

## RTD Content Validity Review Committee Member Responsibilities

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The RTD (Rigorous Test Development) project is an attempt to build a professionalized content development practice that focuses on individual item quality, particularly by leaning into the importance of validity throughout the content development process. It assumes that content development professionals develop professional judgment that can be raised, honed and calibrated by providing frameworks and clarifying expectations in ways that account for the constraints and demands of typical practice within test development, today. RTD is a conscious and deliberate attempt to respond to the disparity in status, training and shared knowledgebases between psychometrically oriented professionals and content development professionals.



# Content Validity Review Committee

## Member Responsibilities

**Purpose/Mission:** 1) The purpose/mission of the committee is to gather *the best feedback possible* for the items so that their validity can be assured. Everything else is in the service of that goal. 2) You are responsible for remembering this, and for contributing to the quality of that feedback. 3) Do not confuse the *means* by which we try to accomplish this goal with being your goal or mission.

**Preparation:** 1) You are responsible for reviewing the materials (e.g. items) supplied to you in advance of the meeting, following the training or guiding questions that been supplied to you as best you can. 2) If you suspect that there will not be time to both review all of the materials *and* follow the desired procedures, you should ask as soon as possible which takes priority.

**Attendance:** 1) You are responsible for arriving at each meeting on time – be that online, on the phone or in person – and ready to work when the meeting is scheduled to start. 2) You are responsible for staying in the meeting through the scheduled end each day or those running the meeting end it for the day, whichever comes first. 3) You are responsible for taking part in the entire meeting each day, returning from breaks on time. 4) If you know in advance that you will be unable to attend the meeting all or part of a day, you are responsible for notifying the facilitator or other authorities as soon as practical. 5) If you must leave a meeting without prior notice, you are responsible for quietly informing the facilitator of this fact and provide your best estimate of when you expect to return.

**Audience Awareness:** 1) The *primary audience* for the discussions of the Content Validity Committee are the lead content specialists at the client and at the vendor. They are there to observe the discussion, and occasionally to participate by nudging or prompting the committee. 2) You are responsible for following their lead, responding to their direction and concern, and for raising issues they may not have considered. 3) You should not focus on convincing other members of the committee to agree with you, only on trying to ensure that that primary audience understands your point – even if they do not agree with it.

**Process Questions:** 1) You are responsible raising any questions you have about the process for the meeting (i.e. procedures, expectations, etc.) in a prompt fashion. 2) You are responsible for addressing process question to the facilitator, who may redirect them to others. 3) You may raise these questions aloud in a way that others can hear, or you can use other methods of communication (e.g. email, chat, written notes, etc.). 4) You need not – and perhaps should not – wait for the discussion to come to you to raise a process question. That is, you should feel free to step forward and announce that you have a process question, so that the facilitator may give you a chance to ask it.

**Listening:** 1) You are responsible for listening to the facilitator's direction. 2) You are responsible for listening to the primary audience's requests. 3) You are responsible for listening to your fellow committee members and trying to understand the points they make and the issues they raise.



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**Clarifying Questions:** 1) You are responsible for asking clarifying questions of the other members of the committee to help you to understand their points *and* to help them make their points more clearly to others. 2) You need not – and perhaps should not – wait for the discussion to come to you to raise a clarifying question. That is, you should feel free to step forward and announce that you have a process question, so that the committee member or the facilitator may give you a chance to ask it.

**Connecting the Discussions:** Because issues often reoccur in slightly different forms and because better feedback is generated from a collaborative process, you are responsible for explicitly *connecting comments to prior comments* and to the originators of those prior comments – perhaps even to the point of exaggerating prior contributions.

**Disagreement:** 1) The best feedback is often generated through a healthy exchange of differing ideas, and therefore disagreement should be explored. 2) Before voicing disagreement, do your best to make sure you understand the other committee member (e.g. thinking through his/her point in your head, asking a clarifying question, etc.). 3) Do not make it personal. Be sure to disagree with the substance of ideas, and *not* the person. 4) Be clear as to the nature of your disagreement, and explain if you think there is a way to resolve it. 5) Do *not* expect that you will convince others to your point, or require the meeting to stay on the disagreement to achieve consensus. Once the primary audience understands both/all perspectives, the meeting should move on to the next point.

**Repetition:** 1) At their best, Validity Committee meetings are intense and exhausting, and are subject to time constraints and the endurance limits of the committee members. 2) Therefore, when at all possible, avoid repetition of other committee members and of repeating explanations. 3) However, when a point or issue applies again to another item, *do* raise that point again.

**Offering Substantive Contributions:** The urge to defend oneself and one's work is very strong. However, Content Validity Review Committees are *not* the appropriate forum. You are responsible for cutting off such comments so that participants can focus on offering feedback (e.g. spotting issues or offering suggestions). If an item developer is asked, s/he may answer direct questions about an item. However, you are responsible for keeping this rare. (Note: Questions about indicators, focusing themes and content topics/sub-topics should be addressed as often as needed.)

**“Equal” Participation/Contributions:** 1) Do *not* all committee members to participate equally. 2) Different committee members may participate in different way, some with original point, some with responses, some with clarifying questions, etc.. 3) Different committee members may participate in different quantities. 4) The goal is *not* equal participation, by any measure. The goal is the highest quality feedback on the items for the primary audience.

**Conflict/Disrespect:** 1) The best feedback will come from discussions that include conflict of ideas or even over ideas. However, disagreement should be confined to the ideas. 2) Disrespect or insults should not be directed at any participant in the meeting. 3) If you feel that there has been a problem in this area, you should address your concerns – preferably silently – to the facilitator.

