

## Clear Meeting Roles

(Or how Roles and Timers Can Save Your Bacon.....)

*Written by Peggy Jessome, January 2012*

In our worst nightmares as facilitators, we picture ourselves facing groups with participants who challenge us, act out, and completely derail our sessions.

Fortunately, the good news is that almost every meeting conflict can be prevented before the meeting even begins.

One of the easiest and most powerful ways to avoid problems in the meeting is to ask small groups to self-manage their own process through clear roles. Introduce the roles at the beginning of the session, and ask participants to rotate through the roles throughout the session:

- **Leader**
- **Recorder**
- **Reporter**
- **Timekeeper**
- **Participant**

Make sure the timekeeper has a timer, and you'll find that the leader and timekeeper will keep the group focused and on track.

**The reason is simple:** Treat people like adults and they rise to the occasion: treat them like children and they will likely act out.