

# Types of groups

In order to facilitate a group it is necessary to know what type of group it is. There are basically two types of groups with a variety of groups that fit within each type.

## 1. Task groups:

- **Charge/Purpose** is to take action and share information or for decision making.
- **Participants** are concerned and interested citizens.
- **Content** is topical not personal.
- **Examples** are groups for public awareness, political action, community building, steering committees, advisory boards and governing boards (boards of directors or executive boards).
- **Interaction** is leader centered---All communication and discussion flows through the facilitator or chairperson. Those who wish to speak are recognized by the leader before they begin. (See diagram 1)

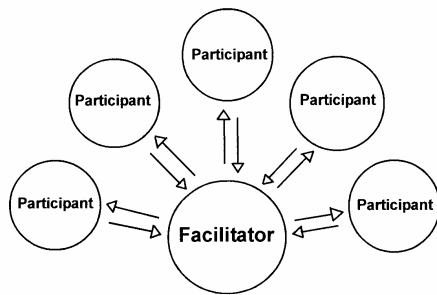


diagram 1

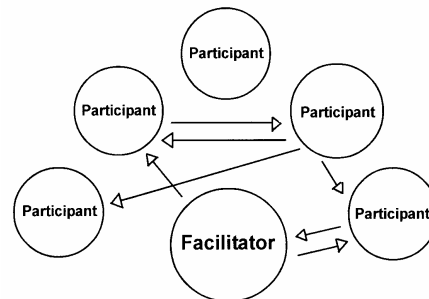


diagram 2

Although an advisory board and an executive board or board of directors are both task groups, as a facilitator it is important to understand the difference between them.

### **Advisory boards:**

Members provide only **advice** and make **recommendations** to a decision making authority. May offer direct input and influence, but have no authority.

### **Governing Boards (Boards of Directors or Executive Boards):**

Members have the **authority** to make policy decisions, assume fiscal responsibility and determine operating procedures



## 2. Growth groups

- **Charge/Purpose** is personal growth and enhanced functioning.
- **Attendees** are generally well adjusted people.
- **Content** is personal and relational, and concerns the here and now.
- **Interaction** is member centered.
- **Examples** are support groups, parent conversation groups, self help groups, therapy groups, peer coaching, or educational sessions.
- **Interaction** is member centered. Conversation is balanced among the members and flow spontaneously, not formally requiring recognition by the group leader. (See diagram 2)

### **Question:**

*Do you know the type of group you are facilitating?*

