





Team Decision Making and Effective Communication

22.033





Tyrell Arment

12 October, 2011

Objectives

-  Become familiar with some of the methods for team decision making
-  Know when each method is applicable
-  Become familiar with the common barriers to communication
-  Know how to manage conflict in team oriented situations

What is the “Best” Team Decision?

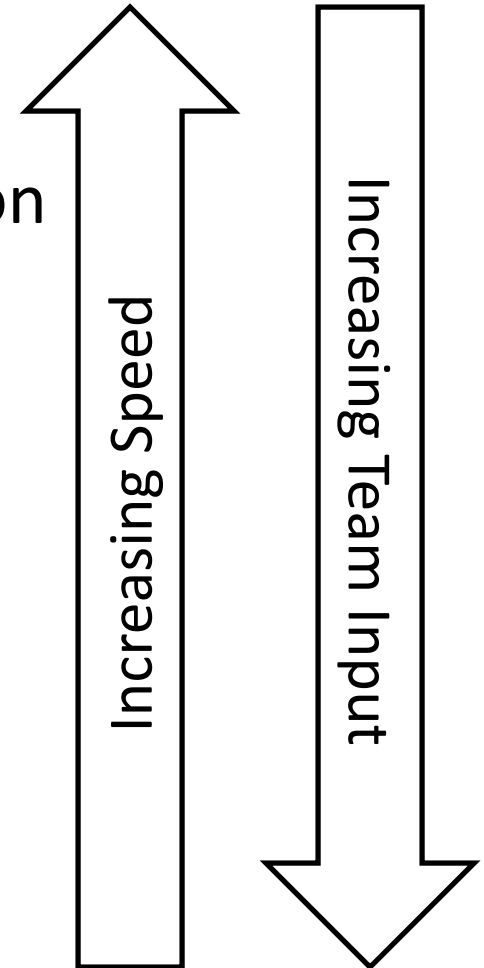
-  Would not have been thought of by an individual alone
-  Sound solution to the problem
-  One that is based on unbiased input from each team member
-  Addresses the team’s goal for the decision making process

Seven Methods of Decision Making



Decisions can be made by:

- An authority without group discussion
- An expert
- Averaging individuals' opinions
- An authority after group discussion
- The minority
- The majority
- Consensus



1. Authority Without Group Discussion

Strengths

- 🔹 Takes minimal time to make decision
- 🔹 Commonly used in organizations
- 🔹 High on assertiveness scale

Weaknesses

- 🔹 No group interaction
- 🔹 Team may not understand the decision or be unable to implement the decision
- 🔹 Low on cooperation scale

Example

Changing the brand of printer paper that the company uses

2. Expert

Strengths

- Useful when one person on the team has the overwhelming expertise

Weaknesses

- Unclear how to determine who the expert is
- No group interaction
- May become popularity or power issue

Example

The CEO of Kickin' Kicks Shoe Company consults a marketing specialist on the strategy for advertising a new line of sneakers.

3. Averaging Individual Inputs

Strengths

- 🔥 Extreme opinions cancelled out
- 🔥 Error typically cancelled out
- 🔥 Group members consulted
- 🔥 Useful when it is difficult to get the team together to talk

Weaknesses

- 🔥 No group interaction, members aren't fully involved in the process
- 🔥 Opinions of least and most knowledgeable members may cancel
- 🔥 Commitment to decision may not be strong

Example

The group leader sends out a survey to decide what the group's softball team name is going to be.

4. Authority After Group Discussion

Strengths

- Team used more than the previous methods
- Listening to the team increases the accuracy of the result

Weaknesses

- Team may compete for the leader's attention
- Team members tell leader "what he/she wants to hear"
- Still may not have full commitment from team members

Example

A business owner changes the hours of operation to 7am - 3pm after talking to employees and finding out that it would help those that commute to spend less time in traffic.

5. Minority

Strengths

- Often used by executive or temporary committees
- Useful for large number of decisions and limit time
- Some team perspective and discussion

Weaknesses

- Can be railroading
- May create an air of competition among team members
- May not have full team commitment to decision

Example

The executive board of Enron decides to “balance the books”.

6. Majority

Strengths

- 🔦 Useful when:
 - There is insufficient time to make a decision by consensus
 - Complete team-member commitment is unnecessary for implementing a decision

Example

A group of friends decide where to go out to eat on Friday night.

Weaknesses

- 🔦 Opposing parties are viewed as “winners and losers”
- 🔦 Minority opinion not discussed and may not be valued
- 🔦 Unresolved conflict may remain

7. Consensus

Strengths

- 🔥 **Most effective method of team decision making**
- 🔥 All team members express their thoughts and feelings
- 🔥 Team members feel “understood”




Weaknesses

- 🔥 Takes more time than previous methods
- 🔥 Takes psychological energy and a high degree of team member skill

Example

After days of deliberation, the jury emerges and delivers the verdict to the courtroom.

Additional Benefits of Consensus

-  Team member expression
-  Group agreement
-  Individual satisfaction
 - Agreement with most parts of the decision
 - Lets go of non-crucial opinions and backs decision
 - Values aren't compromised
 - Belief that the final decision is the “best”

Constraints of Decision Making

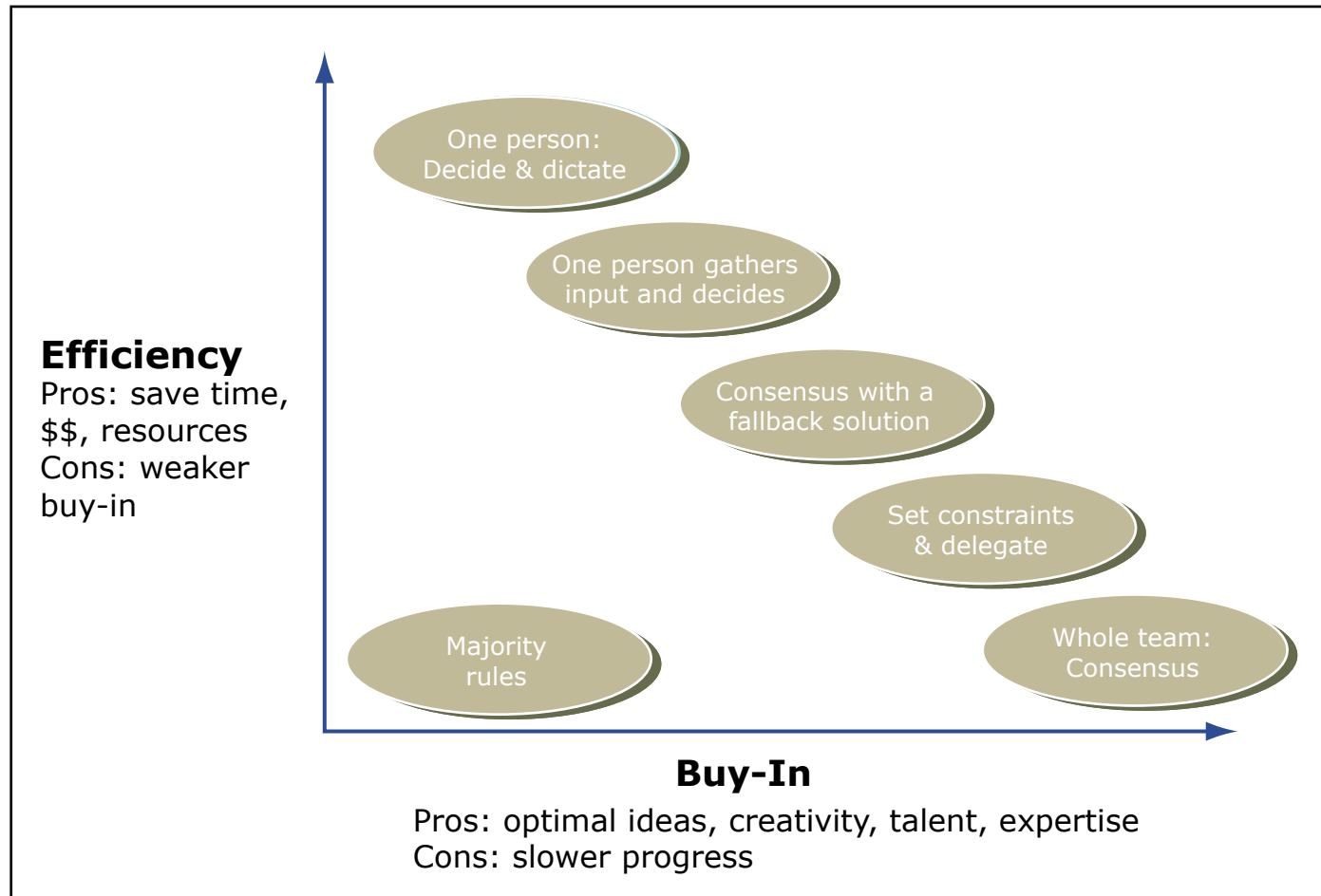









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Barriers to Communication

-  Judging
-  Sending Solutions
-  Avoiding Other's Concerns




Judging

-  Criticizing
-  Name-calling
-  Diagnosing
-  Praising Evaluatively



Sending Solutions

-  Ordering
-  Threatening
-  Moralizing
-  Excessive/Inappropriate Questioning
-  Advising

Avoiding Other's Concerns

-  Diverting
-  Logical Argument
-  Reassuring

Managing Conflict

-  Conflict will inevitably arise when working in groups and as future project leaders, it will be up to you to resolve them.
-  Three Parts of Conflict Management
 - Stay Calm
 - Show Respect
 - Make decisions based on facts, not emotions

Questions?

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