**Common Approaches to Making Decisions**

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| **DECISION OPTION** | **ADVANTAGES** | **DISADVANTAGES** |
| **Consensus**   * Every view or position is heard * All members are willing to support           the decision | * Generally ensures greater buy-in and therefore increases the likelihood of successful implementation * Benefits from input from all perspectives * Once a decision has been reached, it can often be acted on more quickly than a unilateral decision handed down | * Can be time consuming and difficult to do * Can be contentious if individuals or small minorities are allowed to block agreement; blocking can result in dissatisfaction with the inflexible minority or individual |
| **Majority Rule**   * Decision determined by a majority vote | * Familiar, time efficient * Considered “fair” by some | * Regarded as competitive rather than cooperative * Ignores the possibility of compromise * Can reduce the commitment of each individual to the decision and create less willingness to act upon the decision |
| **Participative or Representative**   * Those making the decision seek and take into account input from the entire team or staff | * Efficient in that it does not tie up the entire team or staff but still provides the advantage of their input * Staff feel they were heard; generally acceptable by many * Allows for administrative (or other designated decider) to make final decision | * Sometimes takes time to gather the input, and there is the potential to miss someone * Requires good communication |
| **Unilateral**   * One person or a group is empowered to make a decision without consulting others | * Most efficient * Good for when a quick decision needs to be made | * Open to abuse of authority * May overlook some perspectives * If overused, can be demoralizing |