



Group Decision Tip

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

Multi-Vote

In principle, one vote per person works well to assess support for a single issue or to choose a single candidate, but to establish several top priorities from among a long list or to assess group preferences among multiple choices, try a multi-vote. A multi-vote is where each group member is given three or more votes to allocate among several alternatives. For instance, after identifying several ways to solve a problem and writing them all on the wall, each group member might be given three small sticker-dots (votes) and told, "Put your sticker-dots on your three favorite ideas."

Placing two or even three stickers on a single item is typically allowed. After voting, the whole group can step back and see how the votes are distributed among all the ideas. There is an immediate shared sense of the group's top priorities.

Practical Tip: Use a multi-vote to decide where to focus conversation. Rather than continue conversation about a whole list of ideas, multi-vote results indicate which ideas are worth further group consideration, and which are not.

To use multi-vote results to actually make decisions, have repeated rounds of multi-voting with each round limited to the top priorities of the previous round.

Apart from using sticker-dots, there are several other multi-vote methods such as hand-written or on-line surveys. Some groups use keypad voting where each participant is given a remote keypad and results are digitally tabulated by a computer and displayed graphically on a screen.

Multi-voting is a great way to quickly engage all participants and immediately see preferences of the group as a whole.

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