

# ASCEND

## LEADER FACILITATION GUIDE

### WHAT THIS MEANS...

### WHAT TO ASK...



## A ANTICIPATE

Clarify the purpose and who should participate.  
Consider participants' roles, needs, concerns and expectations.  
Prepare agenda, materials and setting in a way that reflects the priorities.

Why are we getting together?  
What do we hope to accomplish?  
Do participants share an understanding of roles and goals?  
What potential distractions or challenges can I prepare for?



## S SUMMARIZE

At the meeting, for each topic, concisely sum up the relevant background and desired outcome.  
Create a shared foundation and context before moving into details or decisions.

Why is this topic important, and what is important to know?  
Are there contrasting or competing narratives?



## C CONCERNS

Acknowledge and elicit concerns for each topic.  
Resist the tendency to blame or jump to solutions.

What are our biggest concerns?  
Are there emotional or informational gaps between participants?



## E EXPLORE

Create a plan by exploring:  
· Process, timeline and reversibility of decisions  
· Best/worst/most-likely outcomes  
· Risks and ways of mitigating them

Does this option achieve our goal?  
What's the risk? Opportunity cost?  
Use "parking lot" for off-topic issues.



## N NEXT STEPS

Define plan and specify follow-up.  
Consider pivot points that would trigger reassessment.  
Define homework to address information gaps.

Have we clarified timelines, priorities, responsible parties and resources needed?  
How will we evaluate success?



## D DOCUMENT

Document key points, ideas and next steps.  
Distribute documents to participants, collaborators and those affected by decisions.  
Improve collaboration for next time through debriefing.

How will this plan be implemented?  
What will be carried forward from this meeting? To whom?