

How to Prepare and Write a Framing Document

How framing fits KBDM

Each KBDM discussion should have “bookends”: a beginning frame of reference that provides meaningful information that will inform the discussion to come and a closing summary that briefly provides information about what the discussion was about and what conclusions, if any, were reached.

Our purpose is to ensure that all participants begin the discussion on “the same page.” In a culture of trust, we all have equal access to important information. *We strive for clarity.*

Three important facets of a frame of reference that lend clarity to a discussion

- Background/History
- Relevance
- Context

Background/History: Knowing the background and history of the topic to be discussed helps to bring clarity to the discussion and provides focus. Knowing what happened in the past and how we have arrived at the present moment puts the discussion in perspective. Getting background information together requires research. You can get this kind of information from: Service materials including the *Service Manual*, CAL, WSO Archives, WSO staff and volunteers, *Conference Summaries*, meeting minutes, letters, etc.

Relevance: Describing what is pertinent to and closely connected to the topic will provide clarity. People want to enter a discussion knowing what the topic is about and *why we are having the discussion*. If those questions are not addressed at the start, the focus of the discussion is often diverted. Provide information that will help participants know why the topic has relevance to them, to their Assembly, to the WSO.

Context: Participants want to know why the discussion is taking place *at this time*. What are the circumstances that form the setting for the topic that can be fully understood and assessed? What is the frame of reference for the discussion? How does the topic fit into current circumstances? Why is this topic being discussed at this time? What is happening or has happened that makes this discussion currently important?

Important points when preparing a framing document

- Provide sufficient information so that there can be a good discussion
- Do not draw any conclusions—set the background so that the conclusion can come out of the discussion
- Consider personal thoughts or experiences if they assist in clarifying or lending credibility or illustrating a point—but keep it short. Sometimes an anecdote can be a very effective opener but use it carefully.