



Facilitation

Ende Gelände webinar series,
28 April 2020



Overview of webinar

- Introduction
- Why facilitation/moderation?
- Tasks and attitude when facilitating – offline and online
- Facilitating consensus decision-making Ende Gelände style – offline and online

Mini-break

- Smaller groups: difficult moderation situations and how to deal with them
- Open questions from smaller groups
- End: ca. 22h

How do we want to work together?



- Learn self-responsibly: Ask, feedback, share!
- Technical issues: Please solve *in private chat* with tech support person
- Use * in chat to be added to speakers list
- 1-2 min length for contributions
- Be 100% present, give full attention to the webinar ❤️
- Privacy - do not record the webinar on your own accord

A dramatic photograph of a city skyline at sunset or sunrise. The sky is filled with dark, heavy clouds, and a bright lightning bolt strikes down from the left side. The city buildings are silhouetted against the warm, orange and yellow light of the setting or rising sun. The overall mood is intense and atmospheric.

Check-in in small groups!

1) Share your actual *emotional* weather (2 words), i.e.:

„sunny with clouds“

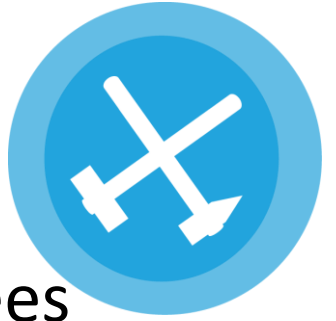
2) Share what it is that you want to learn in this webinar *the most*

(1 aspect), i.e.: „inclusion of all participants“



Why facilitation?

- Enable group to arrive at a decision
 - Make decision-making processes more efficient
 - Ensure that various people can speak in process
 - Ensure that different positions get heard in process
 - Help prevent misunderstanding, conflicts et.
- > **Good facilitation contributes to both the quality of the decision-making process and the result**



Tasks of facilitators (I)

- Introduce (and possibly prepare) agenda, ensure everyone agrees
- Take care of appropriate setting (location etc) for meeting and introduce group to it
- Agree with groups on rules how to speak, conduct meeting, take decisions
- Help ensure good, safe discussion atmosphere for everyone
- Keep people focussed on topic
- Keep time
- Make sure there are minutes as needed

Tasks of facilitators (II)

- Make sure people can speak in line with rules agreed
- Offer methods that enable communication, mutual understanding, decision-making, participation
- Ask clarifying questions, as appropriate
- Make progress in discussion transparent by summarising, visualising
- Identify and summarise proposals for decision-making
- Create clarity on what was agreed, possibly point out missing aspects
- Feedback to group on discussion process

When facilitating



- Facilitators are responsible (to an extent) for the discussion process, not the result; trust the group
- Be constructive, benevolent, curious – express that to the group
- Stick to your role as facilitators; if you need to leave it, make that transparent
- Avoid taking one side within the group – be neutral
- Be relaxed, spread a good mood, value people's contributions, be empathic
- Be focused, listen well – facilitation takes quite a bit of energy
- Do not hesitate to use your role as a moderator (e.g. don't hesitate to interrupt)



Virtual Facilitation: „More is better“

- Establish a clear culture of communication/**Netiquette**
- Speak **slower** and more clearly than in live meetings
- Limit contributions to 1-2 min
- Use chat for speakers list:
 - * = put me on list
 - DR = direct response (preferably short, no statement)
 - T = Technical remark/question



Virtual Facilitation: „More is better“

- Apply more **emotions** than normal when giving feedback for comments, motivating, highlighting, etc.
- Actively feedback on distracted participants
- Address people with their **names** frequently
- Speak out loud/paraphrase what was said, has been written, is shown to create group **focus**

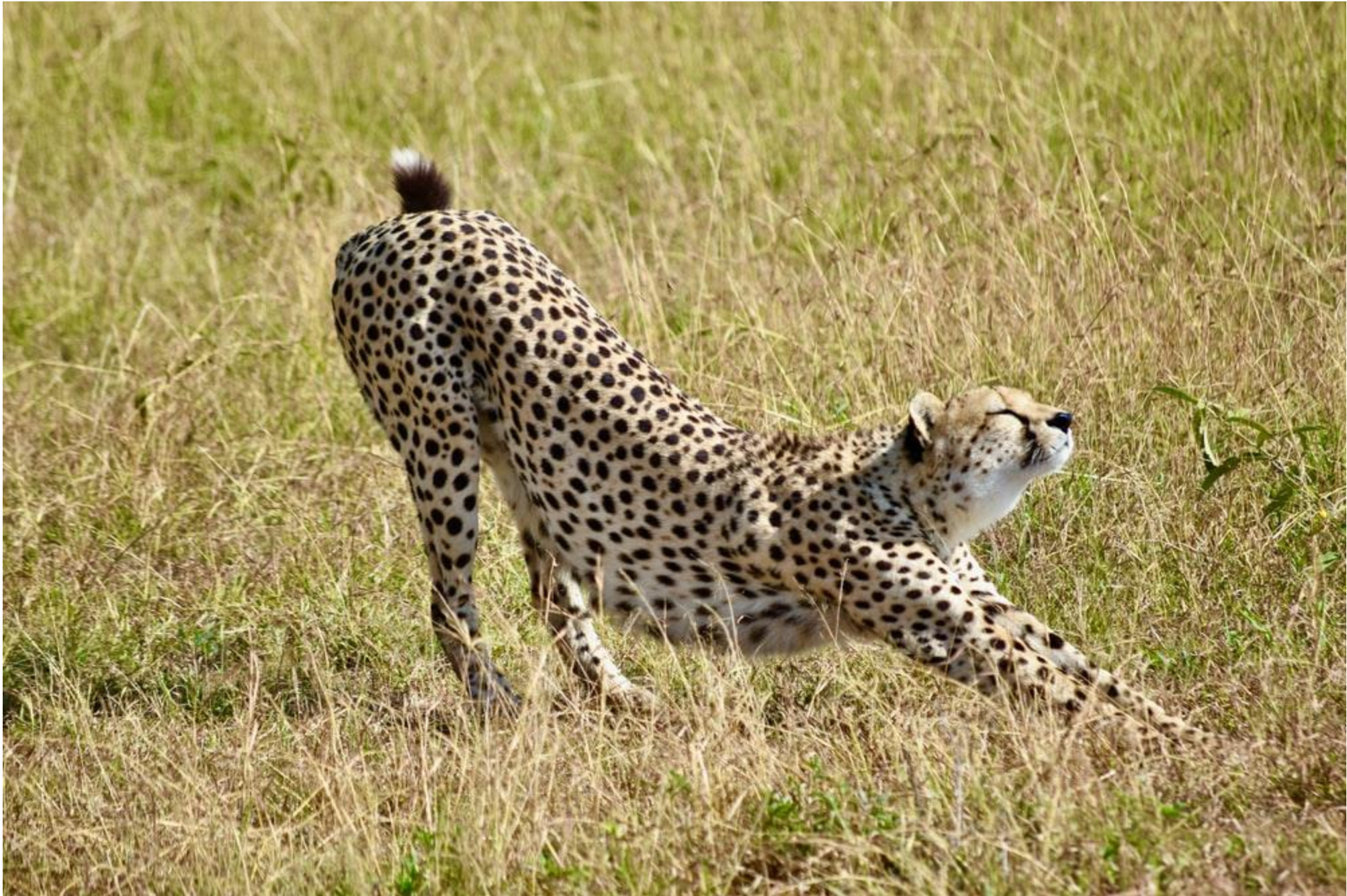


Photo credits: D.S. Chapman Unsplash

Consensus decision-making Ende Gelände style



- A consensus based decision is one that everyone that is part of Ende Gelände can at least live with; it is not necessarily one that everyone is enthusiastic about.
- Consensus decision-making can take time; it requires strong facilitation.
- For consensus to work, groups needs to agreed to use it as modus of decision-making. Group also needs shared goal/willingness to cooperate/trust.
- Not every decision is taken by consensus; many decisions are (by consensus) delegated to certain groups of people. There is a tendency to take decisions on more important, fundamental issues by consensus.



Consensus process

- **Stage 1:** Clarify the issue
- **Stage 2:** Explore issue – think divergent: open discussion, different proposals, controversial points of view etc.
- **Stage 3:** Discussion of various proposals („groan zone“), look for emerging proposals
- **Stage 4:** Discuss and amend emerging consensus proposal – think convergent: summarise, synthesis etc.
- **Stage 5:** Test for consensus; if not consensus go back as need to stages 2 – 4

Facilitating towards consensus



- Allow for **enough time**
- Make sure that **discussions and decisions are prepared**, e.g. by inviting different proposals and positions
- **Use hand signs** or methods such as asking people to position themselves in space on certain issue (spectrum lines) to make position of everyone in the group transparent to the entire group (and the facilitators)
- Use methods that foster **active participation** of all
- **Use small groups**; this might need to include people with strong and divergent opinions
- Doing speakers' list in adapted ways (e.g. by gender; those who want to speak for the first time, are allowed to speak first)
- In larger groups/for longer meetings: **co-facilitate**



Taking consensus decision

- Explicitly formulate decision issue and consensus proposal (once you feel that there is a chance that there might be a consensus)
- Positions that people can take in consensus decision-making
 - **Agree**
 - **Moderate concerns/reservations**
 - **Serious concerns/reservations**
 - **Stand aside** – I don't agree and won't participate in implementation, but the group can go ahead
 - **Veto/block** – I don't agree and the group cannot go ahead
 - **Abstain** – no strong view, can't/don't want to decide
- Hear serious concerns; reasons for standing aside and vetoes
- No consensus if there is a veto; group may wish to re-consider decision if there are too many people that stand aside or have serious concerns



Best Practice (online): Methods and Tools

- Increase participation with breakout-rooms
- Increase attention through varied media
 - (presentation, online-docs, film)
- Use chat in a clear way and observe it closely
- Increase focus by delegating tasks and roles
 - Question collection
 - Energizer/Break responsibility

Best Practice (online): Methods and Tools



- Introduce formats that allow for equanimous participation
 - use fast-paced mood-voting through chat to check agreement and/or metalevel (+/++: agree/strongly, -/- - : disagree/strongly, oo: neutral)
 - flashlights, chat-feedback → Brainwriting
 - parallel work in online-docs
 - intro and outro rounds
- Introduce breaks and energizers (every 30-45 min.)
- Introduce structure with visual collaboration tools for check-in, creativity, discussion, decision making: Example: Mural

Best Practice (online): Communication



- Use process and inclusion-oriented questions:
 - 1) Inclusion: Who hasn't spoken yet? What can be added to this? What other viewpoints/alternatives exist?
 - 2) Process: What is the main aspect we want to write down? What do we need to decide this?, What is the next step?, Who will do task XYZ?)
 - 3) Meta: How productive was our work/ communication? Why/why not?

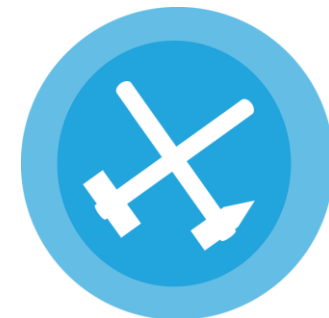
Best Practice (online): After the meeting



- Make sure results are noted down in an accessible and easy-to-understand manner
- Invite meta-level sharing at the end: Did we work/ communicate effectively? Why/Why not?
- Invite (anonymous) feedback through online forms
- Follow-up on individual level: Support to task-owners and get feedback from people who appeared withdrawn
- Plan space for informal exchange in the virtual room



Photo Credit: Zoltan Tasi Unsplash



Breakout groups

- Difficult moderation situations and how to deal with them
- 8 breakout groups altogether, always two of them dealing with same issue
- Duration 25 minutes; you will be allocated automatically to the breakout room and be re-directed to main room automatically
- After you have been assigned look for the pad belonging to your group (number!) at <https://pad.riseup.net/p/EG-facilitation-master>
- Follow guidance in pad; take minutes
- Not every group report back; but some time for major questions

After the webinar

.... you will find from 1 May our additions and solutions to the difficult facilitation situations in the respective pads. They are online for 60 days after the webinar at <https://pad.riseup.net/p/EG-facilitation-master>

.... some additional material will also be available at the above link.

... otherwise: facilitate, get feedback, do better next time!

... check out our next webinars!

Reflection



Photo Credit: Saffu Unsplash

Credits

Parts on online moderation inspired by webinar on online meetings by <https://www.danielunsoeld.de/> .