

Decision Rules - the way groups make a choice or reach a decision



Decision	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>1. Decision by majority rule:</p> <p>Requires support from more than 50% of the members of the group. Commonly achieved by voting or less commonly by polling (going around the room and asking each person to say where they stand).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• democratic (i.e. it's assumed that at least more people are for the decision than against it)• one way to get a clear decision• can be a quick process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• can disguise a 49% opposition and could leave a sizeable opportunity for resentment• can be divisive in critical issues and create problems for group cohesion and participation.
<p>2. Decision by consensus rule:</p> <p>Requires that a majority approve a given course of action but that the minority agree to go along with it. May be used selectively (e.g. to carry out a major building programme).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• allows for full discussion• requires participation from all group members• allows for wide acceptance and therefore support and implementation of the decision• excellent for important or difficult decisions that will subsequently require considerable group participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• can be very time-consuming• some psychological pressure can be placed on individuals holding out.
<p>3. Decision by unanimous decision rule:</p> <p>Requires everyone to agree on a given course of action.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the most acceptable approach there is, as there is no opposition to a decision• eliminates overt psychological pressure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the most difficult and time-consuming way to reach a decision• if all decisions are made this way, a high degree of inefficiency and membership loss may result in the long term, especially among those who want to get things done quickly.