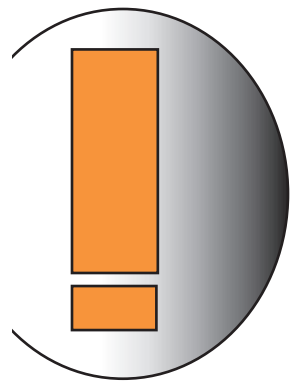


# Brainstorming

1. Visualize the extreme opposite of the situation. If you are trying to find a way to get into something, picture instead ways to get out.
2. Look at the space around the problem rather than the problem itself. If a committee member is no longer contributing like they used to, analyze their behavior in the context of their larger life.
3. Reverse the objective. If you have a high group turnover and want to change that, look at ways to encourage turnover. Identify behaviors of turnover and what you can do to encourage it. Then you have developed a list of things you can work to change.
4. Assume that all of your information is wrong – that nothing is, as it appears to be – that fact is fiction and fiction is fact. Challenge your working assumptions by trying the opposite.
5. Try something new. Do something you have never done before. The more alien to you, your way of life and your work habits, the better.
6. Brag. You might discover some hidden talents or desires by forgetting modesty and humility for a short period of time and allowing yourself to brag about your abilities; they are usually much greater than you allow yourself to believe.
7. If you always manage to keep a stiff upper lip or carry on cheerfully in the face of all adversities, change. Admitting your concern will help others understand there is a problem. Making it worse than it is might excite you to do some creative problem solving and to exert effort to save the day.
8. Reverse the physical characteristics of every object and person in the problem. Alter sizes, colors, density, capacity, purpose, weight, flexibility and priority.
9. Expect the unexpected.
10. Be someone else. Put yourself in another person's shoes to gain a perspective on why they are as they are.
11. Encourage everyone to talk about anything and everything that comes to their mind. Preface the discussion by saying that there are no stupid suggestions.
12. Make connections with the brainstorming. For example, if two people have made similar suggestions, connect them somehow.
13. Webstorm. Pick a subject and then branch off of it so that it resembles a spider web.

*Adapted from Whole Brain Thinking by Jacquelyn Wonder & Priscilla Donovan, pp. 102-105.*



# Collaboration

## What is Collaboration?

The act of working together and combining forces to produce something that is bigger and better than a single person or organization could ever do alone.

**In order for there to be a partnership between individuals, the following elements must be shared:**

1. Sense of purpose
2. Respect for the contribution of each other
3. Trust in the integrity of each other
4. Willingness to compromise

**The Contributions of Collaboration:**

1. The build-up of human resource effort.
2. The credibility affirmed through willingness to affiliate.
3. The sharing of financial resources and responsibilities.
4. The merging of partner marketing capability and clientele base.
5. The access to expanded expertise of each partner.
6. The goodwill nurtured through cooperation.
7. The creation of a critical mass of potential participants in the activity.
8. The potential of future endeavors if collaboration proves successful.

**Steps to Collaborating**

- 1) Do your research.
  - Are there groups who might like to collaborate with your organization? What organizations have a similar mission or purpose? What organizations would have a natural interest in your organization's event?
  - Check out the Office of Campus Activities Web site at [www.bgsu.edu/offices/sa/getinvolved](http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/sa/getinvolved) to find out more about other student organizations (some even have links to their own Web sites).
  - Your own members might be members of other student organizations, so find out if their other organizations might be interested in joining forces.
- 2) Establish your collaboration clearly.
  - How involved will the organization be? If they are sponsoring by giving money, make sure you are using it in a way specified by them, if any. If they want to be fairly involved (most will), make sure to include them in all the meetings and discussions about the event or program. Collaboration is usually more than giving money. It is working together to achieve a common goal.
  - Do they have enough money in their account to co-sponsor your organization? Make sure that they will follow through before you get too far in the planning. This might require speaking with the treasurer.
- 3) Plan the event with the collaborating organization in mind.
  - How will you print their name on promotional material?
  - Will they come to your meetings?
  - How will you recognize your collaborating partner(s) at the event or program?
- 4) After the event/program...
  - Make sure that the collaborating partner(s) is appreciated, perhaps by sending a thank you card.
  - Keep that group in mind for future collaborations.
  - Communicate with them on a regular basis to continue the relationship. You never know when your organization might be able to return the favor with a possible collaboration effort.

DeBard, R. (2001). Getting results: A guide to managing resources in student affairs. Horsham, PA: LRP Publications.



# Decision Making Methods

Each decision-making method has its strengths and weaknesses. Each also has particular consequences for the group's future operation. An effective group understands each decision making method well enough to choose the method that is best for the:

- history of the group
- type of decision to be made
- nature of the task being worked on
- amount of time and resources available
- kind of climate the group wishes to establish
- type of setting in which the group is working

## **Decision by Authority Without Group Discussion – *The President calls an unscheduled emergency meeting.***

- + useful for simple, routine decisions
- + good if very little time is available
- + helpful if group members lack the skills and information to make the decision any other way
- advantages of group interaction are lost
- one person is not always a good resource
- no commitment to implementing the decision
- resentment and disagreement may result in sabotage and deterioration of group effectiveness

## **Decision by Expert – *The treasurer creates the organization's budget.***

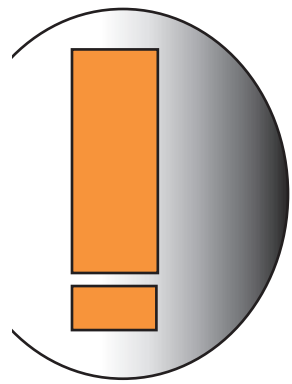
- + useful when the expertise of one person is superior and little is gained from group discussion
- + takes less time than group discussion
- difficult to determine who the expert is
- no commitment to implementing the decision

## **Decision by Averaging Individuals' Opinions – *The Vice President calls members of the executive board and asks "What's a good weekend to have our retreat?"***

- + useful when it is difficult to get group members together to talk
- + can be useful for simple, routine decisions
- not enough interaction between members to gain the benefits of group discussion
- no commitment to implement the decision
- unresolved conflict and controversy may damage group effectiveness in the future

## **Decision by Authority After Group Discussion – *Membership Chairperson solicits input on potential recruitment efforts, however, he/she makes the final decision on what events to hold.***

- + uses the resources of group members more than some other methods
- + gains some benefits of group discussion
- does not develop a commitment to implement the decision
- does not resolve the controversies and conflicts among group members
- members compete to impress the designated leader or tell the leader what they think the leader wants to hear



**Decision by Minority – *Fundraising Committee decides to send letters to alumni members soliciting donations.***

- + can be used when not everyone can meet to make a decision
- + helpful when only a few members have relevant resources
- + useful when board member's commitment is not needed to implement the decision
- does not utilize the resources of group members
- does not establish wide spread commitment to implement the decision
- full benefit of group interaction is not obtained

**Decision by Majority Vote – *Organization holds an election for new officers.***

- + can be used when there is insufficient time to decide by consensus
- + can be used when complete member commitment is not necessary for implementation
- + closes discussion on issues that are not highly important to the group
- usually leaves an alienated minority
- encourages either/or thinking
- full commitment to implement the decision is absent
- full benefit of group interaction is not obtained

**Decision by Consensus – *Organization establishes goals for the coming year.***

- + produces an innovative, creative and high-quality decision
- + elicits commitment by all members to implement the decision
- + uses the resources of all members
- + useful in making serious, important and complex decisions in which all members are committed
- takes a great deal of time, psychological energy and high level member skill
- time pressure must be minimal and there must be no emergency in progress

**The basic guidelines for consensual decision making are as follows:**

1. Avoid arguing blindly for your own opinions. Present your position as clearly and logically as possible, but listen to other members' reactions and consider them carefully before you press your point.
2. Avoid changing your mind only to reach agreement and avoid conflict. Support only solutions with which you are at least somewhat able to agree. Yield only to positions that have objective and logically sound foundations.
3. Avoid conflict reducing procedures such as majority voting, tossing a coin, averaging and bargaining.
4. Seek out differences of opinion. They are natural and expected. Try to involve everyone in the decision process. Disagreements can improve the group's decision because they present a wide range of information and opinions, thereby creating a better chance for the group to hit upon more adequate solutions.
5. Do not assume that someone must win and someone must lose when discussion reaches a stalemate. Instead, look for the next more acceptable alternative for all members.
6. Discuss underlying assumptions, listen carefully to one another, and encourage the participation of all members.

Perfect consensus means that everyone agrees what the decision should be. Unanimity, however, is often impossible to achieve. There are degrees of consensus, all of which bring about a higher quality decision than majority vote or other method of decision making.

# Delegation

## Delegation is...

the process of entrusting part of the work of programs and administrative assignment to others.

### Why don't I delegate better?

- I can do it better myself.
- I cannot trust my committee workers.
- I am reluctant to take a risk.
- I do not have time to involve others.
- I cannot delegate something I do not know how to do myself.
- I feel my workers resent being followed up on in their work.
- I cannot bring myself to delegating "busy work."
- I cannot delegate to my friends.
- All the workers are already busy.

### Why do my committee workers resist delegation?

- They do not know how to do the task.
- They have a fear of criticism for mistakes.
- They lack confidence in their ability.
- They do not understand what is wanted.
- They do not have the time.
- They do not like doing it.
- They feel the incentive offered is inadequate.
- They already feel overwhelmed.
- They have done it before.

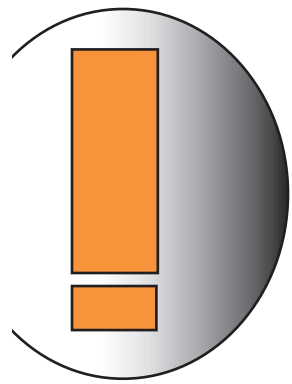
### Delegation is important because it:

- Provides more opportunities for people to be actively involved.
- Distributes work load.
- Motivates members by giving them value and importance.
- Helps organizations run more smoothly.

### What and when to delegate:

- Tasks and Responsibilities that keep repeating themselves.
- Minor decisions that are made most frequently.
- Details that take up large chunks of time.
- When someone has particular qualifications that would match the task.
- When someone expresses interest in the task.
- When you already have designated committees to handle those responsibilities.

Delegating responsibility (the art of spreading the work around) is an indispensable concept which must be grasped by any leader who expects to be successful



### **What and when not to delegate:**

- Situations that require a change in someone's behavior.
- A decision that involves someone else's morale.
- The "hot potato" or a difficult situation.
- Something that involves trust or confidence.
- Something you yourself would not be willing to do (the menial work).

### **Methods for delegating:**

- Ask for volunteers—interest and belief in someone is one of the greatest motivators for success.
- Suggest or encourage—someone who would be good at the task. Silence in response to a request for volunteers does NOT necessarily mean a lack of interest. Often, a person will not volunteer because she/he lacks self-confidence.
- Assign the task to someone. The person can always decline.
- Spread the fun and responsibility around—good jobs give people status and value. Make sure the same people do not always get the good tasks.

### **Guidelines for effective delegation:**

#### **1. Plan before you delegate.**

Determining what can be delegated is often complicated, but use an 80 percent rule. No one can do the job as well as you (or so you think), so delegate when the job can be completed to 80 percent of your satisfaction. Critical issues may demand your personal attention, but everything is not critical. As B. Eugene Griessman says in "Time Tactics of Very Successful People": "You should do only that which only you can do!"

#### **2. Decide to whom to delegate.**

This is either someone who can do the job now or someone you are willing to train so they ultimately can take responsibility. Do not delegate to someone just because they happen to be close at hand. Do not skip levels without checking with a person's supervisor. Decide whether the person needs coaching. Consider his abilities, experience, and degree of willingness.

#### **3. Communicate the delegation in writing.**

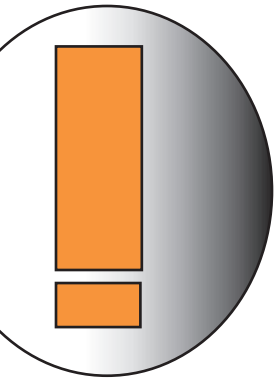
Tailor the task to the individual. Back up the oral presentation and avoid the "I did not know" syndrome. Resolve deadline or priority conflicts immediately.

#### **4. Follow up.**

Use your personal organizer to remind you when the task is due. Leave no doubt as to what you expect to be achieved by the review or completion date. Resist the tendency to let jobs be delegated back to you.

#### **5. Reward successful completion.**

Praise is often the most effective reward. Send a thank-you note for a job well done. For unsuccessful or partly successful assignments, review the errors and keep a positive approach to future ones. Remember to praise in public and correct in private.



**6. Choose the appropriate people by interviewing and placing your members carefully.**  
Consider their time, interest, and capabilities. Specific responsibilities to be delegated to a particular person must be appropriate for the growth or developmental needs of that person at the time.

**7. Explain why the person(s) was (were) selected for the task.**

**8. Delegate segments that make sense;** not bits and pieces of a task.

**9. Discuss the task at hand.**

Discuss ideas; mutually set possible goals and objectives. Whenever possible, give those who will be responsible for carrying out a program a voice in the decision-making. Do not lower standards: Don't insult people!

**10. Define clearly the responsibilities being delegated to each person.**

Explain what is expected of the person(s) and what the bounds of authority are. Be sure agreement is reached as to areas where the person can function freely.

**11. Give accurate and honest feedback.**

People want to know how they are doing and they deserve to know. This is both an opportunity for complimenting work and encouraging growth. Allow for risk-taking and mistakes.

**12. Support your officers/charipersons by sharing information, knowledge, and plans.**

It is incredible how many errors are made simply because of lack of information and communication. Share their failures as well as successes.

**13. Really delegate.**

Most responsible people do not appreciate someone looking over their shoulder or taking back parts of their assignment before they have a chance to do it. As the leader, it is hard for you to let go. Delegating does not eliminate work; it simply changes it. As you delegate appropriately, a multiplier effect occurs; the time spent doing a job can be spent enabling others to do numerous jobs.

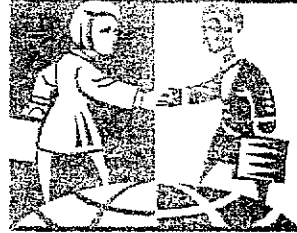
*Adapted from LEADERSHEETS, University of Alabama*

**Just remember...**

**The person who insists on doing himself what could have been done through others is wasting valuable time. Can you afford it? If you do the whole thing yourself you are insuring that the next time you will have no choice but to do it again, since no one else learned how.**

## How Consensus Works

- Formulate opinions
- Express opinions
- Listen to the opinions and feelings of all others
- Avoid using "win-lose" techniques
- Alter the solution, as needed
- Take the time to listen, consider other views, develop a thoughtful perspective, and be reasonable in reaching a group decision



**Consensus is Achieved When Every Member Can Say. . .**

**"I have had an opportunity to express my views fully and they have been thoughtfully considered by the group. Even though this solution may not be the one I believe is optimal, I think it will work and I support it."**