Poll and Discussion

Straw Poll

- An unofficial vote with non-binding results used to assess groups overall feelings on the topic at hand.
- Used to determine interest or if the group wants to further pursue the idea.
- If there is support, more time would be devoted to the topic. More information on the topic would be explored, providing details and allowing for discussion. This can be done right away, or be scheduled into a future meeting time.
- After completing this process, members should be presented with a final proposal, and then asked to do a formal vote.

Round Robin Discussion

- Generates ideas in a group brainstorming setting, encourages all participants to contribute, ensuring all have an equal voice.
- Topic is identified by the facilitator, followed by a single thought or reaction from each participant, preferably different than what has already been mentioned.
- Facilitator records comments made. Once everyone has shared, or allotted time has passed, there should be time for group discussion/reflection on all points made.
- Requires a climate of trust in the group to make this type of verbal sharing comfortable, also requires some facilitation to make sure that the process runs smoothly.
- To make a decision, this process should be followed with a formal vote.

Voting Techniques

Show of Hands

- Common voting method, useful in many group settings.
- Can be done quickly
- Generally uses “majority rule”.
- More precise than voice voting because counting is possible. Votes should be counted unless there is an obvious majority. This can be difficult with a very large group of people because there may be too many to count.
- Voting is not anonymous.
Voice Voting

- Vote is taken by verbal response of participants.
- Done by asking those in favor and against to say “Yea” or “Nay” respectively, or can be answered with “I” in the same manner.
- Generally uses “majority rule”, greater than 50% being for decision.
- Does not require much time.
- Can be used with many group sizes, but has potential to be imprecise because some voices may not be as loud, equating to a smaller voting percentage.
- Voting is not anonymous.

Ballot

- A formal voting method, utilizing a ballot or voting form, or simply a piece of paper!
- Great for large groups trying to make many decisions, very time effective!
- Able to make many decisions at the same time if needed.
- Uses “majority rule”.
- Votes are anonymous.

Consensus

- A decision made, requiring every participant to agree with the outcome.
- Group discussion is required prior to the vote, all members should have equal chance to share opinions.
- Changes and additions must be made to proposal until all participants can fully support decision. This is a great opportunity to use the Round Robin technique!
- After discussion, any voting method may be used to make decision. It is recommended to use a ballot or other written form so that there is no persuasion among members.
- This can be a time consuming method, but ensures that all involved are being accounted for.

Fist to Five

- Adapted version of consensus building
- Using hand gestures, or written numbers, participants are asked to rank their opinion on the topic being voted on. The scale is from 0 to 5.
  - Fist/0 = No, highly disagree or changes must be made
  - 3= Not in total agreement, but am comfortable letting decision pass and will support it.
  - 5= Yes! This is a great idea, I will work to implement it.
- Any voters that are fewer than 3, are given a chance to propose changes or share their reasons. These concerns should be addressed before taking another vote.
- In order for a decision to pass, every voter must be a 3 or higher.

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