



Group Decision Tip

E-mailed every two weeks to help groups make good decisions

Clarify, Discuss, Decide

In principle, groups make their best decisions when certain steps are taken before deciding. Making decisions too fast without clarity and without the benefit of discussion is a set-up for bad decisions.

The best decisions are made when everyone understands the situation, the available options, and likely consequences. The worst decisions are made based on incomplete or incorrect information. Further, group decisions are often better than individual decisions because groups have the benefit of multiple perspectives and ideas. No one is smarter than all of us.

Practical Tip: Be deliberate about your group decision making steps. Before sharing opinions with each other, share information about the situation and potential consequences of deciding this way or that. Before forming your own opinion, make sure you are clear about the situation and the available options.

Before the group decides, make sure that there has been adequate time for discussing ideas and their implications. This maximizes creativity, increases prospects for innovation, and decreases the likelihood of unintended consequences.

Structure group meetings to focus on these three steps separately, maybe even separate meetings. Discourage sharing opinions before clear understanding. Discourage conclusions before everyone has had a chance to discuss. Encourage the discipline that no one decides until we all decide.

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