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The Art of Facilitation: Process Matters!

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The Art of Facilitation-Process Matters!

Introduction:

A comprehensive training curriculum for professionals and community volunteers to increase their skills in meeting management, dealing with conflict, understanding group dynamics, and tools for decision making.

This training enables Extension professionals and volunteers to facilitate community conversations on the 5 Grand Challenges: Water; Feeding the World; Health; Growing Tomorrow's Leaders; and Community Vitality.

Presentation:

The Art of Facilitation is a project that is currently being developed by K-State Research and Extension (KSRE) to increase the skills of important people to discuss important issues across the state of Kansas. This might be the local Extension agent or other key community leaders/volunteers. If you have heard of the Extension Master Gardener, Master Food Volunteer, or Master Naturalist programs this one will be very similar with the intent to increase the skill level of local volunteers through training and application while they give back in volunteer hours.

KSRE has an office in every county across the state. Some are county units and others are districts. These are the leaders taking the research from the University and making it real at the local level. We are currently addressing the 5 Grand Challenges of: Health; Water; Global food Systems; Growing Tomorrow's Leaders; and Community Vitality.

Facilitation is "the art of making easy or easier" and we are striving to provide training for local leaders to make critical conversations "easy or easier" as we focus on relationships, process, and results. Agents across the state play one of three roles in their educational efforts. These include presenter/trainer, learning facilitator, and facilitative leader.

The Art of Facilitation address key skills and tools to use in each of the above roles as people work with internal groups, external groups, and public issues. We have the Board Leadership Series for internal groups and ICDD have the public issue forums for the third group. It was the external groups where we saw a deficit that could be filled with The Art of Facilitation.

Currently we have had a pilot training for KSRE agents and partner organizations; inserted parts of it in new agent orientation and are in the development stages of the KSRE Community Facilitator Program.

Questions for the group:

- What might be the key components of a master Community Facilitator Program?
- What would entice community volunteers to become a Master Community Facilitator?
- What opportunities would there be to engage a Master Community Facilitator?