

# Group facilitation Assessment of Competencies Tool (GroupACT)

## Group Facilitation Skills for Adults

### 1. GROUP GUIDELINES AND GROUND RULES

Check all behaviours that are demonstrated in each category.			
Unhelpful or potentially harmful behaviours	Basic helping skills	Advanced helping skills	
<input type="checkbox"/> Violates group guidelines (e.g., answers phone in-session, interrupts members) <input type="checkbox"/> Allows members to violate guidelines without correction or acknowledgement	<input type="checkbox"/> Introduces concept of group session guidelines in first session or recaps and explains why were relevant in subsequent sessions <input type="checkbox"/> Establishes ground rules (e.g., ‘Respect, listen, and pay attention to each other;’ ‘Everything that gets discussed stays here;’ ‘No phones’) <input type="checkbox"/> <i>None of the above</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Completes all Basic Helping Skills</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Asks for agreement from the group on guidelines <input type="checkbox"/> Elicits group feedback, provides interpretations and reflections <input type="checkbox"/> Adjusts rules depending on need or context	
Check the level that best applies (only one level should be checked)			
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 1</b> <i>any unhelpful behaviour</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 2</b> <i>no basic skills, or some but not all basic skills</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 3</b> <i>all basic skills</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 4</b> <i>all basic helping skills plus any advanced skill</i>
Notes:			

### 2. GROUP PARTICIPATION

Check all behaviours that are demonstrated in each category.			
Unhelpful or potentially harmful behaviours	Basic helping skills	Advanced helping skills	
<input type="checkbox"/> Displays favouritism to specific members <input type="checkbox"/> Excludes other members (e.g., ignores input) <input type="checkbox"/> Forces unwilling participant to join discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Scolds participant(s) for under-or-over sharing	<input type="checkbox"/> Uses timely techniques (e.g., turn taking; ‘gentle prompting’) to encourage fair participation <input type="checkbox"/> Clarifies discussion points for members struggling with literacy, numeracy, or tech skills <input type="checkbox"/> Addresses participation barriers (e.g., interruptions) <input type="checkbox"/> <i>None of the above</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Completes all Basic Helping Skills</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Provides reflection on discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Discusses ways members can support one another to participate <input type="checkbox"/> Checks-in on comfort of sharing for all members	
Check the level that best applies (only one level should be checked)			
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 1</b> <i>any unhelpful behaviour</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 2</b> <i>no basic skills, or some but not all basic skills</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 3</b> <i>all basic skills</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 4</b> <i>all basic helping skills plus any advanced skill</i>
Notes:			

### 3. FOSTERING EMPATHY AMONGST GROUP MEMBERS

Check all behaviours that are demonstrated in each category.			
Unhelpful or potentially harmful behaviours	Basic helping skills	Advanced helping skills	
<input type="checkbox"/> Does not intervene when group members are not empathetic, hurtful, or hostile towards one another <input type="checkbox"/> Shares member information from private session as an example of empathy or non-empathy	<input type="checkbox"/> Encourages and fosters empathy amongst group members (e.g., points out displays of empathy towards one another) <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates empathy for others to follow (e.g., nods head, says 'uh-huh') <input type="checkbox"/> <i>None of the above</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Completes all Basic Helping Skills</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Provides summarising statements and interpretations <input type="checkbox"/> Uses prompts ('How do you feel after you shared with us?')	
Check the level that best applies (only one level should be checked)			
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 1</b> <i>any unhelpful behaviour</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 2</b> <i>no basic skills, or some but not all basic skills</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 3</b> <i>all basic skills</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 4</b> <i>all basic helping skills plus any advanced skill</i>
Notes:			

### 4. COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

Check all behaviours that are demonstrated in each category.			
Unhelpful or potentially harmful behaviours	Basic helping skills	Advanced helping skills	
<input type="checkbox"/> Gives direct suggestions without group input <input type="checkbox"/> Does not intervene or address harmful or unrealistic solutions (e.g., 'Quit job,' 'Avoid husband') <input type="checkbox"/> Judges solutions created by group <input type="checkbox"/> Allows judgement from members (e.g., 'That will never work,' 'That's stupid')	<input type="checkbox"/> Equally encourages all members to share how they addressed similar problems <input type="checkbox"/> Encourages members to praise and support each other for positive and challenging experiences <input type="checkbox"/> Unrealistic and unhelpful solutions are eliminated <input type="checkbox"/> Encourages brainstorming of solutions in the group <input type="checkbox"/> <i>None of the above</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Completes all Basic Helping Skills</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Solicits feedback from group to ensure solutions are attainable, realistic, and timely <input type="checkbox"/> Addresses potential barriers <input type="checkbox"/> Validates challenges (e.g., 'Not all solutions work for everyone') <input type="checkbox"/> Suggests member pairing to support each other (if applicable to the intervention)	
Check the level that best applies (only one level should be checked)			
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 1</b> <i>any unhelpful behaviour</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 2</b> <i>no basic skills, or some but not all basic skills</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 3</b> <i>all basic skills</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 4</b> <i>all basic helping skills plus any advanced skill</i>
Notes:			

## 5. ADDRESSING LOGISTICAL BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

Check all behaviours that are demonstrated in each category.			
Unhelpful or potentially harmful behaviours	Basic helping skills	Advanced helping skills	
<input type="checkbox"/> Actively excludes members' attendance (e.g., does not make schedule adjustments) <input type="checkbox"/> Ignores feedback on barriers to attendance <input type="checkbox"/> Rejects/ignores sociodemographic and minority barriers (e.g., religious observances, menstrual practices, disabilities)	<input type="checkbox"/> Actively solicits information to address any barriers to attendance (e.g., work/farming schedule, transportation) <input type="checkbox"/> Works to reschedule or adjust sessions accordingly <input type="checkbox"/> Encourages members to attend even if previous sessions were missed <input type="checkbox"/> <i>None of the above</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Completes all Basic Helping Skills</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Engages group in problem-solving/brainstorming ways for all members to attend sessions <input type="checkbox"/> Encourages group members to support one another in attending group sessions <input type="checkbox"/> Supports access to sessions (e.g., convenient session locations; traveling together)	
Check the level that best applies (only one level should be checked)			
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 1</b> <i>any unhelpful behaviour</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 2</b> <i>no basic skills, or some but not all basic skills</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 3</b> <i>all basic skills</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 4</b> <i>all basic helping skills plus any advanced skill</i>
Notes:			

## 6. GROUP CONFIDENTIALITY

Check all behaviours that are demonstrated in each category.			
Unhelpful or potentially harmful behaviours	Basic helping skills	Advanced helping skills	
<input type="checkbox"/> Shares a member's confidential information or experiences with the group (e.g., a member's trauma history disclosed in private) <input type="checkbox"/> Threatens to share group information with community or family members <input type="checkbox"/> Targets or blames members when confidentiality is broken <input type="checkbox"/> Does not intervene when others break confidentiality	<input type="checkbox"/> Explains rationale for confidentiality, including situations when confidentiality can be broken <input type="checkbox"/> Confidentiality issues are addressed when unexpected/uninvited individuals arrive <input type="checkbox"/> <i>None of the above</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Completes all Basic Helping Skills</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Explains issues of respect, valuing others' experiences, and feelings associated with violation of confidentiality <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriately addresses times when confidentiality is broken during group	
Check the level that best applies (only one level should be checked)			
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 1</b> <i>any unhelpful behaviour</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 2</b> <i>no basic skills, or some but not all basic skills</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 3</b> <i>all basic skills</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 4</b> <i>all basic helping skills plus any advanced skill</i>
Notes:			

## 7. TIME MANAGEMENT: APPROPRIATE BREAKS, ENERGISERS & PACING

Check all behaviours that are demonstrated in each category.			
Unhelpful or potentially harmful behaviours	Basic helping skills	Advanced helping skills	
<input type="checkbox"/> Prevents participants from taking a break <input type="checkbox"/> Forces group to continue when emotionally exhausted or distressed <input type="checkbox"/> Targets or blames participant(s) when requesting breaks or energisers	<input type="checkbox"/> Reviews schedule for the day <input type="checkbox"/> Includes and explains timed breaks with instructions for start/stop signals <input type="checkbox"/> Includes time for questions in schedule <input type="checkbox"/> <i>None of the above</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Completes all Basic Helping Skills</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Consolidates participants learning (e.g., has well-spaced summarising) <input type="checkbox"/> Elicits feedback and check-ins with learning (e.g., 'checking-in' activities) <input type="checkbox"/> Checks-in with group to see when breaks are needed or preferred <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriately conducts group energisers to encourage participation	
Check the level that best applies (only one level should be checked)			
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 1</b> <i>any unhelpful behaviour</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 2</b> <i>no basic skills, or some but not all basic skills</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 3</b> <i>all basic skills</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Level 4</b> <i>all basic helping skills plus any advanced skill</i>
Notes:			

### Acknowledgement

This scale is informed by research described in: Pedersen, G. A., Sangraula, M., Shrestha, P., Laksmin, P., Schafer, A., Ghimire, R., Luitel, N. P., Jordans, M. J. D. & Kohrt, B. A. Developing the Group facilitation Assessment of Competencies Tool for Group- Based Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Interventions in Humanitarian and Low-Resource Settings. *Journal on Education in Emergencies*. 2021. <https://doi.org/10.33682/u4t0-acde>

The following documents supported development of competency descriptions:

- World Health Organization: Group Interpersonal Therapy (Group IPT) for Depressio. WHO generic field-trial version 1.0. Geneva, Columbia University; 2016. [https://www.who.int/mental\\_health/mhgap/interpersonal\\_therapy/en/](https://www.who.int/mental_health/mhgap/interpersonal_therapy/en/)
- World Health Organization: Caregiver Skills Training, Session Guide. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2018. <https://www.who.int/teams/mental-health-and-substance-use/treatment-care/who-caregivers-skills-training-for-families-of-children-with-developmental-delays-and-disorders>
- World Health Organization: Self-Help Plus (SH+). Facilitator manual Geneva, World Health Organization, 2021. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240035119>

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## Abbreviated instructions for standardized role plays

If using standardized role plays, the following prompts can be used when eliciting different competencies. For full details on performing standardized role plays see <https://equipcompetency.org/>.

### 1. GROUP GUIDELINES AND GROUND RULES

Actor instructions: *During the group session, participant #1 answers a phone call and begins speaking, creating a disruption to the group's focus and flow.*

### 2. GROUP PARTICIPATION

Actor instructions: *Participant #1 dominates the discussion by speaking frequently. When participant #2 begins to share their experience, participant #1 repeatedly interrupts, making it difficult for participant #2 to fully express themselves.*

### 3. FOSTERING EMPATHY AMONGST GROUP MEMBERS

Actor instructions: *Participant #1 shares a personal experience of worrying about something in their daily life. Participant #2 replies with a comment such as "Oh, that's not a big deal. I used to worry about it all the time, but I just got over it."*

### 4. COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

Actor instructions: *Participant #1 shares a personal challenge they are facing (e.g. a difficulty they are having at home or work). After they finish speaking, the rest of the group remain silent, offering no suggestions, support or follow-up.*

### 5. ADDRESSING LOGISTICAL BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

Actor instructions: *Participant #2 arrives at the session late after having missed the previous one. Upon arrival, participant #1 says, "Hey, you can't just walk in here after missing all of the last session. You don't even know what we are talking about."*

### 6. GROUP CONFIDENTIALITY

Actor instructions: *During the session, participant #2 expresses concern to the group, sharing that while walking in the park with their family, they unexpectedly ran into participant #1, who casually asked "Hey, what did you think about the last session? I really appreciated what you were talking about" in front of participant #2's family.*

### 7. TIME MANAGEMENT: APPROPRIATE BREAKS, ENERGISERS & PACING

Actor instructions: *Participant #1 appears restless and repeatedly asks, "Can we take a break soon?" expressing impatience. They comment, "We've been at it for like an hour just talking about the same thing over and over again. Aren't we doing anything else today?"*