



Keyword: Consensus

Tips for Creating Consensus

by Kevin Eikenberry

A Definition – A consensus decision is one that seeks agreement and to resolve or mitigate concerns and resistance at the same time. Consensus cannot be reached without understanding and exploring the opinions of all group members.

Consensus is reached when all members of the group are able to say:

"I believe that you understand my point of view."

"I believe that I understand your point of view."

"Whether or not I prefer this decision, I will support it because it was reached openly and fairly."

Tips for Consensus Decision Making

- Establish and focus on an overall or umbrella goal.
- Establish the importance of a "win/win" vs. a "win/lose" climate. "Win/win" can be achieved by using the best collective judgment of the entire group instead of arguing to win as an individual.
- Conflict on ideas, solutions, predictions, etc., should be viewed as helping rather than hindering the process of reaching consensus. Without differing opinions the best decision cannot be crafted. Recognize too that agreement that seemingly comes too easily may not be consensus at all, but acquiescence.
- Avoid changing your mind if it is only to reach agreement and avoid conflict. Support only solutions with which you are able to agree.
- Discourage arguing for individual judgments or opinions. Approach the task on the basis of logic first.
- Encourage (and remind) everyone to accept responsibility for both hearing and being heard so that everyone is included in what is being decided.
- Avoid "conflict-reducing" techniques such as majority vote, averaging or trading when reaching your decision (if you really want/need a consensus decision).
- Consider the 6 Steps of conversation to move closer and closer towards consensus. Discuss the situation or decision from each of these perspectives one at a time.
 - Perception
 - Definition



Title Tips for Creating Consensus (continued)

- Analysis
 - Generate Options
 - Evaluate
 - Decide
- Remember that the best results flow from a fusion of information, logic and emotion.

Use consensus when appropriate and needed. Consensus is difficult to reach; therefore, not every decision will meet with everyone's complete approval.

As a group, try to make each decision one all members can support.



Kevin Eikenberry is a bestselling author, consultant, trainer, speaker, coach, leader, learner, husband and father. He is the Chief Potential Officer of the Kevin Eikenberry Group (www.KEIKENBERRY.COM) and the Creator of the Remarkable Leadership Learning System (www.REMARKABLE-LEADERSHIP.COM), both of which are dedicated to life-long learning and helping Clients unleash their remarkable potential. Interested in becoming the remarkable leader you were born to be? Go to www.REMARKABLE-LEADERSHIP.COM today!
