u> | Debrief - Ask the participants how the practice went. (Revise the detail of the demo) [THEY TELL IT] |



23. **Pre-test (Written Needs Assessment)** – Before the lecture begins, pass out a pre-test to each participant. Have them answer the questions to the best of their ability. Next, begin your lecture highlighting the correct answer to each of the questions as you go.

24. **What is the Question?** – Most people like playing in this game show format. Divide your group into teams and have them create questions to the answers displayed on the wall/screen. To create the game, list the amounts on cardstock (e.g. 100, 200, 500) and the categories above those amounts. You will need 3 of each amount if you have 3 categories. Write the question (the answer) upside down on the reverse side of each card. Tape each card on the wall in the grid format. When a group provides a correct question, give them the card. At the end, total up all cards to determine the winner. If you have a projector on your computer, you can create the game with a PowerPoint template available from the site below. The second website also has templates for versions of Millionaire, Concentration, and more.

<http://www.pathoslearning.com/gameshow.html>

<http://208.183.128.3/tutorials/PPT-games/>

25. **Field Trips**

The best way to maximize learning on a field trip is to give learners a set of questions for which answers must be supplied. These answers can be discovered on the field trip.

They can be reviewed at a feedback session in the classroom following the tour.

Different learners could also be asked to answer different questions. During debrief, groups could share their “discoveries” with each other. This could lead to discussion and comparisons.



26. **What Is It | Why Is It Good | What Could Go Wrong** – Divide your group into three teams. Have the first prepare a list of the key points you presented. Have the second create a list of reason of how what you have presented can be used. Have the third list what could happen if they don't use what you have discussed.

27. **Best Answer** – Divide your group into 3 – 5 teams. Give each group a paper bag and a stack of single coloured cards. Each group should have its own colour.

Have each develop a question for the other teams to answer and write that question on the outside of the bag. When all questions are ready, rotate the questions so that each group has one that it did not write.

Next, each group should answer the question held on a coloured card. When done, the card should be placed in the bag and sent to the next group. After everyone has seen every question, the bags should return to their original authors.

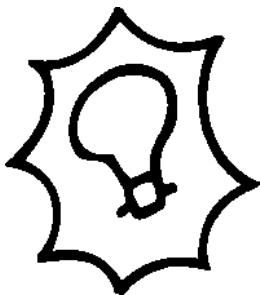
At this point, the groups should open the bags and evaluate the answers to their question. A total of ten points should be divided between the answers, more points going toward the better answers. Next, review all questions and answers. To wrap up the activity, total the number of points given to each group (e.g. the green card group got 12, the pink card group got 6, etc.). The group with the most points wins.

28. **BINGO** – Use this activity during your lecture. List terms you are discussing on a BINGO card for each of the participants listening to your lecture. Once a participant gets a row, two rows, or whatever criterion you set. The game is over.

For an online BINGO card creator, see the website below.

http://www.bestteachersites.com/web_tools/materials/bingo/

29. **Group Role Play** – Just don't call them role plays! Nobody seems to like role plays but practice cases are okay. Role plays can work if they are done well. Often what works best is for a groups to prepare for one of the parts and then to elect a representative to play that part in front of others. This reduces the risk and improves the potential success of the participant because many people were involved in preparing for the exercise. It also decreases the likelihood that someone ended up doing a "role play" when they really didn't want to.



30. **Two Truths and a Lie** – Divide your group into teams of 3-7 members. Have them develop and record on flipchart paper three statements about the material covered. Two should be true and the other false. Go around the room and have each group read its statements out loud. The other groups should identify on paper which statements are true and which are false. Review the answers when all statements have been presented.

31. **Lectures** - The lecture is by definition words spoken by the instructor. This offers a relatively passive and un-stimulating experience for the learner. If you need to use this method please ensure that you have plenty of interesting examples to illustrate theory. *See activity #43.*

We are aiming to reduce the use of this method to 20-30% of any one session in the GCMT curriculum. 70-80% of the session must be interactive!

If you have to lecture, remember to:

- Speak loudly and clearly enough to be heard.
- Include areas for discussion as part of the lecture.
- Include visual aids.
- Always leave time for “interruptions” where learners can ask clarifying questions or make comments.
- *When communicating unfamiliar content often it can only be done by lecture. You can make any section of a lecture interactive by using one of the process or review type activities to ensure the participants take ownership of the material presented. See numbers 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 40, 41.*

32. **Both Sides of the Issue** - Post flip chart paper around the room with a large “T” covering most of the page. Leave room to write on the top of the “T.” List a topic on the top of each “T,” and a question about the topic on each side of the page, directly underneath the main topic. For instance, a “T” on a lecture about presentation skills might have the words “Presentation Skills” on top of the “T,” “What makes a good presentation on the left side?” and “What makes a bad presentation on the right?” Divide your group into teams of 3-7 members. Have each team answer the chart and then report back to the group.

33. **Note Taking**

Note taking by learners is somewhat controversial. Some learners like to take extra notes therefore ensure that they have extra paper to do this. We have also provided space in the GCMT student notes for this. The danger with note taking is that learners will write down what they *think* they hear. This may not necessarily be what the instructor has said.

The best way is for the facilitator to provide the learners with the complete notes. The GCMT curriculum does this.

34. Panel Discussions

This is an excellent format to use if you have access to people who are experienced in the subject matter e.g. living the Spirit-filled life or witnessing.

You could ask such people to come prepared to talk for a few minutes on different aspects of the subject at hand.

Feel free to include learners from the class with the appropriate life experience on the panel as well. This will enhance their feeling of inclusion in the learning process.

At the end of this time, learners could quiz the panel by asking clarifying questions.

When including learners on a panel remember to:

- Give the panelists adequate time to prepare ... to read some specified material, analyze it and synthesize it into an effective presentation.
- Allow time for other learners to ask questions.
- Keep the discussion moving.
- Remember the safety rule and allow the learners to ask the whole panel, not a specific member of the panel. The panel can decide who will answer the question.

See also: Reading Assignments

35. Skits

A skit is a prepared enactment which may include prepared, precise dialogue for the actors.

It helps to keep them simple and let each skit have a **single message** it wants to say.

Remember to practice before class so that you will know for certain if it is going to work.

36. Structured Discussions

These are conversations between learners aimed toward specific learning objectives.

You should therefore, announce the learning objective clearly in advance. It is usually helpful to post a written statement of the objective where all can see it.

Facilitators can also let the class develop the agenda for discussion, e.g., how much time should be devoted to each objective, etc.

37. **Topical Discussions**

This is where the facilitator announces the discussion far enough in advance to permit a bit of required reading plus time to analyze and synthesize that new information.

Prior to the discussion:

- Announce the precise time limits.
- Announce one or more specific objectives.
- Lie low! From here on it is up to the group to meet the objectives of their analysis of this topic.
- Tell the group that it is up to them to keep the discussion on track and to meet the objectives.

38. **Question - Answer Panels**

Facilitators announce a topic and a reading assignment plus a list of questions to be brought to the session itself. These can be drawn up by learners.

The learners can then have opportunity in the next session to ask the panel of learner “experts” the questions.

Again leave time for guided discussion to maximize participation and learning.

39. **Reading Assignments**

Reading assignments do not do much to stimulate the senses. They can expose learners to large quantities of information. Reading assignments must be accompanied by some feedback activities which measure or assist the retention of the content.

To increase learner involvement, you could arrange for members of the class to participate in a **panel discussion** after a reading assignment. The learner will take greater responsibility for developing an opinion on the subject if they are included in the panel.

Always leave time for questions and answers after the panel makes its presentation.

At minimum reading assignments should include:

- Built in accountability by means of tests, discussions or written summaries of the content.. *The tests should apply new concepts to real-world problems and should not be simply memory-recall.*
- Supply a list of questions for the readers to search out the critical information in the notes they are reading.

40. **Crumpled Question Toss**

This exercise works well if you are reviewing a lot of material. Give each participant a piece of paper and have them write a question about what has been discussed.

Next, have them crumple the paper into a ball and throw it (gently) at another participant.

Next have them open the question and record an answer. When all questions have been answered, re-crumple and throw. In this round have the participants add any needed information to the answer given. Crumple and throw one more time.

When the pages are opened, give each person an opportunity to read the questions and answers, and to add any comments they might have. To keep control of the room and to stay on task, ask for additional responses to any duplicate questions after each question is read. You can vary this exercise by beginning with prewritten questions on each page.

41. **Behaviour Modelling**

This is an ideal enactment of a desired behaviour which lets learners discover what actions and standards are expected of them – The model can be presented via a medium like videos, but may also be performed by instructors in what amounts to a skit.

42. **Popcorn**

After pairs or group discussion of a topic, the one word or short phrase report back is done by people “popping up” with answers from around the room. This is best done if you want a quick summary and are not recording the answers.

43. **Illustration, or Testimony**

Illustration, or testimony whether yours or someone you know, true or fictional, secular or scriptural, can stir an emotional response which will help the

participants make a connection, remember, take ownership, or internalize an important point.

When you tell a story the participant paints a picture in his mind with your words.

44. Jigsaw

Jigsaw is best used when you have a very large amount of material to cover such as familiarizing the group with a manual. Ask the participants to get in groups; you determine the number of people in each group by the number of sections you want them to cover. For illustration's sake let's say there are 7 sections to the manual. The groups must then be 7 in number, no more, no less. Have them count off in their group 1 through 7. Assign all the number ones to study the first section, twos the second, threes the third, etc. Give them 10-15 minutes and give them a guide as to what they are looking for, i.e., 1) What is the section about? 2) What are the main points? 3) What is the action point of the section? After 15 minutes get everyone's attention, have them stand up and move to various parts of the room putting all the ones together, all the twos together, all the threes together, etc. Now tell them in this large group to come to consensus on the answers to the questions about the section they studied. They do not need to sit down for this time. Give them 15 minutes. After 15 minutes have them return to their original group of 7. Each person is to share with the rest of the people in their group what their section is about. Give them enough time for each person to share.

This would work well with "How to Build a Movement #1."

45. Tell a Story

One of the major forms of communication is through stories. Jesus used stories to communicate much of His content to His listeners. Story telling is an art. Story telling is often the best way to make a point. We remember stories. People will remember a story that has been told to them easier than a story they have seen on television.

Why is this true? Because, words are the paintbrushes we provide for them. They paint pictures in their minds of the story we are telling. When they paint the picture it belongs to them; they take ownership of it.

There are two different types of stories:

- those that have been written.
- those that are personal stories from our own lives.

In telling the story we use all the tools we have at our disposal; we use our

bodies, our voices, tone, volume, our eyes, our facial expressions, movement, gestures, etc.

How do I remember everything?

Every story has a plot. When a person hears an oral story that is all plot, it is like carrying water in his hands. He needs a **container** in which to carry the plot.

- We begin with **time** and **place**. How do most fairy tales begin? "Once upon a time in a far away land..."; time, place.
- Then the **characters** are introduced.
- Then comes the **plot**. So always start your story by building the container for them to carry their plot.

How do I remember all the parts of the story?

To remember a story we use a tool called "blocking."

- First, we must divide the story into "**scenes**."
- Take a piece of paper and fold it until you have the same number of squares that you have "scenes."
- Draw a little **sketch** of each "scene" in a block, much the same as a comic strip. Continue until there is a block for every scene. You, the storyteller are the only one who will see these pictures, so stick figures are just fine.
- The blocks will be **in order** so as you look at them, describe what you see. You are **telling** your story.
- Do this several times, **repeatedly**, as you look at the blocks.
- Now, tell your story without looking at the blocks. You may want to tell it to a **mirror** so you can add your "style."
- **Memorize the opening and closing statements**. Good closing statements are the moral of the story, the point that is to be made.

Hints

- Keep your focus on the main point.
- Get to their level physically. Sit on a tall stool or the front of a desk, looking the students in the eye and talking to them directly says you are serious about what you are telling them and holds their attention.
- Use words that they are most familiar with.
- Do not be afraid of repetition with adults.
- You may use visual aids in telling your stories, but only if they relate.

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