

## APPENDIX 14 (AOHC, 2007)

## Building Better Teams

## Answer Sheets: Deciding How to Decide

Method	Advantages	Disadvantages	When to use
<b>Unanimous</b>	Fast, easy, everyone is happy, unites the group	Too fast, perhaps the issue actually needed more discussion and debate	OK when discussion isn't vital on trivial or simple matters
<b>One person decides</b>	Can be fast, accountability is clearly spelled out	Can divide the group if the person deciding doesn't consult and makes a decision that others cannot live with. Lacks both the buy-in and the synergy of a group decision	When the issue is unimportant or small, when there is a clear expert in the group who can make the decision, when only one person has the information and is unable to share it, when one person is solely accountable for the outcome
<b>Compromise</b>	Lots of discussion, creates a solution from seemingly very different options	Negotiating can be adversarial if people are pushing their point of view and there are power imbalances, this approach can divide the group, everyone wins but everyone also loses	Compromise is often the only alternative when faced with a strongly polarized group and when there are two options proposed, neither of which is acceptable to everyone
<b>Multi-Voting</b>	Systematic, objective, democratic, non-competitive, reduces power imbalances, everyone wins somewhat, a fast way of sorting out a complex set of options	Often associated with limited discussion and understanding of options, forces choices that may not be satisfactory for people, real priorities may not have surfaced	When there is a long list of alternatives or items to choose from or when applying a set of criteria to options identifies the best course of action

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<b>Majority Voting</b>	Fast, high quality if used after thorough analysis, creates a clear decision	Can be too fast and low in quality if people vote their personal feelings without the benefit of each other's thoughts, creates winner and loser, hence can divide the group, the show of hands method puts people under pressure to conform	When there are two distinct possibilities and one or the other must be chosen, to decide items where a division in the group is acceptable. When consensus has been attempted and can't be reached. When unacknowledged power imbalances could prevent a consensus process
<b>Consensus</b>	A collaborative effort that unites the group, high involvement, systematic, objective, fact driven, builds buy in and high commitment to the outcome	Time consuming, low quality if done without the proper data collection or if members have poor group skills. Power relations can affect the outcome if not explicit	The most effective decision making process for important decisions where the ideas of the whole group are needed and buy in from all members is essential. The importance of the decision being made must be worth the time it takes to complete the consensus process properly