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Getting Unstuck: Facilitating Group Decision-Making

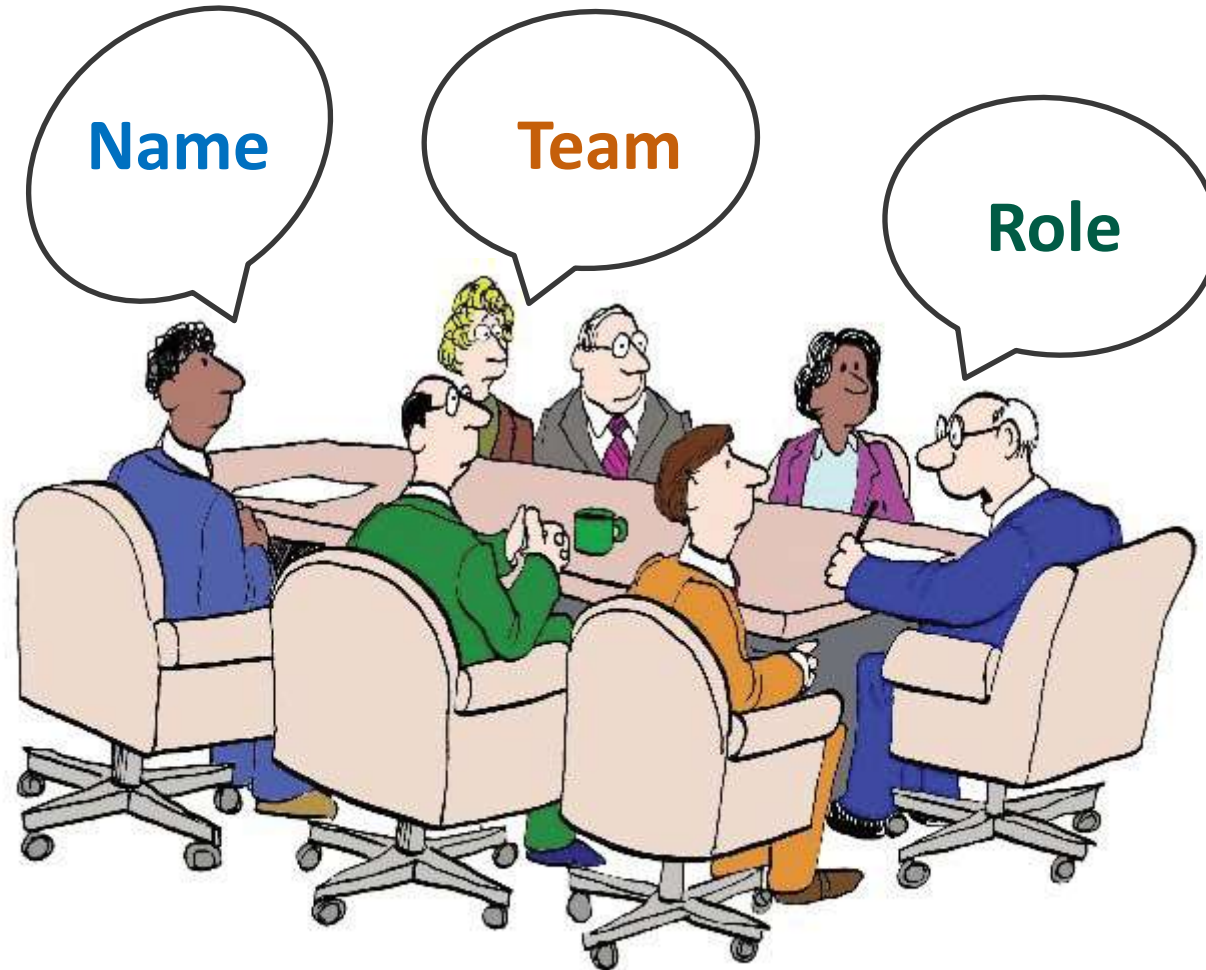
Learning Together Series

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Introductions

Via TEAMS Chat



**“Of course we can make fast decisions ...
once we have considered the 4872 factors.”**

Group Decision-Making (DM)

Why

- Facilitating group decision-making is part of our role
- Effective consensus can lead to superior outcomes (accountability, reduced bias, innovation)
- Unmet participant needs may result in non-productive conflict, draw-out project timelines and impact working relationships

Objectives

- *Compare* and contrast the different approaches to group decision-making
- *Identify* your predominate decision-making style and how different styles interact
- *Appreciate* the benefits and limitations of consensus decision-making

DM Models

What it is

When to use

Rational

Follow a sequence of predetermined steps to determine the best solution

- Information gathered and quantified
- The decision is important
- Trying to maximize the outcome

Bounded Rationality

Do the best you can, with the time and resources you have

- The minimum DM criteria are clear
- Can't invest too much time in DM
- You're not trying to maximize outcomes

Intuitive

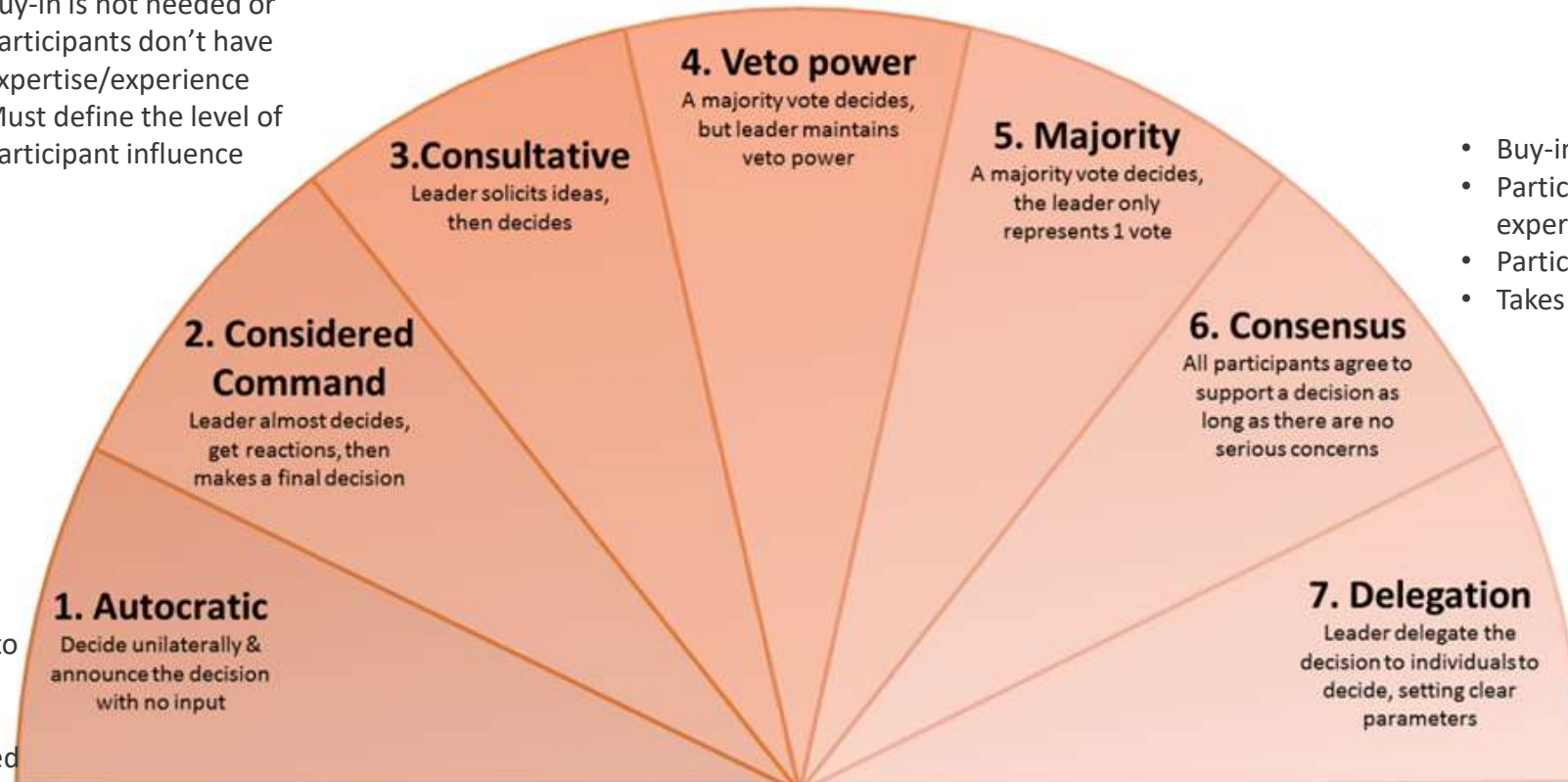
Use of prior knowledge and experience to come to a decision

- The goals are unclear
- There is time pressure and 'analysis paralysis' would be costly
- You have experience with the problem

Group DM Methods

- Leader is the facilitator
- Expertise is not needed by participants but desired
- Risk of unexpected decisions, win-lose proposition, the tyranny of the majority (us vs them)
- Clear expectations need to be established

- Buy-in is not needed or participants don't have expertise/experience
- Must define the level of participant influence



- Buy-in is needed, the group decides
- Participants have the expertise and experience to make a decision
- Participation required
- Takes ++ time

- Leader defines the scope
- Ensures buy-in
- Low-risk decisions
- Participant experience is required
- Cost and time factors are unpredictable

Leader decides

Participants decide

Faster

Slower

Directive – no buy-in required
Leader expertise

Democratic – buy-in needed
Participant expertise

Identifying the Goal of DM

The Right Correct Answer	The Right Ethical Answer
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finding the best answer out of a set of options• Often the correct answer does not apply to everyone.• Sometimes it is not clear what the best answer is.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finding the best positive impact in the answers.• Being cognizant that the answer will have an effect on the organization.• Through strong ethical consideration, a viable choice may emerge.

← Maximizing benefit while minimizing harm →



Personal DM Style

HAWK



- Direct
- Dislikes ambiguity
- Assertive
- Performs well under pressure
- Results orientated

PEACOCK



- Aspirational
- Charming
- Creative
- Talkative
- Likes to sell ideas

DOVE



- Sensitive and caring
- Flexible
- Dependable
- Facilitator
- Collaborative

OWL



- Detailed
- Reflects
- Quiet, thoughtful
- Logical
- Task-orientated

DECISION-MAKING STYLE MATRIX



In your next meeting:

'Bird Watch'

What birds potentially exist in your group?

Reflect on your preferences and the preferences of others.

Is a change in approach needed to settle ruffled feathers?

Setting the Stage: Group Decision-Making Effectiveness

- Shared mental model
- Participants: selection and presence
- Relationships
- Information
- Method
- Assert DM is to choose the alternative with the best trade-off of advantages and disadvantages. Greatest value vs win-lose proposition (e.g. I want this)



Decision Making by Direct Voting

Voting by **Majority**

- Decision to proceed with greater than 50% vote
- Majority wins regardless of how strongly the minority feels
- Assumption
- Sacrifices cohesiveness for speed
- Risks: Win-lose, group-think, ignores potentially valid concerns
- Use when the decision is not very important, a decision needs to be made quickly or when any decision is better than none

Voting by **Minority**

- Decision to proceed with less than 50% vote
- Proposal from most vocal. Majority silence is misconstrued as an agreement
- Rewards the loudest, most opinionated and assertive members
- Avoid

Consensus Decision Making

Is a dynamic way of reaching an agreement amongst all members of a group. A group using consensus is committed to finding solutions that everyone can actively support or live with.

Allow for disagreement and further discussion.

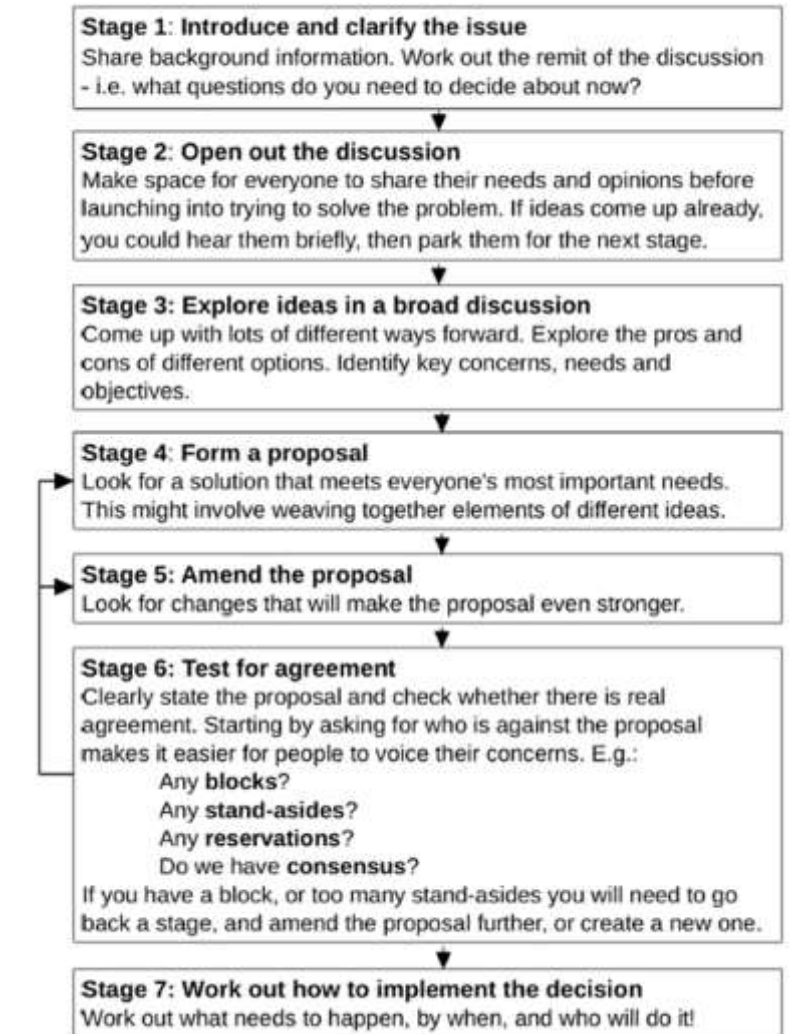
Benefits

Equality, collective responsibility over decisions bolstering buy-in, transparency, innovation, protect minority interests

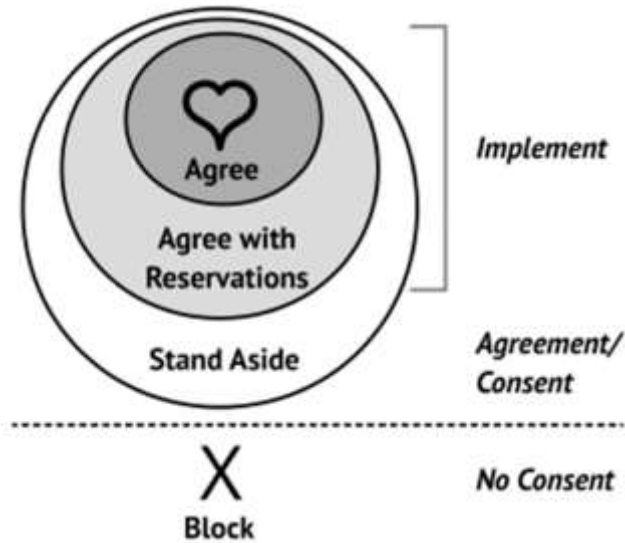
Constraints/Risks

Time (not quick), active facilitation and participation, group decisions may not reflect the greater population depending on representation, openness to seeking consensus vs prioritizing wants, group-think, gaming

Consensus Flowchart



Options for Agreement and Disagreement



Agreement: I support the decision and am willing to implement it

Reservations: I still have some problems with the proposal, but I'll go along with it

Standing Aside: I can't support this proposal because .. But I don't want to stop the group

Block: I have a fundamental disagreement with the core of the proposal that has not been resolved. We need to look for a new proposal and return to previous steps.

Consensus variation: Super majority aka majority-1

[SHA Decision-Making Strategy: Fist-to-Five](#)

Fist	No support--will work to block proposal. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "I need to talk more about the proposal and require changes for me to be comfortable with it."
1 Finger	No support, but won't block. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "I still have strong reservations and want to discuss certain issues and suggest changes that should be made, but I agree not to block the proposal if approved as is."
2 Fingers	Minimal support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "I am moderately comfortable with the proposal as is, but would like to discuss some minor issues."
3 Fingers	Neutral <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "I'm not in total agreement but feel comfortable to let this decision or proposal pass without further discussion."
4 Fingers	Solid support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "I think it's a good idea/decision and will openly support it."
5 Fingers	"It's a great idea, and I will do all I can to promote it."

Resolving Disagreement and Negotiation

Options for disagreement in consensus DM

- 1 – Discuss and revise the proposal
- 2 – Pre-emptively have a majority minus 1 strategy
- 3 – Stalemate protocol



Interest-Based Negotiation

- Pumpkin and restaurant analogies
- Don't argue on position
- Identify individual interests

Thank you

Questions

Contact: jmurawski@sharedhealthmb.ca

References & Resources

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