

# I. FACILITATING CONSENSUS

Facilitating consensus means that all participants have a voice in the decision-making process. Differences of opinion are viewed as helpful rather than an impediment. Each person is given a chance to describe their feelings about the issue and those who continue to disagree indicate publicly that they are willing to go along for an experimental try for a prescribed amount of time. Everyone shares in the final decision.

Suggestions for effective consensus decision making:

- Avoid arguing for your own position.
- When at an impasse, avoid feelings of winning and losing by determining the most acceptable option for everyone.
- Don't change your mind just to avoid conflict.
- Avoid conflict-reducing methods such as majority vote, averages, coin toss, and bargaining.

Facilitating consensus does not mean:

- A unanimous vote
- Everyone's first choice
- That everyone agrees