

Guidelines for Recorders in Meeting Facilitation

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These guidelines are intended to serve as a starting point for negotiation between a meeting facilitator and a recorder—*not* as a set of absolutes or rules that must be followed in all situations. They assume that the recorder is serving to help the group develop and manage a “group memory”—that is, a record of key points raised in discussion that may be referred to as the group attempts to make decisions and solve problems. They also assume the recorder is recording ideas on flip chart paper, although another medium may work equally well for some purposes.

1. Record the group’s main ideas, using *their* words.
2. Record key words, especially verb-noun phrases (versus recording everything).
3. Remain silent and take your cues from the facilitator; let the facilitator facilitate (and thereby give the group a common focus).
4. Write legibly and large enough for all to see.
5. Alternate colours so that separate ideas stand out.
6. Label each page with a title, date, and page number.
7. Use letters, not numbers to label ideas, so as not to imply a ranking prematurely.
8. Leave white space to the left of each idea to allow space for comments, votes, etc.
9. Post each page as it is completed; plan ahead by having tape and wall space available.
10. Don’t worry about spelling (at least while you’re trying to get the ideas down -- you can always proofread later).