

Dr Webb
LAKEWOOD RANCH

Philosophers's Forum

We ask questions... We ask questions... We ask questions

Meeting Facilitation Guidelines

Process, Mindset, and Actions

Goals and Objectives

To provide a forum where inquisitive people can come together to share ideas, learn from each other and the great philosophical minds, and provide a benefit to the community and society. To achieve this we need to:

- Provide a safe and welcoming place where new and experienced people get involved.
- Share complex information in a easy to understand format
- Structure the dialogue in a way that prioritizes allowing the participants to voice the concerns, experiences, and opinions
- To ensure the discussion flows in accordance with the intended topic
- To manage the risks that often occur and prevent us from ensuring that save and welcoming environment. These risks include:
 - Individuals that are angry or confrontational
 - Individuals that are more interested in their opinions than learning
 - People that hog the floor
 - People that take the discussion in an unproductive direction

Meeting Facilitation Guidelines

The Process and Actions



Protagonist - the leading character or one of the most prominent figures in a real situation.



Interlocutor - "a conversation partner," who questions all the other performers as a way of moving the act forward.

Applying "Socratic Method" - Based on Greek Theater / Philosophy

Meeting Facilitation Guidelines

The Process and Actions

What is Socratic Method?

- Socratic method** is:
- a form of cooperative argumentative dialogue between individuals, based on asking and answering questions to stimulate critical thinking and to draw out ideas and underlying presumptions.
 - a style of education involving a conversation in which a student is asked to question their assumptions. It is a forum for open-ended inquiry, one in which both student and teacher can use probing questions to develop a deeper understanding of the topic.

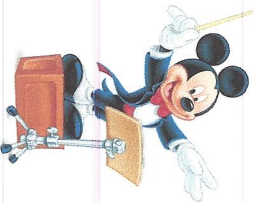
Socratic questioning is disciplined questioning that can be used to pursue thought in many directions and for many purposes, including: to explore complex ideas, to get to the truth of things, to open up issues and problems, to uncover assumptions, to analyze concepts, to distinguish what we ...

Meeting Facilitation Guidelines

The Process and Actions

The roles within Philosophic Discussion

Interlocutor - *Interlocutor* traces back to the Latin word *interloqui*, meaning "to speak between." We use *interlocutor* either for "a conversation partner," or for "a third party in a conversation," like a middleman who speaks on behalf of an organization. Someone who participates in a discussion or conversation, sometimes as a go-between. If you and your friend are in an argument and aren't speaking, a third friend could act as an *interlocutor*, delivering messages back and forth.



Protagonist – the leading character, hero, or heroine of a drama or other literary work, a proponent for or advocate of a political cause or social program, etc. the leader or principal person in a movement, cause, etc. the first actor in ancient Greek drama, who played not only the main role, but also other roles when the main character is offstage.

Presenter – The person that researches information about the topic and presents that information to the group.

Scribe – The person who observes the dialog and recaps the overall findings of the group.

Audience – The audience can play any of the roles defined above, at the direction of the interlocutor

Meeting Facilitation Guidelines

Establishing a Safe and Welcoming Environment

The Mindset

Philosophy is not a specific topic or opinion, but process for discussing difficult topics. It is a mindset, a process, and a behavior.

The **mindset** is an inquisitive nature, with a desire to learn, collaborate with others, help others, and evolve knowledge toward "Absolute Truth".

The **process** is "Socratic Method" (a form of cooperative argumentative dialogue between individuals).

The **behavior** is an unwavering respect of the viewpoints, experiences and contributions of others and actions designed to maintain a high standard of interaction. This includes prohibiting phrases like "blatantly idiot" except when referring to dead philosophers.

Seven reasons why people ask questions – and only one of them is because they want to know the answer

- 1: **They want to know the answer to the question.**
- 2: **They are testing you.**
- 3: **They are accusing you.**
- 4: **To impose a delay, to get you off their back**
- 5: **To express disagreement or disapproval**
- 6: **To exert power**
- 7: **To make a statement**

Another technique for facilitating productive meetings is the psychological process of:

- Step 1 – Mirroring to earn respect
- Step 2 - Probing to uncover underlying meanings
- Step 3 - Exploring additional options to try

THE 7 HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PEOPLE: HABIT 5: SEEK FIRST TO UNDERSTAND, THEN TO BE UNDERSTOOD. - STEPHEN R. COVEY

"Keep the company of those who seek the truth- run from those who have found it!" -

Meeting Facilitation Guidelines

The Mindset

Philosophy is the study of the fundamental nature of knowledge, reality, and existence

The Value of Philosophy

Philosophy is to be studied, not for the sake of any definite answers to its questions, since no definite answers can, as a rule, be known to be true, but rather for the sake of the questions themselves; because these questions enlarge our conception of what is possible, enrich our intellectual imagination and diminish the dogmatic assurance which closes the mind against speculation.

British philosopher Bertrand Russell (1872-1970)

Philosophy = The Love of Wisdom

Focusing on "How to Think" not "What to Think"

Meeting Facilitation Guidelines

Comparing Philosophic thought to Political, Religious, and Scientific thought

The Mindset

	Political	Religious	Scientific	Philosophical
Practitioner	Politician	Theologian (Minister, Priest, Rabbi, Imam, Monk, etc.)	Scientist	Philosopher
Reference Source of beliefs	Writings of movement founders (i.e. John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Karl Marx, US Constitution, etc.)	Religious Scripture (i.e. Bible, Quran, Torah, Vedas & Bhagavad Gita, Lotus Sutra & Dhammapada, etc.)	Published papers of all previous findings/scientists.	Writings and speeches of all sources (Socrates, Plato, Locke, Rawls, Dalai Lama, Obama, Trump, etc.)
Goal	Establish followers to gain power / control to implement their policies	Promote perceived truths to convert people and help them live better lives	Advance science in order to improve lives.	Advance knowledge to determine truth and solve problems
Method	Promote Political Party Platform and Ideologies	Promote Scripture and church doctrine.	Scientific Method	Socratic Method
Focus	What to think	What to think	How to think	How to think
Perception of others	Biased, narrow minded, superiority complex	Sees reality through a narrow point of view, superiority complex	Highly intelligent people that have trouble relating to common people	Confused, unable to come to a conclusion, to a conclusion,
Normal Behavior	Preaching	Preaching	Trial and error to test theories and publish findings	Use thought provoking questions to advance knowledge