

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS CAPACITY MATRIX

Not all members of the public participation team are required to have all the skills, knowledge, and behaviors needed for successful public participation. The key is to assess the overall capacity of the team and ensure that the team has sufficient expertise, knowledge, and experience.

Foundational Skills	Skill Level Needed for All Team Members	Additional Skill Level Needed for Managers and Leaders	Additional Skills that May Be Sought from Outside Experts
Fundamental understanding of equity	Understand principles of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) as well as unconscious bias and tools for changing behavior.	Provide leadership and guidance to ensure an equity lens is applied through all programming.	Provide training on DEI principles and effective tools to combat unconscious bias.
Fundamental understanding of public participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity for influence • Commitment to input • Inclusiveness • Relationship-building • Transparency 	Understand and recognize the importance of all principles.	Provide leadership and guidance to ensure that principles are at the core of the planning and implementation of the project.	Provide training in principles and the overall approach to public participation.
Fundamental understanding of public participation behaviors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Openness • Humility • Respect • Honesty • Reliability • Flexibility • Resilience 	Reflect on the importance of individual behaviors and how to ensure their interactions with stakeholders are positive.	Recognize individual behaviors and overall team behaviors and build the capacity over time. Ensure team member roles are properly aligned with their current behavior capacity. Model the behaviors at all times.	Provide training in behaviors.



Foundational Skills	Skill Level Needed for All Team Members	Additional Skill Level Needed for Managers and Leaders	Additional Skills that May Be Sought from Outside Experts
Project management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situation assessment • Goal setting • Planning • Process management • Meeting and event management • Evaluation 	Apply appropriate management skills to individual roles.	Design public meetings and events. Create project workplans. Provide overall project management and leadership.	Provide training in project management. Design public meetings and events. Create project workplans.
Stakeholder communications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective writing • Simple language • Presentations • Interpersonal skills • Active listening • Negotiations 	Understand the importance of each skill and current skill level, and then take action to improve skills over time.	Recognize individual skills and overall team capacity and build the capacity over time. Ensure that team member roles are properly aligned with their current skills. Engage outside experts to complement gaps in current skills.	Provide training in communication. Provide expert communication skills and assistance in all areas.
Neutral facilitation	Recognize the role and importance of facilitation.	Work cooperatively with the facilitator to design and implement credible processes.	Apply all the skills required of an expert neutral facilitator.
Conflict resolution and problem solving	Understand the key skills needed to resolve conflict, negotiate solutions and work in high-intensity situations.	Recognize individual skills and overall team capacity and build the capacity over time. Ensure that team member roles are properly aligned with their current skills. Engage outside experts to complement gaps in current skills.	Provide training in conflict resolution, alternative dispute resolution, negotiation, and working in difficult situations.

Public Participation Guide: Foundational Skills Capacity Matrix, Environmental Protection Agency, 2014.
<https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2014-05/documents/skillsmatrix.pdf>

