

Reflections on Structures for Effective Facilitation

I felt I had the most success with the activating structure “Since We Last Met.” In this process one reads the following prompt: “Since we last met, my life has been like a _____ (movie, book, or TV show).” I used this energizer for several reasons. It honoured where people were before a meeting and gave them an opportunity to transition to the meeting. It provided a way for group members to check-in with each other, as well as to energize and to focus. It also provided an opportunity for humour and group-bonding. Members could choose to share and explain what was going on with them personally and we were able to learn about more about each other as individuals. We could also offer support and compassion when necessary. As a teacher, I could see this prompt being used as bell-work, a prompt for discussion, or a writing journal entry. It would be effective to help students focus and transition to English class.

The other structure I had great success with was the assessing, goal-setting and planning process “Here’s What/So What/Now What.” We had given a parent survey and we needed some structure to analyze the data. Because I had used it in class, I felt it was a solid structure that I understood that would be of benefit to us. We began by observing the data and recording our observations. We then dialogued possible inferences and explanations for the data. Lastly, we were able to come up with two goals; one was to create a more welcoming environment and the other was to be more effective in our communication. I felt the structure was successful because it gave us a process to follow and it gave us two goals to focus on. Without some sort of process, I don’t feel we would have been able to proceed because how does one leap from data to goal setting? I would definitely use this structure again, and I personally feel it would have been very helpful at our most recent teacher in-service at EMS. We had a lot of data, but there was no real way to organize it, or analyze it. I felt what we did was very disorganized, and using the “Here’s What/So What/Now What” would have given some sense of purpose and process in analyzing the data.