

CONSENSUS DECISION MAKING

Making decisions together, with mutual respect & authentic consent

TOPIC IS INTRODUCED

Clearly state the issue to be addressed. Information and history can help everyone be informed. If the exact issue is unclear, discuss concerns and clarify the issue.

DISCUSSION

Brainstorm ideas, hear experiences, raise concerns, use **active listening** to understand perspectives. Clarify where there is agreement, and disagreement. Discuss differing opinions. Find common ground.

DISCUSS PROPOSAL

Does the proposal address the issue, and work for the group? Does it reflect the discussion? Does it address all concerns that have been raised?

A PROPOSAL EMERGES

As the group identifies concerns and explores options, possible courses of action become more clear. One of these is put forward as a proposal.

NO

Unaddressed concerns exist. Further discussion is needed.

TEST FOR CONSENSUS

Clearly summarise the proposal. Call for consensus. Call for objections or unaddressed concerns.

YES

Everyone agrees with proposal and gives enthusiastic consent.

COLLECTIVELY ADJUST PROPOSAL

Brainstorm ways to modify the proposal to address or mitigate concerns. Address one concern at a time. Whole group participates.

CONSENSUS ACHIEVED



IDENTIFY CONCERNS

Discuss concerns or objections, identify issues.

STAND ASIDE

A person may give informed consent, even if they see problems with the suggestion.

BLOCK

If there is a fundamental conflict of ethics or values, a member may block consensus. A person blocking consensus should say why.

GROUP DECIDES

1. No consent, no action.
2. Back to discussion.
3. More info is needed.
4. Try a different facilitator.
5. After several tries, group may consider a vote.

ACTION POINTS

The suggested course of action is agreed. Identify "next steps" or actions, who will take them, and timeframes.