



Facilitation FOCUS

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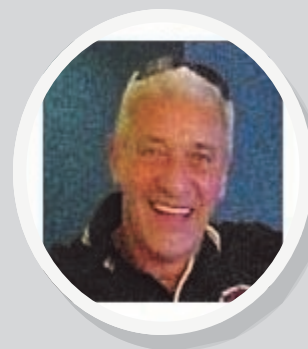


[Bernadette O'Connor](#)



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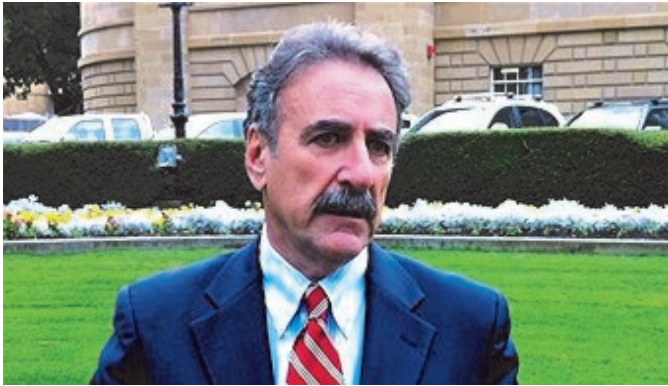


The Origin of Enterprise Facilitation



Local Enterprise Facilitation

There are numerous interpretation of exactly what is Local Enterprise Facilitation (LEF), however, I believe that the following explanation is succinct and precise: *"Local Enterprise Facilitation is an approach to personal and local community development based on transforming individual ideas into viable and sustainable enterprises"*
Ernesto Sirolli 2004



Ernesto Sirolli in Tasmania to facilitate entrepreneurial activity in regional areas. (ABC News - ABC News)

Origins

Ernesto Sirolli is a noted authority in the field of sustainable economic development and is the Founder of the Sirolli Institute, an international non-profit organization that teaches community leaders how to establish and maintain Enterprise Facilitation projects in their community.

In 1985, he pioneered in Esperance a unique economic development approach based on harnessing the passion, determination, intelligence, and resourcefulness of the local people. The striking results of "The Esperance Experience" have prompted more than 250 communities around the world to adopt responsive, person-centered approaches to

local economic development similar to the Enterprise Facilitation® model pioneered in Esperance.

According to [Highbrow](#) Enterprise Facilitation came from Ernesto Sirolli's reflections on the dismal failure of aid projects that he worked on in Zambia in the 1970s. There, as in countless other places, top-down approaches—too often culturally inappropriate—wasted billions. For example, Sirolli worked on a project to grow tomatoes, a food of no interest to Zambians, where farm laborers had to be bribed with beer to participate, and in the end, the entire crop was eaten or destroyed in one night by hippopotamuses.

"The key," Sirolli says, "is to find ways to let the community take responsibility for its own economic success. Enterprise Facilitation presents a social technology for allowing this to happen. It is the only way we have found to actually train people in the community to be responsive to the overall needs of entrepreneurs."

Sirolli found most development aid similarly patronizing or paternalistic, treating recipients like employees or children, respectively. Determined to find a better way, he pioneered Enterprise Facilitation, where the guiding principles are elegantly simple.

Guiding principles:

- Go only where invited.
- Do not initiate anything.
- Listen!
- Pay attention to what people want to do—is there an idea backed by passion?
- Remove barriers to success.

Sirolli's passion was to find a way of working such that communities would invite him in—no more imposing top-down solutions that were damaging to and disrespectful of the communities they were supposed to serve.

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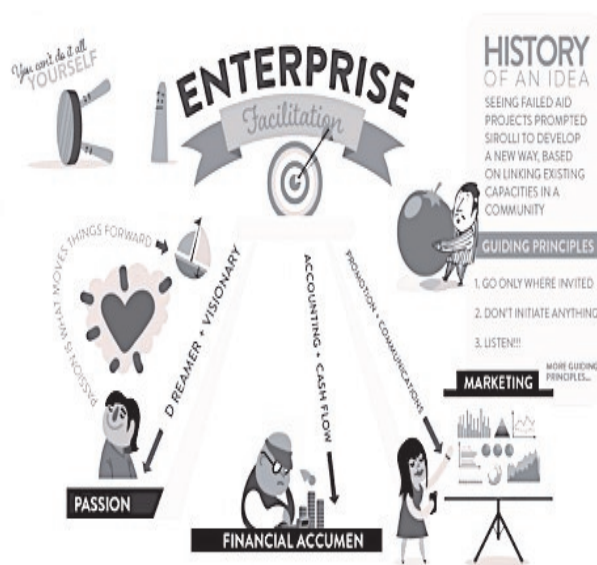
The success of an enterprise or initiative is possible even in the most unlikely circumstances if one convenes three elements:

1. An idea backed by passion, determination, and either know-how or the willingness to learn
2. Solid marketing and promotion
3. Financial acumen—accounting, risk assessment, cash flow, scaling up, etc.

The Enterprise Facilitator

The strategic element of Enterprise Facilitation is the linking function of an Enterprise Facilitator: someone passionate about helping people do what they love to do.

With Sirolli's focus on community economic development, the enterprise facilitator's job description is to show up in town, make it known through flyers, networks, and the local media that they are available to help anyone with an idea for a small business, and wait patiently in local cafés or the town square for people to approach them.



[Enterprise Facilitation | Highbrow \(gohighbrow.com\)](http://gohighbrow.com)

technology and projects that outsiders thought would be good for a community, and expecting people to change as a result, was not working.

He began to see the concept of development in a different way. "The focus of development," he writes, "is within the human heart, head, and hands and therefore the only thing we can do to foster real development is create an environment conducive to the transformation of good ideas into viable and sustainable ventures." He moved to Western Australia, and began to try his ideas in the small town of Esperance. Ten years later, the project had created or assisted 320 entrepreneurial enterprises, with a substantial and sustainable wage impact on the community.

"If you want to be invited, do something beautiful in your own community. Good news will travel fast." And it has: Enterprise Facilitation has been dramatically successful in all parts of the world, including Africa, remote Australian communities, and some of the most economically challenged counties in the United States.

Local Enterprise Facilitation (LEF) is an approach to local economic development that is driven by a community's social, environmental and economic priorities. It is shaped by those who live, work and run businesses within that community.

Although the Enterprise Facilitator works with individuals, groups and entire communities, LEF's overall purpose is to revitalize communities, assist to develop new opportunities, promote sustainability, attract investments, build wealth, encourage entrepreneurship, and create jobs.

*** Ernesto Sirolli's Enterprise Facilitation model came from first-hand experiences of failure, working in international development with the Italian government in Africa. Sirolli saw that bringing in



The Six Steps in Facilitation



Facilitation is a process used to enable and support a team or individual in achieving a long term goal, solve a problem, or develop a product or feature.

The role of the facilitator needs to be a combination of a catalyst, conductor, team member, explorer, and also problem solver. The facilitator should be capable and proficient in guiding clients through a mix of focus, excitement, hesitancy and bridling imagination.

The skilled Enterprise Facilitator works with entire communities, large and small groups, large companies, SME's and also the home-based single operator. They should be able to listen to clients as well as guide them to listen to one another.

Some of the key core skills required by the facilitator are:

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.

[The Six \(6\) Steps in Facilitation - AIBEF](#)



BRAINSTORMING; Is It Past It?



BRAINSTORMING - *And how to do it right*

Although it doesn't appear to be used that much these days, a very dynamic and effective group creativity technique is Brainstorming - which is not much different to Mind Mapping! Although it was once widely practiced, only seldom is it utilised correctly for optimum benefit. Even if you currently use brainstorming, review these rules to check your technique:

Preparation: Prior to the meeting, give each participant an overview of the subject to be brainstormed: The Problem Statement, background information etc. Send each participant a set of brainstorming rules.

Brainstorming Rules: The ideal group size is between 5 and 12 people. Ideally all are familiar with the procedure. A facilitator will lead the group, and a video should be taken of the process, which will record the ideas expressed. The entire group should participate in the idea-generating process.

Part One Before working on the “real” situation, it is a good idea to begin with a warm-up exercise (*preferably something imaginative to help relax the group*). When you are ready to “get to work” the facilitator should state the problem and invite initial input.

The facilitator should:

1. Keep the atmosphere relaxed, fun and free-wheeling;
2. Encourage everyone to participate either with original ideas or ‘piggy back’ on other people’s input;
3. Focus initially on quantity, not quality of ideas. Some groups set a numerical goal, say 25 to 50 ideas and try to reach these ideas in the allotted time;
4. Urge participants to say anything that occurs to them, no matter how wild or ‘far-fetched’ those ideas may seem;
5. Allow around 20 - 25 minutes for the idea generation phase. If the group has been too conservative during this phase, the facilitator should encourage more lateral thinking by saying something like: “What are the wildest, most outrageous ideas we can come up with?” (Remember, you may find a brilliant idea that could be “teased” to fit reality;)
6. During the idea generation phase, no one should be allowed to judge, criticise or quench any of the ideas generated.
7. The facilitator should stay alert for non-productive comments such as, “We tried that last year” or “That would cost too much”, “I don’t think that would work”, etc; and counter with, “This isn’t the time for evaluation yet”.

Break: *Before you begin part two of your brainstorming session, the group should be thanked for their participation in the idea generation phase. Then the group needs to put closure to phase one and take a break before going on.*

One creative twist that can be effective is to use two groups to look at the ideas generated, and then these two groups evaluate the ideas. Then switch lists so that both groups offer evaluation of all of the ideas.

Part Two:

The entire group should then reassemble to evaluate the input. As this happens, be sure that each member is familiar with the criteria essential for the evaluation. For instance, if price, human resources, or timing is important, let everyone know. Look at all the ideas and suggestions that have been generated for the value that they may contain, both as they have been originally stated and if they need to be altered at all.

See if you can scale down an outrageous idea to one which has practical dimensions.

Follow Up:

Regardless of the results of the session, all team members should be thanked for participating. (A short note may be appropriate). If ideas were suggested that the group decides not to implement, your feedback should be in the form of a very positive response. If a solution that came from the session is accepted, the entire group must receive full credit..Brainstorming can be dynamic and has the added benefit of people working together to achieve a common goal. **TRY IT!**



Capacity Building in Your Community



According to the [Western Australian Department for Community Development](#) “Community capacity building is about promoting the ‘capacity’ of local communities to develop, implement and sustain their own solutions to problems in a way that helps them shape and exercise control over their physical, social, economic and cultural environments.”

The full measure of a community is not just in how much it grows jobs and opportunity, nor in what it does to prevent crime or support and educate its children.

All these things are vital, certainly, and members of healthy communities should be proud when they achieve success in these areas. But the measure of a community, ultimately, must factor in how their community works together for all members’ benefit.

Community capacity-building (CCB) is an approach that attempts to increase a given community's capacity to solve collective problems. It aims for "grassroots", "bottom-up", and sustainable solutions to problems.

[The Aspen Institute](#) identifies eight outcomes of community capacity building:

- Expanding, diverse, inclusive community participation
- Expanding leadership base
- Strengthening individual skills
- Encouraging a shared understanding and vision
- Strategic community agenda
- Facilitating consistent, tangible progress toward goals
- Creating effective community organisations and institutions
- Promoting resource utilisation by the community



These outcomes, however, can also be considered processes **for** community capacity building. They provide an indication of some of the things we might be doing when working with a community.

CCB has developed as a concept because of the absolute need for strategies and policies to address major social and economic decline in towns, cities and regions experiencing significant economic change and the consequences of deep-seated and long term unemployment.

Business growth is seen to be one of the main ways of promoting economic development. But there are many different forms of business and not all put community well-being at the centre of their operations. While privately owned businesses might employ local people, the wealth they produce is accumulated and invested or expended by the business owners often elsewhere.

The only way to ensure that the wealth generated locally is used to improve livelihoods locally is for the community to take charge of enterprise ownership and development.

Community based social enterprises are distinctive in that they organize their business activities around providing community benefit directly. Because community enterprises involve stakeholders from all over the community, they are more able to devise strategies to cope with competition and capitalisation.

Community capacity building is the **continuous process** required to foster the pride and appropriate **local leadership** that allows communities, through their members, to **take responsibility for their own development** (*Human Resources and Skills Development Canada quoted in [Verity, 2007, p. 14](#)*).



Ron Court,
AMC Dip (Funerals)
MQJA JP
OH&S Advisor
0419 679 619
roncourt@aapt.net.au

Duty of Care



Duty of Care is owed by one person to another and the concept of general duty of care is the cornerstone of OH&S in many jurisdictions.

The terms "general duty of care", "duty of care" or "general duties" relate to broad responsibilities, expressed in general terms, of a wide range of persons who are connected with the work or working environment. These may include employers, employees, self-employed persons and others, such as people who control workplaces, design and construct buildings or manufacture and supply plant. The concept reflects the fact that a "duty of care" is owed in law by one person to another. Examples of such duties include:

- An employer must, as far as practicable, provide a work environment in which employees are not exposed to hazards;
- Employees must take reasonable care for their own health and safety, and that of others, at work; and
- Self-employed persons must, as far as practicable, ensure the work does not adversely affect the health and safety of others.

The general duty of care concept is based on principles established under common law and has subsequently been incorporated into statute law.

Courts have determined the common law duty to mean that all employers must take reasonable care for the safety of their employees. This recognises the greater level of control the employer has over working conditions, compared to the employee, and the employer's consequent greater control over matters affecting OHS.

In common law, an employee may claim damages through a civil court for injuries arising from an employer's failure to take reasonable care. These are commonly called "negligence claims".

Under statute law there is no need for an injury to occur before enforcement action can be taken to have an unsafe situation fixed. The focus is on prevention of such unsafe situations, through enforceable duties. Under statute law, the courts may impose fines for breaches of the legislation, and there are usually no payouts for negligence to injured parties.

In common law, each case is decided on its merits and the courts determine whether the action taken by the employer is reasonable in any particular case.

A workplace is defined as any place where employees or self-employed persons work or are likely to be in the course of their work.

A safe system of work implies that all aspects of the work have been considered as an integrated whole.

Instruction to Experienced Employees

Employers should continue to provide information instruction and training to experienced employees who have previously had relevant health and safety training. An employer should not assume that an experienced person does not need to be instructed about the obvious.

Further training or re-training is particularly required when the methods, environment, equipment, procedures, or job change; and if new laws are introduced.

All injuries are preventable; one would hope that it is all of us.

The emphasis is on health as well as safety. Injuries caused by mechanical equipment are usually quite obvious. Workplaces should have a reporting and recording system which includes details of the location where the accident occurred and the action taken to prevent further similar injuries.

Reporting of all incidents or "near misses" to the employer is also important (as required under the employee's duty).

Recording of these incidents provides valuable data to improve health and safety, and allows for steps to be taken to prevent injury.

Always seek independent legal advice on what is applicable to your situation.

Meet Troy Robinson MAIBEF (Assoc)



TROY ROBINSON

Technology Solutions Consultant

Speaker and Workshop Presenter

Troy is a Technology Solutions Consultant who focuses on Process Automation and Cyber Security.

Troy has over 24 years industry experience in Systems Administration, Web Development, Network Operations, Cyber Security and Automation.

CONTACT

PHONE:
0431 073 687

LinkedIn
[Troy Robinson | LinkedIn](#)

EMAIL:
Troyrobinson1968@gmail.com



Knowledge - Skills – Experience – Qualified – Accredited - Integrity

Are you looking for expert business assistance with your business? AIBEF and our network of qualified and skilled members offer expert counseling and training across Australia (and beyond).

All of our members are accredited and qualified experienced Business and Enterprise Facilitators, and have been required to achieve a designated standard of training, achieve the required level of qualifications set down by the AIBEF. They have delivered many hundreds of hours of business support and advice to business owners and their teams across Australia.

Part of the role of AIBEF is to provide ongoing Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for all of our members. This ongoing activity ensures that our members can constantly stay up to date and well-informed in their profession.

All of our members operate under a Code of Ethics, which includes attributes of:

*Confidentiality *Professional Competence *Professional Behavior *Objectivity *Integrity

Several of our members are experienced specialists in certain areas of business, and all of our members are "generalists" with a wide and diverse range of skills and knowledge.

Over the coming months, AIBEF will be featuring some of our members and profiling their skills and experience on our website and also our monthly newsletter.

Maintaining Accreditation, Integrity and Knowledge for Business Advisors

Web: www.aibef.org.au **Email:** info@aibef.org.au **M:** +61 410 082 201



"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, Training, Mentoring or Facilitation Services?
- Are you looking for accreditation and recognition of your facilitation skills?
- Wanting to give clients the confirmation of your professionalism and experience?

The Australasian Institute of Business & Enterprise Facilitators Inc. has recently launched a program to enable business advisors and mentors to achieve industry-recognised accreditation without the need for lengthy study or expensive courses. If you have the experience and knowledge, and have delivered over 200 hours to clients you could be eligible for Recognised Prior Learning.

Certified Master of Business and Enterprise Facilitation



MORE INFORMATION?

Send an email to Dennis Chiron, AIBEF National President at president@aibef.org.au or phone +61 410 082 201

The Australasian Institute of Business & Enterprise Facilitation Inc.

www.aibef.org.au

PO Box 906 Bribie Island 4507

ABN: 5016132 5686 AO: 2912



AIBEF Code of Conduct

All AIBEF members are obliged to maintain professional standards and ensure the legitimate interests of their clients are paramount. They must ensure that any conflicts of interests are avoided and confidentiality maintained. Members are required to adhere to the highest standards of facilitation, advice, referral, information provision, support and client care through undertaking ongoing professional development

The Process of Becoming an AIBEF Accredited Facilitator

To be an accredited Member of AIBEF, simply submit your application to the AIBEF Secretariat.

The AIBEF Accreditation Committee then assesses your experience and qualifications and will advise you of the Institute's decision.

Often this decision is partly based on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) where the Committee takes into account the equivalent experience of the candidate. The new AIBEF Member is then provided with a certificate of Membership and is invited to have their name listed on the Institute's website, and can immediately use the post nominal *M.A.I.B.E.F.* after their name.

Whether it is a concern about business start-up or growth, a marketing issue, HR or financial issue, a member of the AIBEF can provide effective guidance and support to entrepreneurs, business owners, communities or organisations.

Ph: +61 0410 082 201

About the Institute

Benefits of Membership Some benefits include:

Recognition of the professional qualifications of Member of the Institute of Business and Enterprise Facilitators (MAIBEF) and Fellow of the Institute of Business and Enterprise Facilitators (FAIBEF) in Australia and New Zealand.

The ability to use the post-nominals, MAIBEF and FAIBEF in promoting their activities and achieve:

- credibility/validation as an enterprise and business facilitator
- a premium for services
- client confidence and direct benefits to their business secure and regular employment/use as a business facilitator and enhanced market/business opportunities

Personal confidence and increasing business:

- through business support organisations including training providers and centres increasingly requiring counsellors/advisers to be professionally trained and experienced facilitators
- achieved through the formal recognition of practitioner skills
- by becoming preferred contractors.

The sharing of knowledge and skills and growth of new business through:

- peer networking and interchange of ideas with other



Members and Fellows

- peer mentoring of other Members and potential Members
- enabling contacts (formal and informal) with peer organisations and alliances

Regular electronic Newsletters and communications that:

- disseminate news of major developments in the business support industry
- notify Members of relevant conferences and events
- keep Members up to date with current issues
- notify Members about opportunities in professional development

Development of business facilitation skills and knowledge through the provision of:

- notification of opportunities to participate in ongoing targeted and specific professional development
- access to professional development in recommended training courses
- the best and most up to date information on business and training/facilitation.

Representation to others (government and non-government) on Members behalf on issues



affecting business facilitation.

A.I.B.E.F. Established 24 years

Web: www.aibef.org.au

Email: info@aibef.org.au



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, facilitators 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, facilitator, 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 Facilitators, 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, Facilitators, 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?

Thanks for the Info

Just a note to thank you for the helpful information contained in your magazine. I'm a client of one of your members, who sends your magazine onto me. I find it easy to read and some of the ideas in the numerous articles are very useful and valuable.

*Peter Haley
Solar For Life
Coffs Harbour, NSW*

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:

www.aibef.org.au

info@aibef.org.au

Assoc. No: AO2912

Mob: +61 410 082 201

PO Box 906 Bribie Island QLD 4507