

# FACT SHEET

## FACILITATION (including meetings, AGM's, group discussions etc)

This Fact Sheet will assist participants to understand the process, how they can prepare and what they can expect from a facilitation session with Conflict Resolution Service (CRS).

### WHAT IS FACILITATION?

Facilitation may take many forms with the aim of bringing people together to talk about any problems or to make a decision. Often the parties in a facilitation session would not see themselves as in 'dispute' or in need of mediation but simply in need of assistance to facilitate communication or decision-making.

Facilitation can help your workplace or organisation to:

- Put everything in perspective and decide what is most important to the workplace
- Look at a situation from different angles, which can help you find a solution
- Get all participants talking with the other person/s involved
- Make sure all participants understand each other's point of view
- Work something out together that everyone involved can live with.

Facilitation Services include the following:

- Independent 'Chairs' for meetings
- Team building
- Strategic planning days
- Organisational reviews
- Community consultations
- Assistance with organisational change
- Needs analysis
- Dispute system design

### WHAT WILL WE TALK ABOUT?

The agenda covered during the facilitation will be set by your workplace or organisation. Prior to the facilitation, participants must register themselves as a speaker and estimate the speaking time required so that appropriate time can be allocated in the agenda.

As a result of time considerations and to enable all participants to appropriately prepare for the session, only items on the agenda will be discussed during the facilitation. Where possible, the agenda will be provided to all participants in advance of the facilitation session. The agenda is set by the hosting workplace or organisation.

Our role is to facilitate discussions and enable a collaborative and inclusive approach, not follow the individual constitutions of the participants.

CRS do not hold any responsibility for the subject matter covered in that agenda.

### WHAT CAN I EXPECT DURING THE FACILITATION?

Time is valuable for all participants and often specific timeframes for the completion of a facilitation session are in place. We appreciate that discussions can evoke emotional responses and that high stress and conflict can be a normal response to disputes. The facilitator is there to ensure that all

participants feel included, the group remains on task and focussed and that the group is provided with a supportive environment to encourage a successful outcome.

During the facilitation, participants should expect the following:

- The facilitator will guide the discussion in keeping with the agenda, which may include indicating whose turn it is to speak.
- Subject matters not covered by the agenda may arise unexpectedly and at such time, the facilitator will use their discretion to identify whether the session is the appropriate forum to discuss that subject matter.
- The facilitator may request that a participant discontinue speaking, particularly if the subject matter has already been adequately covered by another participant, does not align with the agenda items, and/or is not helpful to encouraging a positive and meaningful discussion.
- Participants should contribute thoughtfully to the discussion and where necessary, the facilitator may ask a participant to rephrase or redirect their message.
- Participants should be mindful of their communication and body language and how this may be perceived by other participants.
- The facilitator will assist to summarise points, challenge ideas and record outcomes.

The facilitator does not make any decisions for participants and they don't take sides. Facilitators are there to help participants to have a conversation which will enable them to make decisions together about a situation.

The facilitator is not able to determine legal rights, provide legal advice or otherwise involve themselves in legal matters. From time to time, the facilitator may provide guidance on matters and the purpose is to ensure that the facilitation remains on track with the agenda and time is not wasted on irrelevant matters.

### **HOW CAN I PREPARE?**

Facilitations have a greater chance of success when all participants feel prepared and supported during the process. Think about your key issues and concerns and ensure these matters are included on the agenda prior to the facilitation.

Participants should thoughtfully consider their personal needs, including seeking emotional support where required. As part of preparations, participants may want to seek their own advice and information, including legal advice. CRS cannot be held responsible for a participant's failure to adequately prepare or inform themselves prior to a facilitation.

### **FEEDBACK OR COMPLAINTS**

CRS will always respond to your enquiries and consider any complaints you may have. Due to the nature of our business and for confidentiality considerations we will not entertain discussions about the process we have taken. Please be assured that CRS will provide information to participants in keeping with our policies, procedures and legislative requirements.

If you are not happy with the service you have received, you may make a complaint to CRS and have it confidentially investigated. To make a complaint, or for a further discussion, please contact us.

#### **More information**

If you would like further information about anything contained in the Fact Sheet, please contact CRS:

P: (02) 6189 0590

E: [mediation@crs.org.au](mailto:mediation@crs.org.au)

[www.crs.org.au](http://www.crs.org.au)