# **A picture containing light, graffiti Description automatically generatedTips for Designing and Facilitating Engaging Events in a Community of Practice**

Engaging Events Tips

*This document is part of the Communities4Dev CoP Toolkit featuring practical resources to help you develop impactful Communities of Practice in the development sector. [Access the full CoP Toolkit](https://collaboration.worldbank.org/content/sites/collaboration-for-development/en/groups/communities4Dev.html).*

### 10 Tips for **Designing** Great Events and Activities

1. **Set a clear objective that is tied to your broader goals** - *what would you like to achieve and what would you like your audience to walk away with? What would you like them to feel or do next?*
2. **Take the time to plan, assign roles and responsibilities and engage your community members** – *an event is a project, treat it as such and plan carefully what and who will do before, during and after*
3. **Create space for meaningful audience interaction and participation** - *from the warm up that focuses everyone’s attention and brings energy to the wrap up that provides space for reflection and highlights attendees’ key insights*
4. **Create opportunities for relationship building** – *interactions are the start; think about how to make them meaningful so that people really get to know each other*
5. **Illuminate and leverage the collective wisdom of all attendees** – *enable attendees to learn with and from and help each other*
6. **Give everyone a voice** – *make sure everyone has an opportunity to speak, contribute and be heard and acknowledged (doesn’t have to be in front of everyone)*
7. **Find the balance between flexibility and structure**– *strive to keep a balance between sticking to your plan and staying flexible when a section of the event is going particularly well and merits more time*
8. **Cater to different learning styles** – *different people learn and engage differently so use a variety of props and activities*
9. **End with lessons learned and next steps** – *always provide space to reflect and tell people what will happen next*
10. **Solicit feedback right after and use it for next time** – *do a +/delta to understand what worked and what you could do differently next time, and then make the necessary changes*

### 10 Tips for **Facilitating** Great Events and Activities

1. **Share and follow the agenda** – *set expectations and let people know how the event will go; stick to the preestablished agenda*
2. **Prepare the speakers and moderators in advance** – *if you have panelists or other guest speakers, set clear guidelines for what they should do*
3. **Establish the ground rules up front** – *invite the audience to generate and agree to the ‘dos’ and ‘don’ts’*
4. **Create a safe space and comfortable environment** – *be intentional about how you welcome people and how you set the room*
5. **Practice active listening**– *your job is to* ***facilitate*** *and bring out engagement from all attendees and guide the conversations and flow, NOT to dominate the agenda and have all eyes on you*
6. **Role model** – *behave the way you want your audience to behave; you are setting the tone for a respectful, inclusive and engaging event*
7. **Respect your event design and participants’ time** – *cut people off, if you have to, and deliver on what you promised*
8. **Diversify the types of activities you use**– *get people moving, pair people up, switch groups, use visuals and different props*
9. **End with lessons learned and next steps** – *always provide space to reflect and tell people what will happen next*
10. **Solicit feedback right after and use it for next time** – *do a +/delta to understand what worked and what you could do differently next time, and then make the necessary changes*

### Technology Tips for Online Events

1. **Mute yourself when you join the meeting** – *and stay muted unless you are about to speak*
2. **Call-in from a noise-free location** – and *if you face issues with bandwidth, use phone to call in and turn video off*
3. **Always say your name before speaking** – *it will help everyone, especially people who have audio only, to follow the conversation*
4. **Turn your video on and encourage others to keep their video on** – *at least for part of the meeting; it will help establish a personal connection*
5. **Say something if you experience technology issues** – *if you can’t hear someone, or you lose visuals, alert the presenter by speaking up or over chat*
6. **Share screen only when necessary** – *not sharing will allow participants to better see each other during the meeting*
7. **To record a meeting in a videoconferencing platform, you have to be ‘host’** – *OR you can ask the host to assign you the privilege to be able to hit the record button*
8. **Share necessary materials BEFORE meeting** – *like resources, PPT slides, agenda, to help people prepare but also to ensure everyone has access to materials in case of connectivity issues*
9. **Ensure you hear from everyone at least once!** – *this will create a more inclusive environment and help with relationship-building*
10. **Suffering is optional**: *mute your mic, take a walk, make coffee, but stay present with us*

### Sample Meeting Norms and Principles

* Everyone will hear and be heard
* There are no wrong answers
* The wisdom resides within us
* We need everyone’s wisdom
* The whole is greater than the sum of its parts
* Expect leadership to come from anywhere

### Useful Resources

* [Facilitation Idea Book](http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/754071468135303845/The-idea-book-for-World-Bank-Group-facilitators-practical-ideas-for-icebreakers-energizers-and-interactive-exercises-to-add-to-learning-sessions): a World Band Group resource with practical ideas for icebreakers, energizers and interactive exercises to add to learning sessions
* [Art of Hosting](https://www.artofhosting.org/resources/articles/): a compilation of tools and techniques for participatory meetings and workshops
* [Guide to Great Events](http://opengovhub.org/eventresources): a conceptual framework with practical examples and tips for how to design great events
* [Resources for Participatory Meetings](http://www.chriscorrigan.com/parkinglot/facilitation-resources/): a plethora of resources on World Café, Open Space, and other participatory methods for small and large meetings and events
* [Art of Knowledge Exchange](https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/17540): a wide variety of activities developed specifically for knowledge exchange at different levels
* [The Circle Way](http://www.thecircleway.net/circle-way-guidelines): guidelines for how to facilitate ‘circle’ meetings giving everyone an equal voice
* [Liberating Structures](http://www.liberatingstructures.com/): an alternative approach and design to how people interact and work together
* [Improv Warm-ups](https://www.learnimprov.com/warm-ups/): a great collection of simple exercises to increase the energy and interactivity of an event

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