
Tools

10-4 Consensus

Making Decisions

Background

A consensus decision represents a reasonable decision that all members of the group can accept. It is not necessarily the optimal decision for each members. It is more difficult and time consuming than a democratic vote or an autocratic decision.

When to Use

- When a team is stuck in trying to reach a consensus on a topic
- When agreement is needed in a situation

How to Use

1. Each member gets 10 total votes.
2. In each rotation, a member may cast up to four votes on one or more item(s). For example, four votes for one item, two for one item and two for another, or one vote for each of four items.
3. A member may choose to pass without casting votes. Anyone passing can vote at the end of the round or wait until the next round.
4. After each round, the team takes time to dialogue about the different perspectives of team members in an attempt to come to a shared understanding and direction.
5. The next round, each member can cast up to four votes in the same manner as the first round.
6. The round continue with voting and dialogue until all members have cast all their ten votes.
7. The team reviews the decision to understand perceptions, feelings, etc.

Hints

Consensus is a group decision believed to be the best approach for the organization at the present time. It does not suggest unanimity. Each individual should have the opportunity to be accepted by the group, to express opinions, and to have his comments listened to.

How Does It Look



The continuum from voting to consensus places 10-4 consensus close to consensus. The power is in the dialogue.

Consensus Guide

- Present your position.
- Seek out and accept different opinions; disagreement improves the decision.
- Seek to understand the reactions and comments of others.
- Explore options acceptable to all participants.
- Ensure participants accept the solution for basically similar reasons.
- Avoid conflict-reducing techniques (e.g., voting, averaging,

