



Spectrum K12 is a diverse team of more than 200 people, including educators, parents of special needs children and former education directors and school administrators who appreciate first-hand the challenges faced in managing the special education process.



Balancing Diverse Teams Through The IEP Process

Presenters -



Stacey Blavatt

*Director of Professional Development
Operations*

Ginger Sewell

Lead Trainer, Facilitated IEP Trainings

Purpose of Today's Session

Our Essential IEP Facilitation process

- o Implements the intent of the IDEIA including Resolution Sessions;
- o Provides a support framework for student decisions;
- o Enhances collaboration among parents and staff;
- o Builds capacity & consensus at the local school level;
- o Works as both a preventative framework for meetings & an option for conflict resolution.

Purpose of a Facilitated Meeting

The Essential IEP Facilitation Meeting Process enables:

- o **Relationships:** create/reinforce positive team member relationships;
- o **Consensus:** make consensus-based decisions;
- o **Student Focus:** focus the conversation on student strengths and challenges;
- o **Meeting Process:** use tools that result in an efficient, guided process and effective communications among team members.

Ground Rules

- o Respectfully listen & consider other's opinions & ideas
- o Be willing to experiment with ideas & techniques presented
- o Maintain confidentiality in your comments
- o Honor time guidelines
- o Take turns in speaking
- o Put cell phones & pagers on silent or vibrate

Outcomes

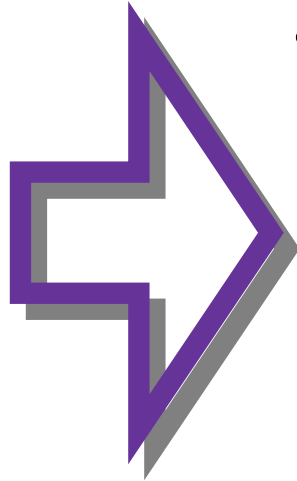
- o Awareness of facilitation framework that supports & provides integrated solutions
- o Understanding of the benefits and values of facilitation skills
- o Application of facilitation strategies & tools

Agenda

- Introduction
 - Overview of Purpose, Outcomes & Agenda
 - Ground Rules
- Major Topics
 - Background & Development
 - Identification of Needs
 - Values & Benefits
 - Successful Tools & Strategies
 - IDEIA 2004 and Resolution Sessions
 - Demonstration of IEP Meeting
- Conclusion
 - Q&A's
 - Cultural Considerations
 - Summary

Background

- IDEA '97
- Development of *Essential Facilitation for IEP Meetings* Workshop
- President's Commission
- IDEIA 2004



- Empower parents as key players & decision-makers
- States need to “...develop early processes that avoid conflict & promote IEP agreements, such as **IEP Facilitators**..... skilled facilitators to run IEP meetings in way that gets parents & school staff to win-win solutions for children.” President's Commission on Special Education
- Resolution sessions required prior to due process

“Problems with Meetings” Expressed by Participants



“Problems with Meetings” Expressed by Participants

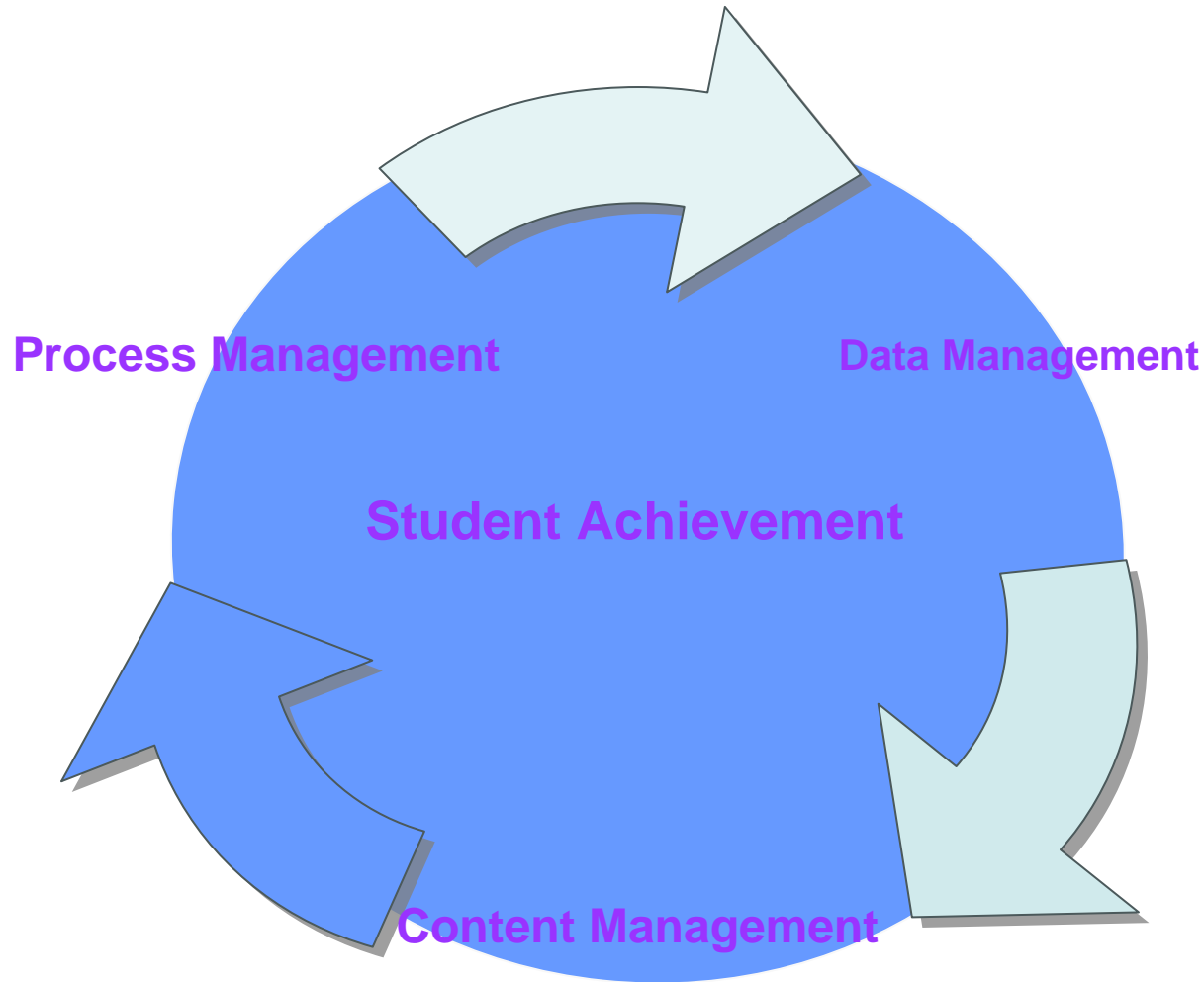


Interaction Method

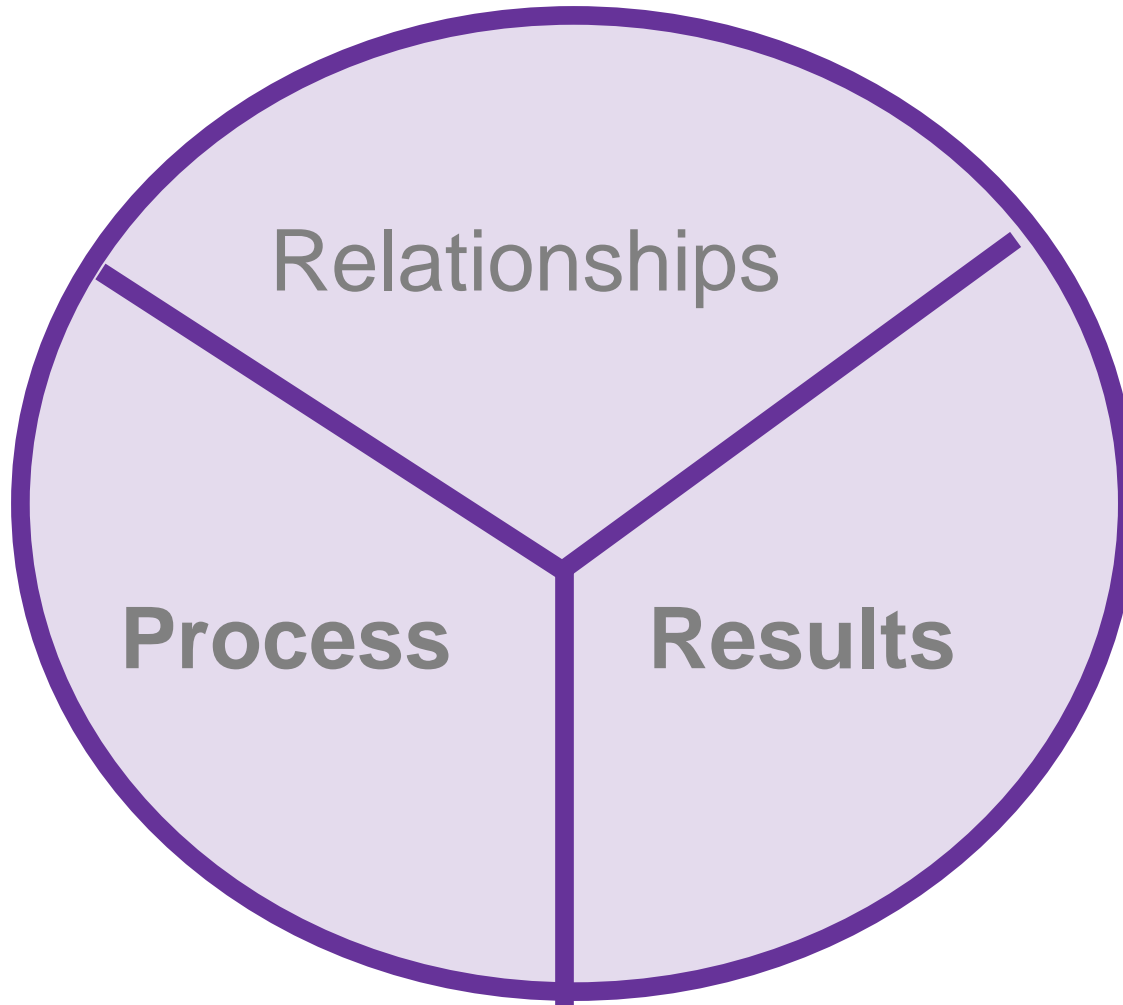


- Guide IEP groups toward their objectives;
- Assist people in building understanding & agreement;
- Bring out the best in all group members.

Essential Facilitation as a Systems Framework



Model for a Successful Meeting



Components of the Essential IEP Facilitation Process

- o Interactive & respectful communication strategies;
- o Visual tools;
- o Meeting leadership techniques;
- o Team & trust building;
- o Building small agreements throughout the meeting;
- o Emphasis on dialogue within a legally compliant process;
- o Strategic planning & organization tools for meetings;
- o Consensus building techniques;
- o Role of neutral facilitators or facilitative chairperson;
- o Address cultural differences and interpreters.

Content and Process



What is the **content** of the meeting?

What is the **process** of the meeting?

**** Majority of issues in meetings are process issues*

What is Process Management?

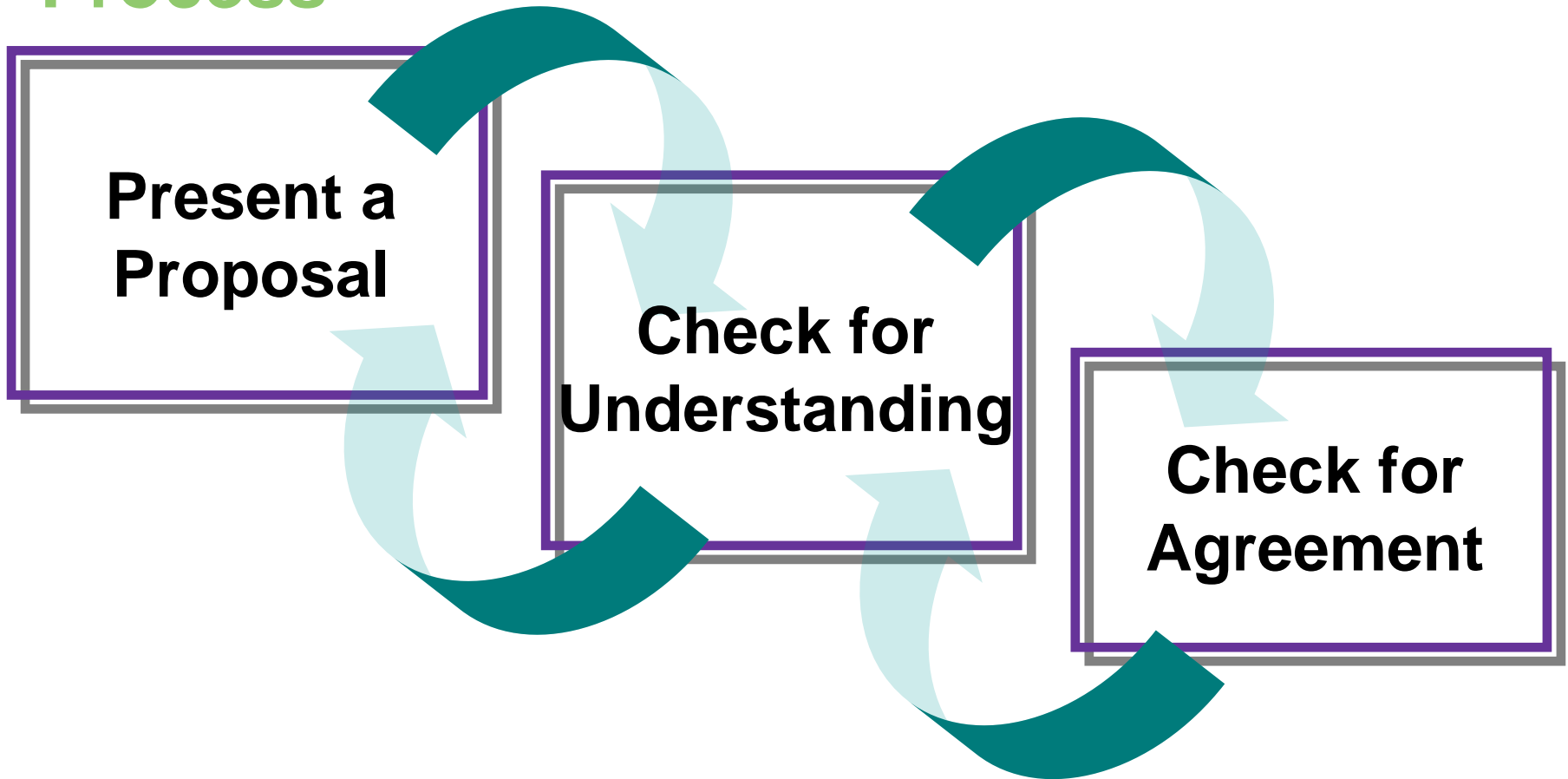
- o **GUIDE:** Guiding the meeting through the agenda;
- o **FOCUS:** Keeping the group focused on the task;
- o **ENCOURAGE:** Encouraging participation;
- o **REFEREE:** Making sure everyone is working on the same thing, in the same way, at the same time.

Meeting Roles & Functions

- Functions – what has to be accomplished at meetings
 - Participation
 - Decision-making
 - Information Management
 - Process Management

- Roles – the team member (s) who perform these functions
 - Chairperson
 - Meeting Participant
 - Recorder
 - Facilitator

The Communication Process



- All team members get a chance to share ideas and have them understood and clarified in building consensus.

Communications Strategies

- o Stages of a Discussion

 - Stage 1: Open** Gather information

 - Stage 2: Narrow** Organize the information

 - Stage 3: Close** Select the best approach & reach agreement

- o Preventions & Interventions

- o Listening as an Ally Techniques

Clients' Reports on Successful Visual Tools & Strategies



Visual Tools

- Ground Rules
- Agenda
- Parking Lot
- Action Plans
- Charting

Strategies

- Active Listening
- Valuing parents as team members
- Setting tone for communication
- Non-adversarial approach
- Maintaining student focus

Special Ed staff say:

- o “We were able to set targets & reach agreements.”
- o “The posted agenda helps everyone.”
- o “Using the strategies, we can resolve issues in the meeting before they become big conflicts.”
- o “We are more prepared, collaborative and efficient in all our meetings.”

School administrators say:

- o “I now use the listening skills in phone conversations with parents.”
- o “The communication strategies have made a positive difference in disciplinary meetings with (high school) students and parents.”
- o “I like the “process management” role: I don’t feel uncomfortable in meetings anymore.”

Parents say:

“ My wife said these meetings were always negative. I thought this was very positive.”

“I felt heard.”

“I appreciated the clarifications to my questions.”

“I don't speak or read English, but every time I spoke, you wrote it down.”

Essential Facilitation IEP Meeting Value



| Issue | Solution | Value |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| 1-2 people do all the work | Shared decision making | Ease burden on select staff – allows for more direct student involvement |
| Parent not involved in team | Positive communication strategies | Parent involved in development and can reinforce plan for child |
| Prevalent litigation | Consensus building | Dollars can be re-directed toward staff support and overall student achievement |
| Conflicts among staff | Conflict resolution | Positive working environment = increased staff retention |
| Emotional issues | Discussion based upon student strengths & challenges | Increased success rate due to decisions rooted in best practices and data |
| Pre-determined decisions | Compliant process | Student benefits from input of all knowledgeable and caring team members |
| Hidden agendas | Agreement on ground rules and team agenda | Efficiency increased as agenda “detours” are averted = shorter meetings |
| Lack of leadership skills | Emphasis on process skills reinforced with defined roles and functions | Skills practiced transfer to all leadership situations |

Summary of IEP Facilitation Process

- **P** = participation & prevention
- **R** = resolution of conflicts
- **O** = organization
- **C** = collaboration & consensus
- **E** = efficiency
- **S** = shared decision-making
- **S** = student focus & success!

Staff Development Workshops



| Workshop Name | Details of Workshop | Target participants | Other |
|---|--|---|--|
| Essential Facilitation Skills for IEP Meetings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses meeting facilitation and communication tools to conduct efficient guided meetings that are student focused • Emphasizes consensus-based dialogue and decision making among parents and school staff • Trains participants through practice scenarios in appropriate roles and functions of meetings • Provides conflict resolution and process skills that transfer to any type of meeting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principals and asst principals • Special education staff with leadership functions in IEP meetings • Special ed administrators and program staff • Others as identified by Districts | Length: 3 days or 2 (8+ hr.) days Number of Participants: 15-25 |
| Essential Facilitation Skills for IEP Meetings with Legal Compliance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Essential Facilitation Skills for IEP Meetings</i> workshop provides the base content for this workshop • Adds legal implications and legal compliance responsibilities • Either Jim Walsh, Esq. or Julie Weatherly, Esq. serve with the 4GL trainers for this workshop. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same participants as above | Length: 3 days Number of Participants: 15-25 |
| Overview of Essential Facilitation Skills for IEP Meetings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of basic strategies, i.e., use of visuals, listening and communication skills • Awareness of meeting processes, roles, and functions • Trains team members to support IEP process leaders and facilitators in district meetings <p>Note: This workshop is offered only to districts that have previously trained staff through the <i>Essential Facilitation Skills for IEP Meetings</i> workshop</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IEP team members who do not participate in the complete <i>Essential Facilitation Skills for IEP Meetings</i> workshop | Length: 1 day Number of Participants: up to 30 |
| Essential Facilitation Coaching Seminar | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides group coaching and debriefing <p>Note: Participants will need to complete 1-2 facilitated meetings within the scope of their normal district responsibilities prior to the seminar.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduates of the <i>Essential Facilitation Skills for IEP Meetings</i> workshop. | Length: 1 day Number of Participants: up to 25 |
| Writing Effective Goals and Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify, write/select measurable goals to meet student's needs • Complies with federal and state requirements • Assists with documenting AYP student progress for NCLB requirements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers & special education staff | Length: 1 day Number of Participants: up to 35 |

Client Support



- o Support & Coaching for IEP meetings
 - o Toll-free phone number
 - o Additional workshops available
 - o Assist with preparation for high risk meetings

Software & Staff Development

ENCORE! and the Facilitated IEP Meeting when working together.....



- Optimize the process from all angles: technology and collaborative meeting skills
- Build and improve communication and relationships among team members
- Take the focus off the paperwork and place it on the student
- Result: improved student achievement.



Thanks for your participation,
your commitment to teamwork,
and, most of all,
your commitment to students!

Contact Information



Ben Bounous

Senior Account Executive

Spectrum K12 School Solutions

214-673-1411

bbounous@spectrumk12.com

www.spectrumk12.com