



February 2019 Volume 8, Issue 2



# Facilitation Focus

PROVIDING A RANGE OF TIPS, IDEAS AND STRATEGIES  
FOR YOU TO USE OR PASS ON TO YOUR CLIENTS

## Helping you achieve your business goals in 2019

*A company is only as good  
as its people, their ability to  
deliver, and the promises  
they keep.*



### AIBEF 2019 INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

*"The business advice industry in Australia and in many other countries is self-regulated, and virtually anyone can call themselves a business or enterprise facilitator, advisor, coach, mentor or consultant. Business Facilitation and Coaching has copped its fair share of flak in recent years, primarily because the industry has a reputation for attracting spruikers and touts."*

Denise McNabb, Sydney Morning Herald

- Do you provide Business Advice, Consulting, Mentoring or Facilitation Services?
  - Are you looking for recognition of your facilitation skills?
- Wanting to give clients the confirmation of your professionalism and experience?
  - The AIBEF is awarding 20 + Scholarships in 2019— Apply Now!

[www.aibef.org.au/aibef-scholarship-program](http://www.aibef.org.au/aibef-scholarship-program)

A program has been launched to enable business advisors and mentors to achieve industry-recognised accreditation without the need for lengthy study or expensive courses.

The Australasian Institute of Business and Enterprise Facilitators' (AIBEF) new scholarship program recognises the skills, knowledge and experience of business advisors and mentors who have the expertise but may not have gained relevant qualifications.

There are three Scholarship categories:

- Women
- Young Advisors (up to 29 years of age)
- General

Additional details and Application Form will be on our web site ([www.aibef.org.au](http://www.aibef.org.au)) by the end of February 2018; or you can send an email to [info@aibef.org.au](mailto:info@aibef.org.au) requesting these forms to be sent to you.

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### The Institute's First Master of Business & Enterprise Facilitation

The AIBEF's first Master of Facilitation, Elizabeth Zsoldos, will be a feature writer for "Focus" beginning next issue.

Elizabeth's background and experience is wide and diverse in the following fields:

Psychology, NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programming), Neuroscience, System-thinking, Organizational Development, Moving and Dancing Therapy, Conflict Resolution, Mediation, Human Rights, Sustainability, Development Education, BUSINESS & Life COACHING and Mentoring.



# The Six Steps in Facilitation



**Many business decisions can fail due to organisational rather than analytical issues.**

Collaborative decision-making can sometimes be difficult for individuals who may play the dual (and often competing) roles of project manager, technical expert, and facilitator.

Using a simple six-step process, these individuals can structure their project planning and implementation processes in a way that promotes team and stakeholder collaboration, allows for effective facilitation and management of the decision-making process, and allows them to contribute to the technical aspects of the project.

1. **Listening:** an effective enterprise facilitator is a good listener, almost like a 'business psychiatrist'. Allowing the business person time to fully articulate (download) the issue or problem without comment or interruption is crucial. The whole picture is important. Once the story is told then the facilitator needs to go back, ask questions and clarify any issues that are unclear.
2. **Questioning:** There may be questions that need to be asked of the person to complete the picture. For example, if the client's issue is difficulty in reaching the market a question might be – 'can you describe your market for me?' It is all

about bringing the person to self-realisation.

3. **Brainstorming and idea generation:** it is important for a facilitator to not limit the range of problem solving options available to a client. Both client and facilitator will have ideas that could be tried. There are ideas and potential solutions to a problem that may have never occurred to either you or the client. The words 'what if...' should be often heard in a conversation between an enterprise facilitator and a client. 'What if we looked at the market differently? What if you targeted a different segment of the market? What if you changed the way you are promoting the product?'
4. **Business planning:** the process of building a business plan is very useful. Business planning never stops and a business plan is always 'work-in-progress'. What is valuable is to continuously work at it, update it, improve it. An effective business facilitator will endeavour to get the business enterprise owner to think about their business plan and how the current problem fits into the plan. The adage 'working on the business' not 'working in the business' is relevant here. You as their facilitator should help them do this. If there is no business plan under way then you should endeavour to get them to start to build one.

5. **Action:** he or she came to you to get a resolve for their problem. You have listened, helped them brainstorm options and let them see the issue in the context of their business plan. Now you need to help them take action. You will have other sources of information, contacts and networks and now he or she needs a plan of action. With your help, the client needs to set out a series of steps that can be taken to try to resolve the problem or address the issue.
6. **Reflecting:** some time later you should contact the client and check out how things are going.

This would be reassuring for them but also provide valuable feed-back for you on the process you used and the effectiveness of various actions taken. It will help you improve as a facilitator.

Using decision tools, the six steps enable decision-makers to manage expectations, solve problems, avoid classic decision traps, and coach leaders and teams to successful decisions.

Success of the six-step process requires that each step be planned and executed sequentially, building on the previous step to provide order and logic to decision-making



# What is Risk Management?



## Introduction

**Wikipedia** Defines Risk Management as *the identification, evaluation, and prioritization of risks followed by coordinated and economical application of resources to minimize, monitor, and control the probability or impact of unfortunate events or to maximize the realization of opportunities.*

All of us come across risks in everything we do - driving to work, taking your family on an outing, dancing in a nightclub or simply going shopping.

Whilst many of us are oblivious to many of these potential risks or hazards, most of us try to reduce the likelihood of risk affecting our everyday activities.

## What is a risk?

A risk is the likelihood or possibility of something happening as a result of a hazard or threat which will impact on your business activity or planned event.

Risk arises out of uncertainty. It is measured in terms of the **possibility** of it happening and the **consequences** if it does happen.

## What is risk management?

Risk management is the process which is used to prevent, avoid, reduce or control risks. There should be a reasonable balance between the cost of managing



risk and the benefits you expect from taking that risk.

When you set out on a picnic, you are subconsciously going through a process to minimise the risks you may encounter.

For example, you check your car's fuel level to ensure you avoid the risk of running out of petrol before you reach your destination. You ensure that you have sunscreen, drinks, eating utensils, enough food, towels, blankets, etc., **This is risk management.**

## Why do you need to manage risks?

Ignoring the risk that your car may run out of fuel puts your car at risk and may also delay your arrival at your destination.

In the same way, ignoring the risks which apply to your business activities or the events you have planned could impact on the following:

- The health, safety and well-being of employees, customers, volunteers and participants
- Your reputation, credibility and ☒

image, public and customer confidence in your organisation

- Your financial position
- Plant, equipment, the general workplace and the environment.

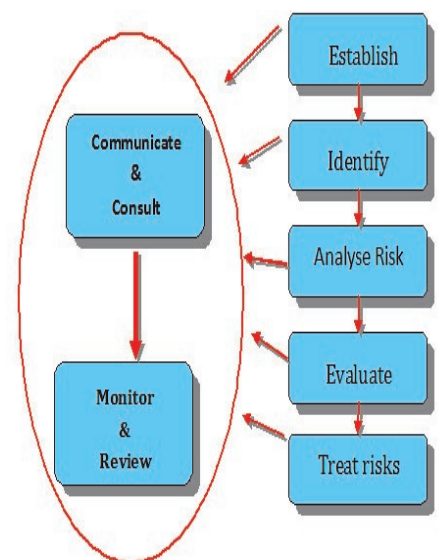
A systematic approach to managing risk is now regarded as good management practice.

## Risk Management Process

The process of managing risks involves a series of steps. At each step, you should consult with others to get their points of view. Every situation is different and requires its own risk management strategy.

The risk management process is shown below.

A good understanding of this environment will help you develop the criteria for deciding whether a risk is acceptable or not..







## What Makes An Exceptional Facilitator? *Do You Have What It Takes?*



What makes for an excellent facilitator? What personal qualities do top facilitators possess that separate them from the good facilitator? Is it more the training or the inner qualities? Is it more the facilitating technique or the artistry? Is it more facilitating knowledge or its application? Is it more natural talent for helping people or cultivated abilities?

Whilst there probably is no one single attribute that all excellent facilitators possess, exceptional facilitators do have one thing in common: They all connect with their clients, they know how to make changes with them and they know how to get results. Bottom line, they get the work done.

This current article, “*What Makes an Exceptional Facilitator*”, attempts to identify a number of the common traits and skills that are prevalent in many practitioners.

Whether you see yourself as a Business and/or Enterprise Coach, Mentor, Advisor, Trainer, Consultant or Facilitator, *(and for the purpose of this article, we will use the title “Facilitator” for all of the above)* knowing how you can be a better facilitator is the key. Being a good facilitator is an acquired talent and skill; being an Exceptional Facilitator is more than that, it's an art form, and in reality it's a talent in which very few people excel.

To be an effective facilitator, not only do you need to learn how to communicate well and help others to get results, you need to guide, motivate and inspire others to reach their full potential.

According to [Karen Williams](#), a great facilitator is likely to have the following talents or qualities:

- **A sound understanding of facilitating philosophies:**

There is no foolproof, perfect Facilitator's model for any of us to follow religiously to be an exceptional Facilitator, but having an understanding of the facilitating frameworks and transformational questions is a good place to start. When you have a sound understanding of the philosophies of facilitating, you'll recognise the principles that exist in an effective facilitating conversation.

- **The ability to communicate well**

We can all say we communicate well, although as a facilitator, less is more. A great facilitator listens more than he or she speaks, reflects the client's language back to them (NLP), recognises the importance of silence, and builds rapport with ease. An exceptional facilitator is non-directive, non-judgemental, and observant of what is and is not said by their clients. The skills of being able to empathise and put yourself in your client's shoes are also very important.

- **Be an effective motivator**

Being positive, proactive and an effective motivator are important parts of being a great facilitator, as you'll need to encourage your

clients to get great results. If they fail to deliver their agreed actions or don't do something that is important to them, you may need to reflect this back to them. To be a great facilitator, you need to be able to inspire, support, challenge, and lead by example, and also encourage your clients to celebrate their successes.

- **Be committed towards results**

You don't need to know the ‘*life and times*’ of your clients intimately to help them to get the outcomes they desire. But you do need to be committed towards helping them to achieve results. You can then both measure the outcomes and how they impact on the bottom line, whether this is financial or a softer measure.

- **The ability to take your skills into any situation**

Being an exceptional facilitator is important in a formal one-to-one setting, but it is equally important to be able to play the same role with a small group as well as a larger group, or even an entire community. Taking these skills into other situations will cultivate and build relationships.

[Bill Cole](#) believes: “*Whether you take a facilitating approach into a training environment, use your talents to facilitate a meeting, guide a client in establishing a new enterprise, assist them with developing business plans, feasibility studies, or financial forecasts, or help a group establish a co-operative, facilitating is a way of life, a technique that gets great results.*” ☑

# Welcome to “Facilitation Focus”

The Australasian Institute of Business and Enterprise Facilitators (AIBEF) was founded in 1997 as a result of the recommendations of the Industry Task Force on Leadership and Management Skills.

In their report, entitled *Enterprising Nation*, the taskforce recommended that: “.... a comprehensive accreditation process be established for small business trainers, educators, counsellors, mentors and advisers so as to upgrade the quality of small business advice.”

It's a fact that, at the moment, the business advice industry in Australia is self-regulated, and virtually anyone can call themselves a business or enterprise facilitator, advisor, coach, mentor, trainer or consultant.

Check out Google for instance; there must be a dozen (or more) sites on “*How To Start Your Own Business Consulting Venture*”.

The AIBEF is the Peak Body for Business Mentors, Coaches and Trainers, and we, the AIBEF Committee, hope to continue the association's great work to further promote the professionalism and quality of our members, and to endeavour to act as a respected voice and advocate for the wider community.

The AIBEF represents a profession that is proud of its independence and confident of the service it provides, committed to continual improvement in the skills and knowledge of our members and Business and Enterprise Facilitators in general, who ably assist in the professional guidance and support of business, enterprise and community development.



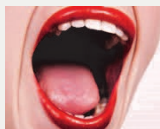
## Welcome to our Newsletter

*Facilitation Focus* is an opportunity for Business Facilitators, Coaches, Mentors, Trainers and Consultants to ask questions, offer answers, and become part of a group where we can all join in peer-to-peer discussions and conversations about challenges, experiences and outcomes. ***It is also worth noting that ‘Focus’ can be included in your Continuing Professional Development (CPD)***

*Facilitation Focus* is a publication for a rapidly changing world.

Almost daily, SME's are facing constant changes, and it is vital that the Business and Enterprise Facilitator is current with their expert advice and guidance.

*Facilitation Focus* has as its main aim to access to a professional network of peers through the AIBEF, and by gaining more insight into business and industry best practices, as well as increasing the focus on the important aspects of their own business, an AIBEF Focus member can accomplish amazing results.



## Something To Say?

Letters and Article contributions from readers are most welcome

Please send your letters to [info@aibef.org.au](mailto:info@aibef.org.au)



## WHO ARE BUSINESS OR ENTERPRISE FACILITATORS?

Virtually any professional, qualified person or organisation involved in assisting entrepreneurs, organisations, or communities to improve their Skills; Knowledge; Business; Staff; and/or Life.

The role of a Business and Enterprise Facilitator is to promote local economic growth by providing support to local entrepreneurs, groups or entire communities wishing to start or expand a small business enterprise or to assist to develop a concept where the community will benefit

The concept of Business and Enterprise Facilitation is a model of development that supports the creation of wealth from within a community by nurturing the resourcefulness of its people.

The Australasian Institute of Business and Enterprise Facilitators is an international not-for-profit institution that works with entrepreneurs, small groups and / or communities to establish sustainable, grassroots enterprise projects.

For more information please contact:

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