

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



Effective Group Participation Skills

Communication Tool for a RCRA Corrective Action Project Manager

As a Project Manager, your success achieving a Corrective Action depends, in part, on your level of skill development in working with other people. Educational systems often fail to provide skill development in this subject area. As an aid to you as a Project Manager, this Communication Tool offers a summary of some group participation skills along with a self-assessment to help you determine your areas of strength and further development.

As a RCRA Corrective Action Project Manager, **your ability to work effectively with others** such as the facility, the public, colleagues/managers/employees in your agency, or other regulatory agencies greatly influences the ease and success of your Corrective Action projects. Effective group participation skills can be learned or developed over time. The first step is determining your current skill level. The following table is a tool to help you assess your current group participation skills:

- 1) The left column lists the specific “Group Participation Skills,” behavior you might use in a discussion, meeting, phone call, or interaction with the facility, the public, the other regulatory agency, or your own agency.
- 2) In the next column, place a check mark in one of the three boxes in the middle to indicate the extent to which you have developed and apply this skill in RCRA Corrective Action projects.
- 3) When you complete this self-assessment, circle those group participation skills for which you have checked the accompanying boxes “Not at all” or “Partially.” Then, review the right-hand column to see how you can practice this skill and apply it in the future.



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Group Participation Skills	Extent to which I have developed and apply this skill in RCRA Corrective Action			To practice this skill . . .
	Not at all	Partially	Totally	
Paraphrasing				Verbally summarize what you hear another say, and ask if it is accurate.
Information or opinion-seeking				Assess what information is relevant to the discussion, and ask others for that information or for their opinion.
Clarifying				State your ideas clearly and directly. Offer examples or illustrations.
Summarizing				In two sentences or less, identify the main point(s) of what you just said.
Testing ideas				Pose a question such as, "What if we (insert idea)? What would be the benefits? The obstacles?"
Integrating ideas				Combine the suggestions and ideas presented into a new idea.
Information or opinion-giving				Assess what information is relevant to the discussion, then provide helpful information or a helpful opinion.
Compromising				Offer a solution that may be acceptable to all parties.
Reducing tension				Offer some levity or humor in discussion. Lighten up the situation by telling a "light" story.
Setting standards				Suggest guidelines or minimum criteria against which the group might evaluate potential solutions.