

The Benefits of Joint Learning Program Facilitation

The Joint Learning Program (JLP) has a dynamic team of workshop facilitators representing the Union and the Employer of the Core Public Administration. JLP facilitators are part of a volunteer cadre of Public Service employees trained to co-facilitate dialogue-based learning activities aimed at improving labour-management relations and at creating healthier and more respectful workplaces.

JLP facilitators are trained by the JLP to guide participants through a series of exercises that foster dialogue, reflection, critical analysis and problem solving. The JLP is responsible for all costs associated with training facilitators and workshop delivery. Their departments will pay facilitators' salaries.

Facilitating for the JLP is an effective way for employees, at all levels, to gain and enhance skills directly related to the *Key Leadership Competency* behaviors as developed by the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat.

Key Leadership Competency

The facilitation skills that support the competencies of “Effective Behaviors” include:

- facilitating participant discussions for the exchange of ideas and learning;
- promoting collaboration among participants to develop action plans for the workplace;
- encouraging diverse views and perspectives;
- creating a safe and respectful environment;
- managing group dynamics;
- developing effective communication skills;
- managing challenging or stressful discussions and/or comments
- ensuring inclusive and barrier-free learning opportunities for all participants including persons with disabilities, different values, personalities or cultures.

Feedback Skills

JLP facilitators practice giving and receiving constructive feedback during post workshop debriefs with their co-facilitator, the workshop organizers and JLP Regional Field Coordinators. This enhances clear communications skills along with the ability to self reflect and apply new learning experiences in their day-to-day work.

New Learning

The JLP delivers workshops such as *Creating a Harassment Free Workplace*, *Respecting Differences Anti-discrimination*, *Employment Equity* and *Duty to Accommodate*. By facilitating these workshops facilitators, develop their own new learning and experiences with these topics. This awareness can contribute to building and ensuring inclusive, safe, healthy and respectful workplaces that are free of harassment and discrimination.

Effective Working Relationships

By delivering JLP workshops such as *Understanding the Collective Agreement* and *Union Management Consultation*, facilitators develop the capacity to support effective working relationships between union and management that foster better labour-relations in the workplace.

Renewed Commitment to the Work and Personal Growth

JLP facilitators have discovered that delivering workshops has positive effects on their personal growth. The core facilitation skills that are developed such as active listening, facilitating dialogue, questioning skills and valuing diversity of views are effective transferable skills in the workplace. Furthermore, opportunities to facilitate for the JLP have increased job satisfaction that in turn results in more engagement and productivity.

JLP facilitation provides for unique opportunities and a change in the work environment. This often brings facilitators back to the workplace revitalized and re-energized. Facilitators develop new skills and experiences and as a result, they become more open minded and receptive to new or different ideas. There is a deep sense of satisfaction and fulfillment from facilitating learning events that create a space for dialogue and that promote healthier, happier workplaces.