

INTRODUCTION

What this publication offers

The aim of this publication is to provide you with an introduction to what working with groups in a facilitative mode involves. As facilitation is closely bound up with attitudes and personal qualities, you cannot learn to become a facilitator just by going through the material provided here. What we set out to do is to give you an overview of what we see as the main issues related to facilitation, to provide you with plenty of food for thought, guidelines for observation, triggers for self-reflection, and some practical tools which you can adapt and try out in your own practice.

We would like to stress, though, that this is not a comprehensive manual, or a step-by-step guide to facilitation. It is a resource tool covering various aspects of facilitation made available in non-linear form to anyone who would like to explore for themselves what it means to facilitate groups.

Who it is for

As the title suggests, this publication is intended for mentors and trainers working with groups of language teachers. In particular, as some of the materials grow out of an ECML workshop organised for teacher trainers interested in running their own courses on facilitation, you will find a number of tasks and activities which can be used on training courses focusing on group facilitation. However, as there are strong parallels between training rooms and classrooms, some of the activities and ideas can also be adapted and used by teachers for their own development in the area of group facilitation.

For complete newcomers to the notion of facilitation, it may be advisable to start with the video extract of Margit working with her trainees and then to listen to what she and Rod have to say about facilitation (Section 1), before moving on to other parts of the publication .

How the material is organised

The material is designed for dipping into rather than as a linear read. You can pick and choose from it based on your interests, needs, and past experiences with facilitation. It is divided into eight sections (referring to different types of material) and is organised around eight thematic areas.

Sections:	Thematic areas:
1 Video extracts	1 What is facilitation?
2 Key quotations	2 Facilitation: background
3 Short articles	3 Group life
4 Reflective diary entries	4 Facilitation: qualities and skills
5 Stories	5 Facilitation: toolkit
6 Activities	6 Questions and questioning
7 Checklists	7 Feedback
8 Further reading	8 Developing as a facilitator