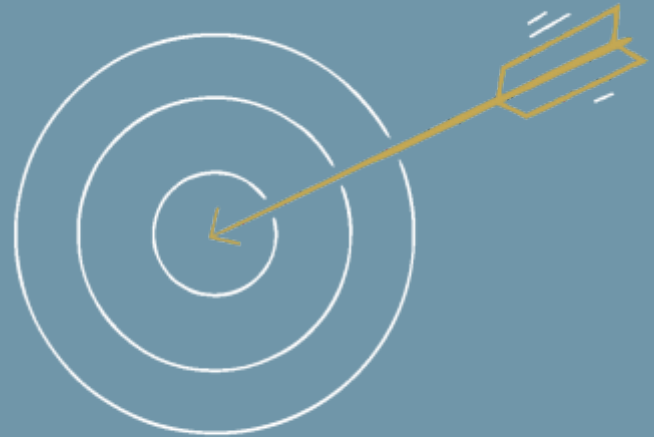


Ignite Series

Facilitating Group Decision-Making

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Session Overview: Basic Elements of Facilitating Group Decision-Making

- Be clear on *who* is making the decision.
- Be clear on *how* the decision will be made, and how others will be involved in the decision-making process.
- Create a supportive environment for effective decision-making.
- Once the decision is made, create a process for implementation that includes periodic reviews of progress, including reflecting on the effectiveness of the decision-making process itself.

Take 2 minutes to write down 1 or 2 situations where you have led (or been a part of) a group decision-making process.

What has been most challenging?
What supported the decision-making process?

Determining Who is Making the Decision



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Using a RACI Model to Clarify Who is Making the Decision

Activity	Responsible	Accountable	Consulted	Informed
<i>Identify the activity/work that requires a decision.</i>	The person(s) who perform(s) and complete(s) the activity – i.e. does the work.	The person who is ultimately accountable and has decision authority. They often delegate the work to the responsible person and then make the final decision/signs off on the work.	Persons that are knowledgeable about and impacted by the work, who can provide input or feedback and contribute to the work.	Persons that need to know of the decision/action, and kept up to date on progress.

Take 1 minute to think about your 1 or 2 situations – is it clear who is making the decision?

How could clarifying roles and responsibilities using the RACI model strengthen group decision-making?

Determining How Decisions Will Be Made

How to Involve Others

What is our decision-making rule?



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Continuum of Participation Impacting Decision-Making

(adapted from IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation)

Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
<p>Provide balanced and objective information to assist understanding the alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.</p> <p><i>We will keep you informed.</i></p>	<p>Obtain feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.</p> <p><i>We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how your input influenced the decision.</i></p>	<p>Work directly with the group throughout the process to ensure concerns and aspirations are understood and considered.</p> <p><i>We will work with you to ensure your input is directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how it influenced the decision.</i></p>	<p>Partner with the group in each aspect of the decision including development of alternatives and identification of the preferred solution.</p> <p><i>We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions.</i></p>	<p>To place the final decision making in the hands of the group.</p> <p><i>We will implement what you decide.</i></p>

Continuum of Participation Impacting Decision-Making

(adapted from IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation)

Inform	Consult
<p>Provide balanced and objective information to assist understanding the alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.</p> <p><i>We will keep you informed.</i></p>	<p>Obtain feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.</p> <p><i>We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how your input influenced the decision.</i></p>

Continuum of Participation Impacting Decision-Making

(adapted from IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation)

Involve	Collaborate	Empower
<p>Work directly with the group throughout the process to ensure concerns and aspirations are understood and considered.</p> <p><i>We will work with you to ensure your input is directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how it influenced the decision.</i></p>	<p>Partner with the group in each aspect of the decision including development of alternatives and identification of the preferred solution.</p> <p><i>We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions.</i></p>	<p>To place the final decision making in the hands of the group.</p> <p><i>We will implement what you decide.</i></p>

Annotate: In your unit, what form of participation/decision-making is employed most often/feels most familiar?

Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
<p>Provide balanced and objective information to assist understanding the decisions, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.</p> <p><i>We will keep you informed on decisions made.</i></p>	<p>Obtain feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.</p> <p><i>We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how your input influenced the decision.</i></p>	<p>Work directly with the group throughout the process to ensure concerns and aspirations are understood and considered.</p> <p><i>We will work with you to ensure your input is directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how it influenced the decision.</i></p>	<p>Partner with the group in each aspect of the decision including development of alternatives and identification of the preferred solution.</p> <p><i>We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions.</i></p>	<p>To place the final decision making in the hands of the group.</p> <p><i>We will implement what you decide.</i></p>

Decision-Making Methods – Decision Rules

Individual Decision Maker – Significant accountability rests with the individual and decisions need to be made quickly with little time to consult.

Majority Vote – When accountability is shared and decisions need to be made quickly.

Consult/Involve/Collaborate – The situation is more complex with deeper contributions, but the decision needs to be expedited.

Consent – It is important that people are actively part of the process and the focus is on action. All agree: good enough for now, safe enough to try.

Consensus – When unanimous support is necessary and the focus is on relationships.

Approach to Achieving Consensus – The How

- Clearly define the issue at hand, the context and what needs to be decided.
- Engage in open discussion, brainstorm and explore ideas, identify common ground, and address concerns. Hear from all voices and listen with curiosity (suspend judgment).
- Coalesce the exploration into a proposal: *“The proposed course of action is to”*
- Test for consensus.

Visual Method for Testing for Consensus

Thumbs Up

- I agree with the proposal and support the decision.

Thumbs to the Side

- I can support the proposal/decision, even though it's not my first choice/preferred course of action.

Thumbs Down

- I have serious concerns and cannot support the proposal/decision.
- When group members cannot support, they need to articulate their concerns/why they cannot support the proposal. The group then needs to be open to continue to explore/discuss concerns and together creatively finds ways to address concerns.

Additional Thoughts on Achieving Consensus

- When dealing with complex issues, yet a timely decision is needed, can focus on **Consent: Everyone can agree it's good enough for now, safe enough to try**. Record reservations and test for them by piloting the decision on a small scale and then evaluate and adjust. Or try out the decision for a set period of time and then evaluate and adjust.
- If there are many ideas/multiple proposals, can use dots (straw poll) to express preferences and narrow down options.
- Throughout the discussion, periodically test for consensus and modify the proposal to build on strengths and address concerns until agreement is reached.

Take 1 minute to think about your 1 or 2 situations - how could the Continuum of Participation be helpful in improving decision-making?

When and how is consensus used?

Creating a Supportive Environment for Effective Decision-Making



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Elements That Support Effective Group Decision-Making

- Foster a collaborative environment. Be flexible and willing to adapt your position for the common good.
- Leader acts as a facilitator of the consensus process.
- Actively listen to all perspectives with curiosity – ask clarifying questions – surface and explore assumptions.
- Encourage people to raise concerns for the group to explore with respect and through open dialogue. Separate the people from the issues.
- Allow enough time.

Some Things to Think About Once a Decision is Made



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After the Decision is Made:

- Communicate the decision and the rationale.
- Develop an implementation plan, with timeline.
- Conduct periodic reviews of progress during implementation to make sure the decision is getting the benefits intended. Address any concerns that manifest and make adjustments.
- Reflect on the decision-making process itself and make improvements for the future(!)

Final questions?

What are your key take-ways? Any next steps?

Thank you!



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