

## Member Departures

The life of a Forum group is dynamic. Although it's a long-term relationship, you will see members come and go over time. Member departure is a critical event. There is always a shift in the group when a member leaves, regardless of the reason. If the departure isn't addressed to the point that the group feels comfortable moving forward, there will be a significant decrease in Forum commitment and productivity. This can be especially dramatic if there was a negative situation surrounding the departing member.

### The Exit Presentation:

- Dedicate a portion of the meeting - 20-30 minutes is an appropriate amount of time for one member. Stick to time limits, more can be said in a social gathering afterward. The remaining group deserves to still have a productive Forum meeting.
- Departing member addresses the group - Address each member individually, in front of the group. Express thanks for specific contributions during the time together.
- Remaining members address the departing member - One-by-one, recall a vignette of their time together in the Forum and thank them for any particular contributions they recall.

### If the departure is contentious:

- Apply conflict resolution strategies - This is done prior to the member's last meeting and exit. See Module 6 on the Moderator CD for more information.
- Isolate this exit presentation - If more than one member is departing, separate the negative exit from a standard exit presentation.
- Forum protocol reminder - Tell the group that this time is only for words related to the member's departure, not a time to rehash any Forum issues relating to the member. Adhere to Forum language protocol and all confidentiality rules.
- Collective statement from the group - If tension makes it difficult for each group member to address the departing individual, then a collective statement can be made from the group. After the departing member speaks, open the floor for any general comments.