

The facilitator's role

Use this tool to help you and other leaders understand roles and typical responsibilities of facilitators. You might use these suggestions to create a job description and responsibilities, to help leaders understand needed facilitation tasks, or to provide information when requesting funding for a professional learning team facilitator. This sheet also could be a checklist for you to determine your own strengths, keeping in mind that the list is not comprehensive and should be adapted for your situation. In areas you do not feel confident, locate someone to assist with that task while building your own skills.

The professional learning team facilitator:

Models continual learning and builds knowledge and skill in the following areas:

- Professional learning team goals, concepts, and processes.
- Fundamentals of professional learning team work and of team development.
- Team facilitation strategies and skills.
- Working effectively with adult learners.
- Establishing productive relationships with team members.

Develops the expertise to successfully:

- Guide teams in holding productive meetings.
- Provide helpful feedback to teams on their work.
- Move teams to the next level of collaboration when needed.
- Read and respond appropriately to team logs.
- Establish online communication among teams; and between teams, designated school and district leaders, and consultants.
- Model leading a team meeting, if necessary.
- Troubleshoot team problems as they arise.
- Help with team logistics to the extent possible (gather needed resources; teach a class to allow a teacher to observe a colleague, etc.).
- Observe classroom applications of teaching practices that teachers are working on collaboratively and provide productive feedback.
- Provide books and/or research-based information on topics teams are studying.
- Provide updates on the team's work to the principal, outside consultants, and others as requested.
- Set up webinars and other types of online networking as a way of connecting team members with outside consultants for coaching and troubleshooting.
- Assist in seeing that team members respond to surveys and help with other formative data collection as needed.
- Regularly publicize the work of the teams (through wikis, school web sites, newsletters, bulletin boards, PTA meetings, faculty meetings, etc.).
- Recognize and advocate for needed changes in the school organization that will better promote and support teacher collaboration.

Builds the knowledge and skill to:

- Train new teachers in the professional learning team process.
- Do follow-up training with existing teams as needed.
- Lead training sessions for other faculties as needed.

Source: Jolly, A. (2008). *Team to teach: A facilitator's guide*. Oxford, OH: NSDC.