

What Is a Facilitated Conversation?

How a Guided Discussion Can Help Your Unit Improve

A **Facilitated Conversation** led by the Ombuds is an ideal tool for units grappling with everything from discrete initiatives to major operational and existential challenges. They succeed when both leadership and staff are open to hearing new perspectives and committed to making changes based on what they discover.

Step One: Background

The process begins with the Ombuds meeting one-on-one with all members of the unit (including leadership), getting background on the unit and answering questions about the process.

Step Two: Questions

The Ombuds Office will send out a brief survey to all unit members, asking them to discuss the unit's issues and potential solutions.

Step Three: Sharing

The Office will share, without attribution, the information solicited in step two, with the unit.

Step Four: The Discussion

At the discussion (usually two hours), the agenda is determined by the feedback given by the unit, with an emphasis on finding workable solutions to the issues at hand. The unit itself, not the Ombuds or other external figures, will agree on solutions, or methods for arriving at them. If no easy solutions are agreed upon, leadership and staff will be asked what they can do over the next 30 days to move the conversation forward.

Step Five: The Follow-up

After the discussion the Ombuds Office will immediately solicit your feedback on how effective the experience was. The Office will also share a summary of the discussion and/or agreements reached. Finally, the Ombuds will follow up with leadership to discuss next steps, including the implementation of any changes and the possibility of future follow-up sessions.

To discuss the utility of a facilitated conversation with the Ombuds, please email ombuds@unlv.edu or call (702) 895-1823.