

Gender-Transformative Leadership
A Participatory Toolkit for Health Workers

Facilitator Guidance

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Jhpiego is a nonprofit global leader in the creation and delivery of transformative health care solutions that save lives.

In partnership with national governments, health experts, and local communities, we build health providers' skills, and we develop systems that save lives now and guarantee healthier futures for women and their families. Our aim is revolutionizing health care for the planet's most disadvantaged people.

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Module 2. Leading with Confidence

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Module 4. Networking

Module 5. Sexual Harassment

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Purpose and Target Audience

This package seeks to *strengthen existing* leadership development curricula for pre- and in-service health workers and managers through a *suite of gender-transformative sessions*, which challenge participants to identify and respond to unique considerations for women in leadership. Rather than expecting women to “lean in” to professions and organizations that have largely excluded them from leadership and senior roles, gender-transformative leadership addresses discrimination, bias, and inequities in the system (both formal and informal) so that women are included on an equal basis to men. In this way, gender-transformative leadership can be used by and benefit decision-makers, the institutions they work in, and the health system itself.

Gender transformative leadership seeks to cultivate individuals, including decision-makers, who empower themselves and their organizations “to pay close attention to **gender power structures** and **discriminatory practices**—both **formal and informal**—in order to **advance gender equity** in their organizations” as well as in the communities and constituencies they serve.

(UN Women, Transformative Leadership: Leading for Gender Equality and Women’s Rights)

Unlike traditional leadership development programs, which tend to focus heavily on building individuals’ confidence and skills to lead, this package goes further to also explore how formal (policies, laws) and informal (norms, workforce cultures) systems present opportunities and barriers to achieving gender equality in health sector organizations.

Contents of the Toolkit

This toolkit has five sections with a total of 16 modules that include participatory sessions. An outline of the toolkit is as follows:

- Foundational
 1. Gender and Work Icebreaker
 2. Vote with Your Feet: Workplace Edition
 3. Where Are the Women Leaders in Global Health?
 4. What Is Bias?
 5. Gender Bias in the Workplace

- Leading with Confidence
 6. Mentorship and Sponsorship
 7. How to Be a Workplace Ally
 8. Effective Feedback
 9. Communicating with Confidence
- Negotiation
 10. Negotiation Strategies for Women
- Networking
 11. Building Effective, Diverse Networks
- Sexual Harassment
 12. Power and Harassment
 13. Violence in Daily Life
 14. How to Stop Sexual Harassment
 15. Talking about Sexual Harassment
 16. Self-Care After Sexual Harassment

What We Mean by Participatory

Sessions are designed to be participatory and dialogue-based. This approach does not entail a trainer passing on knowledge to passive learners; rather, participants are actively engaged by the facilitator and each other. Participants are recognized as experienced, curious, contributing individuals who have the capacity for action and bring their own unique expertise, life experiences, and realities to the learning environment. Typical session activities include facilitated individual reflections, group discussions, case studies, short videos and debrief, and role-plays with practical job aids.

How to Use the Toolkit

The sessions in the toolkit may be facilitated in a variety of ways, depending on time and resources available. The modular design allows for great flexibility in programming. Facilitators may choose to deliver sessions all at once in a workshop format, implement sessions within a particular module that aligns with their program objectives, or select specific sessions from multiple modules and hold one session weekly or monthly over time. Regardless of how you organize the sessions, the following guidance will ensure participant learning and minimize harm:

- Begin sessions with exercises that allow participants to feel relaxed and get to know each other. This will ensure that they feel safe and comfortable throughout the activity.
 - You may choose to start the session or workshop by facilitating a discussion on group norms for participants to adhere to for the duration of the workshop. As the facilitator, you can write the norms that participants suggest on flipchart paper, and display the paper throughout the duration of the workshop. You may also wish to use external resources, such as the World Health Organization’s [Training Curriculum: Gender and Rights in Reproductive Health](#), which includes a group contract session (page 24) and a welcome and an introduction session (page 20).

- The “Gender and Work Icebreaker” from this package is an effective session to begin the workshop or first meeting with, regardless of whether you facilitate the entire “Foundational” (i.e. sessions 1-5) set of modules from this toolkit.
- Facilitators are strongly encouraged to include all modules in the “Foundational” section.
- Given the sensitive nature of the material covered in the “Sexual Harassment” sessions, facilitators should not facilitate them as standalone sessions without proper introduction or sensitization to the topic.

Session Format

Each session is formatted as follows:

- **Learning objectives** of the session
- **Time** required for the session
- **Materials needed** for the session
- **Advance preparation** the facilitator will need to complete before leading a session
- **Introduction** to open the session and prepare participants for learning
- **Steps** for leading the session
- **Facilitator notes** on the session process and important points to be made during the session
- **Participant handouts** that may be given out during or at the end of the session
- **Facilitator resources** needed to lead the session

Learning Objectives

The learning objectives are what participants should learn as a result of completing the session. It is a good idea to begin each session with a description of its learning objectives. This helps participants understand why they are doing the session and what they can hope to get out of it.

Time

Time indicates how long the session should take. Various factors, such as the number of participants, will affect the time needed to complete each session. It is important to work at the pace of the participants. It is also important to remember that any agenda for a workshop is usually a full one. Taking too long with one session may mean you do not have time to complete others. Try to stick to the time suggested.

Note that sessions include steps that require small group work (for example, case studies, role-plays, reflection, and other activities). It is important to facilitate smooth transitions between plenary discussions and smaller group activities. Set the space up in advance to allow participants to use nearby areas for breakout work, load or distribute materials before the sessions start, let participants know when they have 5 minutes left in group work, and rally groups with your co-facilitator when it is time to move from smaller group exercises to plenary.

Materials Needed

These are the materials you will need for each session. You will need to prepare some of them before the workshop begins. For the most part, they include basic materials such as flipchart paper and markers. In cases where the materials listed cannot be easily accessed, you should feel free to improvise.

Advance Preparation

This section will inform you about any preparations you should make before conducting the session.

Many of the sessions also include video clips that can be downloaded in advance. The .mp4 video files are included with the session material.

Facilitator Notes

These notes will help you to facilitate the sessions. They point out important aspects of the process, as well as background information and tips to help you prepare. Make sure to read these notes before you begin. In some instances, facilitator notes will indicate whether a particular session should be delivered only after other sessions have been covered.

Steps

These are the steps you should follow to facilitate the session effectively. Follow the steps in the order in which they appear, and remain mindful of the time allotted for each step. Steps for the different sessions will vary, but all sessions include an introduction and a closing.

Knowledge and perceived comfort/competency questions should be delivered during the introduction and closing as pre- and post-tests, respectively. Participants can track their answers using the “Answer Log for Knowledge and Perceptions of Comfort/Competency Questions” annex.

Introduction

This section provides facilitators with a suggested opening statement for the session. You are free to adapt this to create your own opening statement.

Closing

This section highlights the key points that participants should retain from the session. It may be helpful to refer to these key points as you facilitate group discussions. You can also use them to sum up the discussion at the end of the session. As with the opening statement, feel free to use your own words to deliver these messages.

Each session closes with a few minutes on action planning. Facilitators can decide whether to email the Action Planning handout to participants, provide blank templates for all sessions during the first session, or distribute a single blank template at the end of each session. Participants will revisit their action plans during the wrap-up activity at the end of the 16 sessions.

Participant Handouts

- Some sessions include handouts. These appear at the end of the session. The handouts include information for participants to take away with them or for the facilitator to review with them. Some

handouts include information participants need to complete in a particular part of a session. You should refer to the “Advance Preparation” section to determine the exact number of copies of each handout you will need to make. Not all sessions include participant handouts.

- The curriculum also contains several **annexes**:
 - **Answer Log for Participants** for participants to log their pre- and post-test answers
 - **Pre-/Post-Test Answer Key**, which facilitators can use to confirm answers to knowledge and perceived comfort/competency questions
 - **Wrap-Up Action Planning Template** to be used during the wrap-up activity
 - **Most Significant Change** for facilitators to use as an evaluation tool 1, 3, and 6 months after the delivery of sessions

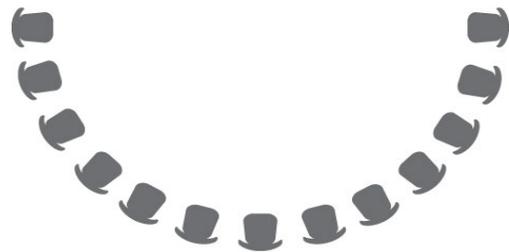
Facilitator Resources

- This is additional information for the facilitator to review while preparing a session. Not all sessions include facilitator resources.

Reflective Practice and the Power of the Circle

Reflective practice differs from classic training workshops in that the facilitator leads participants through a process of learning and personal introspection, as opposed to simply delivering information in a didactic manner. Reflective practice acknowledges that participants are also experts by virtue of their personal experiences, and it recognizes that everyone “has a piece of the truth.” To enable the learning and self-reflection process, it is useful to seat participants in a large semicircle (see Figure 1). This seating arrangement encourages a sense of community and positions everyone at the same level. You may place a few small tables against the walls at the back of the room and use them to hold materials. Seating participants at a table creates a more formal atmosphere and tends to encourage participants to focus on taking notes rather than interacting with and listening to others. Laptops and cellphones should not be allowed in a reflective practice workshop as they disrupt the learning process and can be distracting for the facilitator and other participants.

Figure 1. Seating participants in a large semicircle supports learning and self-reflection.



Role of the Facilitator

Leading this workshop is a great opportunity to share awareness, inspiration, healing, and empowerment with others. As workshop leader, your job will be to:

- Help participants feel welcome, valued, and safe
- Encourage respectful listening and dialogue
- Facilitate workshop sessions

What <i>is not</i> expected of you as a facilitator:	What <i>is</i> expected of you as a facilitator:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are not expected to be an expert on all of the issues that might arise in this workshop. No one person can know it all. • You are not expected to have the answer to every question that might arise. If you do not know the answer, say so! Someone in the group may have an answer, or the group may come up with an answer together. • You are not expected to do everything perfectly. You will make mistakes. Use these mistakes as learning opportunities. (It is important for the group to see you acknowledge and work through mistakes, awkwardness, and difficulty. It is an essential part of learning!) • You are not expected to be responsible for each participant's learning and change. This is not something you can control; all participants are responsible for themselves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are expected to guide participants through this workshop. Sometimes, this means actively steering the group's conversation, and sometimes this means stepping back and letting the group members develop their own ideas. • You are expected to help every member of the group feel welcome, safe, and respected. All participants should have a chance to share their ideas, experiences, and opinions. • You are expected to provide gentle guidance, support, and encouragement to individuals and to the group as a whole, particularly when things get difficult. • You are expected to keep the larger picture in mind. Remember the goals of the workshop and bring the group back to those goals when necessary. • You are expected to model gender equality—with your co-facilitator, group members, and everyone with whom you come into contact during the workshop.

Facilitation Guidelines

- **Keep the end in mind.** Know what you are doing and why you are doing it. Be sure that participants are clear about the purpose and goals of the workshop and of each session.
- **Be flexible.** Be prepared to adapt or skip a session to meet the specific needs of a group or situation. Reassure participants that it is okay to leave some of the sessions and discussions unfinished. This is a lifelong process, and participants can continue to meet as a group or individually to talk, learn, and plan together.
- **Encourage participation.** Ask the group questions and encourage participants to ask questions. Show appreciation for all comments (even if you disagree with them).
- **Pay attention to who speaks and who does not.** Ask people to be mindful of sharing speaking time in the group. You may need to ask people who speak up often to hold their thoughts to create space for people who have not yet spoken.
- **Help the group learn and practice dialogue skills.** Listen to each participant with respect and compassion rather than criticism. Explain that differences in experiences and opinions are an opportunity for learning, not judgment.
- **Encourage participants to engage and talk about their emotions.** The deepest, most effective learning involves both the mind and the heart.
- **Everything that happens is a learning experience, especially situations that seem challenging.** Remind participants that you are learning from each other and with each other all of the time.
- **Use yourself and your experiences as examples.** Trust the value of your experience and perspective. The workshop is a learning experience for you too. Share with the group what you are learning.

Working with a Co-facilitator

A co-facilitator equally shares the responsibility of leading and facilitating the workshop. You are encouraged to use a co-facilitator for this workshop because:

- You can share the responsibility for the workshop. (Participatory facilitation is hard work!)
- You will have someone to help keep track of the important tasks and details of the workshop and each session.
- It brings an additional perspective on gender and another set of life experiences and wisdom into the large group.
- It can provide participants with an excellent model of cooperation, connection, and gender equity when things are going well. It can also provide an excellent model of dialogue and conflict resolution when things are challenging.
- Your co-facilitator can help you check your perceptions about what is happening in the group, help you to think about and address group dynamics, and give you feedback on your facilitation.
- It provides a mix of facilitation styles and personalities, helping to keep the energy fresh and engaging.
- Each facilitator can learn something from the skills and perspectives of the other.

Preparing for Co-facilitation

- Carefully review the objectives of the workshop, as well as the objectives for each session.
- Review the session descriptions. Discuss their potential challenges, how to avoid these challenges, and how to deal with them if they occur.
- Decide who will serve as lead facilitator for each session.
- Discuss contingency plans for each day. Despite our best efforts, things do not always go as we plan. What sessions can you shorten or skip if you run out of time?
- Set times during the day for the two of you to check in with each other.
- Talk specifically about how you will manage the beginning and ending of the workshop.
- Review the “Managing Conflict” section and talk about effective ways for managing conflict that you have observed.

Additional Preparation for Co-facilitators

The relationship between co-facilitators has a big impact on the workshop. It is important that you meet with your co-facilitator **at least twice** before the workshop to get to know each other, review the workshop sessions, and work out the details of your workshop plan.

- Discuss your experiences as participants in previous workshops: What was most valuable to you? What seemed most effective for others in the group? What did you notice about the facilitation? Was there anything that you did not like?
- If you have previously worked together as co-facilitators, talk about the last time you facilitated together: What went well? What was challenging? What would you do differently? How can you improve the experience for workshop participants?

Co-facilitation during the Workshop

- Be open to thoughts, feedback, and help from your co-facilitator. Your co-facilitator may notice something happening during the workshop that you missed. If you feel stuck or unsure about something, ask your co-facilitator for their thoughts. In addition, when you are leading, make a habit of asking your co-facilitator for input or if they have anything to add.
- Take time during and after the workshop to check in with your co-facilitator. This will give both of you the opportunity to check perceptions, give and receive feedback, and strategize about what happens next.
- When you are leading a session, be sure to make eye contact with your co-facilitator. This will give your co-facilitator a chance to get your attention (if necessary) without disrupting the session. It will also give you an opportunity to see if your co-facilitator has something to add to the conversation.
- When your co-facilitator is leading, scan the room to get a sense of what is happening in the group. Check for reactions, participation levels, and nonverbal communication. Gently interrupt your co-facilitator if you think something needs immediate attention.
- When your co-facilitator is leading a session, pay attention to the time. It is very easy to lose track of time, particularly when great conversation or significant learning is happening. Helping your co-facilitator to pay attention to time will allow both of you to balance the group's immediate needs with the workshop objectives.

Personal Preparation

As a facilitator preparing to do gender work, you will need to consider your own thoughts and feelings and how they may affect your role as a facilitator. For example, you may feel uncomfortable talking openly about certain topics (e.g., masturbation or other aspects of sexuality). You may also have strong feelings about certain topics (e.g., homosexuality). These feelings may make it hard to facilitate an open or frank discussion. You may also be reminded of painful experiences from your past. Being reminded of these experiences may make it hard to talk about certain topics.

To help women and men discuss these issues as openly as possible, you must first make time to think about your own thoughts, feelings, and experiences. This could involve:

- Meeting with a colleague to discuss your thoughts and feelings about the gender work you will be doing. Talk about what you are nervous and unsure about, discuss any issues that make you uncomfortable and why, and make a plan for how you will deal with this discomfort.
- Making time during a team meeting to have the same discussions with your peers. If possible, bring in a skilled outside facilitator to help team members with this discussion.
- Choosing someone you trust and whom you think will listen to you and support you (e.g., colleague, friend, family member). Tell this person about the past experiences you are concerned about, how you think they may affect your work, and how you would like to be supported in dealing with your memories of them. Make a plan for how to get this support. If you think you cannot get the support you need or that the memories of the experiences are too strong and painful, remember that you have the choice not to do this work.

Active Listening

Active listening is a basic skill for facilitating group discussions. Active listening helps people feel that they are being understood as well as heard, and encourages people to share their experiences, thoughts, and feelings more openly. It shows participants that their ideas are valuable and important when it comes to solving problems.

Active listening involves:

- Using body language to show interest and understanding. In many cultures, this will include nodding your head and turning your body to face the person who is speaking.
- Showing interest and understanding to reflect what others are saying. It may include looking directly at the person speaking. In some communities, such direct eye contact may not be appropriate until the speaker and the listener have established some trust.
- Listening not only to what is said, but also to how it is said, by paying attention to the speaker's body language.
- Asking the speaker questions to show that you want to understand.
- Summing up the discussion to check that what was said was understood. Ask for feedback.

Staying Neutral

Remember to provide information in nonauthoritarian, nonjudgmental, and neutral ways. Never impose your feelings on the participants.

Effective Questioning

Asking effective questions is another core facilitator skill. Effective questions help facilitators identify issues, clarify facts, and draw out differing views on an issue. Skillful effective questioning also challenges assumptions, shows you are really listening, and demonstrates that the group's opinions and knowledge are valuable. Effective questioning also increases participation in group discussions and encourages problem-solving.

Ways to achieve effective questioning include:

- Asking open-ended questions: Why? What? When? Where? Who? How?
- Asking probing questions. Follow up with questions that delve deeper into the issue or problem.
- Asking clarifying questions by rewording a previous question.
- Discovering personal viewpoints by asking how people feel, not just what they know.

Facilitating Group Discussions

There is no single best way to facilitate a group discussion. Different facilitators have different styles, and different groups have different needs. The following are some common aspects of good group facilitation:

- **Set the rules.** It is important to create "ground rules" that the group agrees to follow. Establish ground rules regarding respect, listening, confidentiality, and participation.
- **Involve everyone.** Helping all group members to take part in the discussion is an important part of group facilitation. This involves paying attention to who is dominating discussions and who is not contributing. Try to involve members who are not participating by asking them a direct question.

However, remember that people have different reasons for being quiet. They may be thinking deeply! If a participant is very talkative, suggest they allow others to take part in the discussion and then ask the others to react to what the person is saying.

- **Encourage honesty and openness.** Encourage participants to be honest and open. They should not be afraid to discuss sensitive issues. Encourage them to honestly express what they think and feel, rather than say what they think the facilitator(s) or other participants want to hear.
- **Keep the group on track.** It is important to help the group stay focused on the issues being discussed. If the discussion seems to be going off the subject, remind the group of the objectives for the session and get them back on track.

Gender Composition of Participant Groups

Given the sensitive nature of the topics covered in this toolkit, many women may not feel comfortable participating openly in dialogue about their experiences, beliefs, and learnings in the presence of men, or being guided by a male facilitator. Review each session carefully in advance and consider whether participants would feel most comfortable learning and discussing in single-sex or mixed-sex groups. Also consider whether participants may respond best to female or male facilitators. The “Negotiation Strategies for Women” session is specifically designed for a female audience, and should be led by a female facilitator. For some sessions, it may be important to engage male leaders as participants, for example, sessions in the **Foundations** and **Sexual Harassment** modules. Before completing the Sexual Harassment modules, *all* participants should receive introductory training on gender and social norms.

For sessions where the group is a single gender (e.g., all women) or is highly gender imbalanced, you can include men’s viewpoints by asking the women to respond from a man’s perspective.

Facilitating Mixed-Sex Groups

When facilitating content with mixed-sex groups, ensure equal participation by women and men. This means ensuring that men do not dominate while also making sure that men feel comfortable contributing. It is also important not to assume that all women participants are disempowered and suffering, or that all men participants are powerful and dominating. Be aware of and address differences among participants in terms of language, race, class, caste, and ethnicity, ensuring that no group feels alienated or insecure and all groups participate equally. The following pointers will help to ensure equal participation:

- If the discussion is not going anywhere, use probing questions to deepen the discussion.
- Do not take sides.
- Give practical examples when needed to stimulate discussion.
- Manage discussions and avoid getting emotionally invested in issues.
- If the group is spending too long on a small point, push the group forward.
- Draw on people’s experiences.
- Help people in conflict to search for common ground and understand one another’s views.
- Make everyone feel valued.
- Ensure that participants have a chance to share their viewpoints, and that no one dominates.

Dealing with Difficult People

People often take on certain roles within groups. Some of these roles can interfere with the learning of the workshop. Facilitating a group discussion may mean dealing with people who are negative or disruptive or who continue to interrupt the discussion. Reminding the group of the ground rules and asking everyone to be responsible for maintaining them is a good way to deal with difficult people. If someone constantly complains, ask for specifics, address the complaint, or refer the complaint to the group. If a participant is disruptive, you can involve the group by having members ask the difficult person to help, rather than hinder, the group, or deal with the individual apart from the group.

Managing Conflict

- Know the difference between disagreement and conflict: disagreement is healthy and can lead to better understanding through positive discourse; conflict is not healthy and distracts from learning objectives. Disagreement is not always a bad thing; it can be productive and is a normal part of group development. When disagreement occurs, do not rush to interrupt if it is happening in a respectful way.
- Reassure the group that disagreement is an important part of the workshop and that it can create a learning and healing experience for everyone.
- Encourage the group to use “I” statements, describing their own individual feelings, rather than “you” statements that criticize or judge others.
- Tell the group that disagreements do not always have to be resolved. **Learning to allow each other our differences can be even more important than getting everyone to agree.**
- If the disagreement is becoming a problem, the following strategies can help deescalate:
 - Review the group guidelines and talk about the importance of working together.
 - Give the group a 5-minute break so you can confer with your co-facilitator.

Session Supplies and Materials

Supplies and materials required will vary depending on the sessions you are facilitating. Review the list of materials for each session in advance. Some sessions require specific materials that are not used in other sessions (e.g., string). In general, all sessions will require the following:

- A meeting room large enough to comfortably accommodate 25–30 people, allow for small group work, and enable participants to move around freely
- Chairs (enough for participants and facilitators) organized in a large semicircle (see diagram in the “Reflective Practice and the Power of the Circle” section)
- Flipchart stand (for some sessions, you may require two stands)
- Flipchart paper
- Plenty of colored markers (at least 30)
- Reams of A4 sized paper
- Construction paper
- Masking tape
- Enough wall space to display flipcharts
- Projector

- Laptop computer
- Speakers
- Notebooks for participants
- Pens or pencils for participants
- Downloaded files of video clips, if indicated for session

Advance Preparation

Know the Space

If you do not know what the room for the meeting or workshop is like, try to visit it a few days in advance. This will help you create the most positive environment for the training. For example, you may need to move chairs and tables or improve the lighting. The space should also be private in the sense that participants should feel comfortable discussing sensitive topics and personal opinions. If the room is not suitable, an advance visit will give you time to look for another room before the workshop begins.

Read the Toolkit

Read through the toolkit before you begin a meeting or workshop. Read through each session once more before facilitating it. If you are confused or concerned about any of the information in the toolkit, ask another facilitator about it.

Prepare Materials

Prepare handouts and flipcharts in advance. Make sure you have enough copies of the handouts for all participants. Some sessions require you to write information on sheets of flipchart paper before beginning the session. Make sure you have all the materials for each session before you begin, including a downloaded file of the video clips. A list of these materials is included in the description of each session.

Special note about video/language limitations: Many sessions (3–6, 8–11, 14) include the use of videos that are available in English. Facilitators are encouraged to review the videos in advance to consider necessary modifications (i.e., video not shown or material presented in a different format) for use in francophone or lusophone settings.

Research Support Services

For some participants, a gender workshop may bring up painful memories, such as childhood sexual abuse or sexual harassment. Some participants may have experienced violence during their adult lives, and some may still be experiencing violence. Facilitators should identify available support services and refer participants if needed.

As Participants Arrive

- Welcome each participant enthusiastically.
- Spend some time interacting with participants.
- Look out for participants who are not mingling with others and make an effort to reach out to them.

Final Thoughts

Relax. Breathe. Stay in the moment. Connect with your co-facilitator. Connect with each person in the room. Feel and acknowledge emotions and energy—your own and the group’s. **Trust that you can and will be a good facilitator**, that the group will learn and connect, and that the experience will be valuable for everyone!

Sources

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