

The question: “What do you do/say when you start facilitating a Lean event and realize that the majority of the group is against the event?”

I’m sure you have other ideas. Following are some of PerspectiveView’s recommendations: For information about our 2-day Meeting Management and Facilitation Skills workshops, go to [www.PerspectiveView.com](http://www.PerspectiveView.com).

- A lot of times people come to meetings/workshops/events as “hostages” because of the way it was “installed”. For example, sometimes participants are invited at the last minute without consideration of other tasks/deadlines they still have to attend to. Review “sources of resistance” laminated card. Sometimes there are other events going on within the organization that have been accidentally overlooked. Try to find out why they are resistant.
- Try to be empathic and open to hearing criticism – you may find they have a reasonable point.
- Consider the possibility that the way you’re presenting the information may sound somewhat authoritative. Avoid using words like “you should”, “this IS good”, etc. Some people tend to resent leaders who use “bossy language”.
- Consider differences in culture – different plants and sections within the USA communicate differently – more assertive, less assertive, more lay back, etc. Adjust accordingly.
- Consider doing a “Group Problem Solving” intervention (stop event, say what you see and listen/paraphrase until you find what the underlying issue is, then problem solve).
- Consider the possibility that you’re leading the group in a disorganize manner. Employees tend to get resistant and frustrated when the leader provides unclear directions. Remember to use guiding statements and a clear agenda.
- As soon as you experience resistance, translate the “feelings” you’re experiencing into clear behavioral descriptions (what are they doing and saying – frame it in time/space). Then share with sponsor, manager and Lean experts what’s happening. Ask for recommendations on how you can make it better. Your goal is to help others move forward, not to reprimand them. Keep reminding yourself that you’re a “conduit of good news”, even if they don’t see it that way.
- Don’t give up your view point. When presenting your differing view point, use the word AND instead of “however” or “but”.