

Best Practices – Faculty

Selection Process

Established Divisions/Districts

- Selection can vary based on Division/District.
- Candidates must be knowledgeable, enthusiastic and “qualified” in facilitation/communication skills.
- Preferably an RLI graduate.
- Geography and proximity to RLI sites should be considered especially in Divisions/Districts that encompass different countries and different languages.
- DG’s should have the opportunity to be involved in the nomination of potential faculty.

New Divisions/Districts

- Faculty selection will vary based on language, cultural skills and proximity to sites.
- The pool of initial candidates should be from recognized leaders within the district/site areas who exhibit Rotary knowledge, enthusiasm and a willingness to learn facilitation techniques vs. lecture.

Initial Training

Established Division/Districts

- Faculty Training Class size is recommended not to exceed 10 attendees in order to accommodate both theory and practice sessions by attendees.
- Facilitation of RLI materials by each facilitator trainee is highly recommended to observe acquired facilitation skills.
- Larger class sizes may require additional faculty to accommodate observation of practice facilitation skills by every trainee. Splitting the group of trainees allows each trainee to practice, but only taking a fraction of the time.

- The certificate given after completion of Initial Training has been revised. This certificate only verifies attendance/completion of the initial phase of training.

New Divisions/Districts

- After initial contractual agreement by DG with RLI, a specified date and time is established for a training team chosen by RLI to conduct the initial facilitation training for that Division/District.
- A larger pool (ideally 20) of potential facilitator candidates is recommended for New Divisions/Districts.
- New Divisions/Districts benefit best from a 2 day training that will encompass all aspects of coordination of a RLI site.

Continued Training

Established Divisions/Districts

- It is highly recommended that after the initial training, the facilitator trainee observe other facilitators/discussion leaders at a site – preferably 4 observations before being assigned an individual RLI session.
- It is recommended, when possible, that a mentor be assigned to the facilitator trainee while attending observations and during the initial facilitation session of the trainee. This will provide the opportunity to discuss observed facilitation techniques, review course material and receive constructive comments from the mentor after the initial facilitation assignment.
- Choosing the best facilitators for observation purposes is recommended.
- As a best practice, it is recommended that a new facilitator trainee be observed at least twice while presenting/facilitating a RLI session.
- When practical, opportunities should be provided for facilitator trainees to choose topics with which they are comfortable and feel they could be comfortable and proficient at facilitating.

- Only after completion of the initial training, continued observations and observations of the facilitator trainee facilitation sessions should faculty certification be deemed completed.

New Divisions/Districts

- The best practices described above may not necessarily apply to New Divisions/Districts because of the limited initial pool of experienced facilitators/discussion leaders.
- New Divisions/Districts may need to rely upon a more intense peer review process among the recently trained new facilitators/discussion leaders to ensure proficiency in the facilitation process of RLI sessions.
- Faculty certification (after initial training and required observations) should be duly documented by Division/District's Registrar or comparable equivalent for inclusion on the Certified Faculty Roster.
- Best Practice – Faculty who have satisfied the certification process should be presented a visible form of recognition e.g. faculty name badge, pin, etc.
- Public recognition of completion of the faculty certification process is highly encouraged.

Maintenance of Certification

- Best Practice – Divisions/Districts are encouraged to establish an ongoing peer review process for all faculty. This can be accomplished by facilitator/discussion leader to facilitator/discussion leader observations at RLI sites followed by discussion of performances.
- Divisions/Districts should establish a minimum number of expected sessions to be facilitated by each faculty member to maintain certification (e.g. twice within an 18 month period) to ensure adequate experience for faculty.
- Divisions/Districts are responsible for informing and disseminating curriculum revisions to all faculty via attendance at Division/District

sponsored refresher courses, webinars, online training, annual meetings, etc.

- Divisions/Districts should implement some mechanism for attendees to evaluate faculty as an adjunct to peer evaluation. This can be accomplished by using printed evaluation sheets, index cards, requesting comments, etc.

Expectations of Faculty

- Faculty need to proactively plan for their assigned sessions – materials, resources, lesson time management, venue, rooms, and observation assignments.
- Awareness of cultural differences may require additional preparation and delivery of materials.
- Faculty are expected to adhere to Division/District policies including expectation of attendance at mandatory site meetings, venue review and preparation, etc.

Specific Suggestions for Classroom Management

- You are a “Facilitator/Discussion Leader” not a teacher doing a lecture!
- Always thank everyone for attending RLI!
- First class of day – have an icebreaker question and have attendees open and review their course materials.
- Discuss the class goals and objectives.
- Know how long the class period is. Know the class ending time and end on time.
- Welcome all input. Encourage participation by everyone!
- Keep the class focused on the specific class topic.
- Know what outside resources are available for the class you are leading.
- Be vibrant and energetic!
- Keep every participant engaged.
- Mitigate negative behavior. (Stand near someone that is not focused on the class)

- Properly control your voice qualities: Tone, Inflection, Pace and Volume.
- Be mindful of your facial expressions and body language.
- Prepare quality class questions in advance.
- Use a written class outline if it better helps you pace your class.
- Don't wing it!
- When observing and/or evaluating a class, please be quiet, sit in the back and do not participate.
- Put in the research time required to properly prepare for every class that you lead.
- Be polite, respectful and culturally aware.
- Don't linger on a single subject. Keep the class on topic and moving forward!
- Do not interrupt group presentations. Let groups first complete their entire report.
- Do not assign anyone to read or preform a task. Always ask for a volunteer to do something!
- Do not talk about yourself or your Rotary Club!
- Do not say "In my club, we..." or "I would not do it this way."
- Do not anticipate an answer.
- Do not say that a response is wrong. (No opinion is wrong.)
- Do not be super serious or rigid.
- Do not allow sexist comments. Do not allow improper comments or jokes.
- Tell each class to take back to their clubs what they have learned today.
- Summarize by asking "What is the most useful thing that you learned here today?"
- Encourage everyone to network with other Rotarians during lunch and throughout the day.
- Remind everyone of the importance of filling out the class evaluation form/card.
- Encourage everyone to use fellow classmates as future resources on the topics discussed.

- Let attendee know that they should feel free to contact the facilitator/discussion leader directly later with any additional questions.
- Encourage your class to further promote RLI within their individual Rotary Clubs.
- Please end your class on time, as a convenience to everyone involved.
- Get to know your class by sitting in on the class beforehand.
- There are no dumb questions.
- Praise good comments and discussions.
- Encourage class notes.
- Refer class participants to all materials and handouts available.
- Strict adherence to neutrality of discussion points by facilitators/discussion leaders is expected.
- Listen intently. Be a role model for listening, and “mirror what was said. Mirroring is repeating back what was said, while paraphrasing outs the facilitators “spin” on what was said. Paraphrasing is not always effective, because it may change the intent if the speaker.
- “Synthesizing” what was said helps the Scribe record the comment of the flip chart. This means listening to complex answers and distilling the information to a few summary words. Check for accuracy.
- Maintain good eye contact and stay connected to the group and each person. Create a climate conducive to learning. The Facilitator should not turn their back on the class.
- Trust is the resources of the group. Learners’ past experiences are useful in the learning process. Keep focused on the discussion.
- Address individuals by their name. Utilize the name cards/table tents..
- Stay alert and involved at each moment.
- Organize, connect, and summarize to achieve closure – a sense of topic completion. You may want to refer back to the original goals of the module.
- Acknowledge and record every idea offered. Conflict if ideas is appropriate, but do not allow conflict of personalities.
- Be a facilitator, not a performer. Be interested, not interesting. Do not tell personal stories.
- Encourage everyone to openly express ideas. Validate varying points of view offered.

- Mentally keep track of who speaks and who does not, and encourage balanced participation.
- Be aware of the objectives of the class session and be flexible in the approach to helping achieve those outcomes.
- Correct incorrect information by asking - "Does everyone agree with this?"
- Body position and movement are important. The Facilitator/Discussion Leader greeting people at the door and standing in the front of the room at the beginning of the discussion period sends a message of control without words. Some movements can distract participants, for example: playing with jewelry, paper or pen, continually adjusting glasses, touching hair, or leaning against a wall or podium for support.
- If using a projector screen, white board, or flipchart, do not turn your back to participants. When referring to a visual, do so at 45-degree angle. While using gestures to emphasize various points can be effective, making too many can easily divert participant's attention away from a session's content.
- Use of space to communicate. As the space between the message sender and the receiver becomes less, the communication tends to become more personal and intense. Backing away and creating more space can have the opposite effect. "Cross talk" and the flow of communication can be affected by the position of the Facilitator/Discussion Leader, i.e., stand between participants to block cross talk with your body.
- Eyes. From the Facilitator/Discussion Leader perspective, use of the eyes may help in controlling who is speaking and who may speak next as you move around the room. The way you use your eyes may also impact the way you are perceived by the discussion participants. A study found that speakers who were judged sincere looked at the audience 63.4% of the time, while speakers who were judged insincere looked at the audience 20.8% of the time.
- Voice qualities and characteristic. The use of tone, inflection, pace, and volume all have an impact on the words that we are using. Providing variety can help convey the appropriate messages at the appropriate time.

- **Silence.** Silence can provide effective communication. As a Facilitator/Discussion Leader, standing in front of the discussion group at the beginning of the session and saying nothing may be an effective way of conveying the message that it is time to start. You may also want to use silence after asking a question in order to allow discussion participants to mentally prepare a response. It may also be that in some cultures, if seminar participants know the subject being discussed, it is proper to remain silent.
- **Touch.** In the context of the Facilitator/Discussion Leader, a handshake and greeting at the door provides communication without a single word being spoken.
- **Time.** Time is viewed differently in various cultures and by diverse individuals. This is something to be aware of as a Facilitator/Discussion Leader. Some participants may want to take time to think through an answer because that may be an expectation in their culture.
- **Color.** Color can provide nonverbal communication. The red, yellow, and green colors of traffic lights, for example, have a nearly universal understanding. Facilitators/Discussion Leaders may wish to consider use of color when using flip charts markers.
- Avoid discussing political and religious topics.
- Always establish the protocol (housekeeping...).
- Finally – Enjoy each and every class you lead! Have fun!

Retention of Faculty

- As a best practice it is recommended by each Division/District to acknowledge exceptional faculty on a yearly/biannual basis.
- Provide opportunities for facilitators/discussion leaders' growth with refresher courses, one on one consultations, and networking with other facilitators/discussion leaders.
- Accommodating facilitators/discussion leaders' class session preferences when possible is recommended.
- Ineffective facilitators/discussion leaders should be given opportunities to improve their skills through mentoring, observation and commentary as well as frank discussions about performance. They may be required to take the Initial Training again.