

Questions for Observers

Reference Chapter 5, section “Observers,” in
Requirements by Collaboration by Ellen Gottesdiener, Addison-Wesley, 2002.

Prepare workshop observers to be active listeners and watchers by supplying a list of questions ahead of time. (Note: Some of these items are listed in the book as sample observer questions.)

- Was the kick-off of the workshop effective? Why? Why not?
- Were all the participants engaged in the process?
- At what points did any participant appear disengaged? What behaviors or words indicated this?
- Did the activities match those shown in the workshop agenda? If not, what changed?
- Did the changes make sense? How do you know (what specific behaviors did people exhibit)?
- Were there points when the energy level seemed particularly high? If so, what was happening?
- Were there points when the energy level seemed particularly low? If so, what was happening?
- Were the right participants present? How did you know?
- What role did the facilitator play?
- Was the facilitator prepared? How did you know?
- What comments, questions, or behaviors by the facilitator were particularly effective?
- Was the recorder’s role helpful?
- What is your perception of the interrelationships among the workshop planning team?
- Did you learn anything about the subject of the workshop?
- What is your perception of the quality of the workshop deliverables? What evidence of quality (or lack of quality) was demonstrated?
- How did participants check on the quality of their own work?
- Did the participants stay in scope?
- What surprised you?
- What puzzled you?
- What would you change if you could redo this workshop?
- What will you do differently, having observed this workshop?
- What recommendations do you have to management about how we do workshops?
- What will you tell your team was your greatest learning point from observing this workshop?