

Participatory decisions are made on a spectrum from Leader Centered to team centered approaches. Leader centered approaches are influenced by the leaders’ control and authority over an issue. Team centered approaches are influenced by the participation and influence of others needed to enact a solution.

Leader-Centered		Team-Centered	
Unilateral	Consultative	Joint	Delegated
I make the decision without consulting anyone.	I consult other people or groups but I retain the decision-making responsibility.	We make the decision together (voting, consensus).	I give full authority to another person or group to make the decision.

All decision making approaches on the leadership to team centered spectrum are valid. There are effects and contributing factors to deciding on an approach.

Leader-Centered	Effects and Contributing Factors	Team-Centered
Less Desired	Teamwork	More Desired
Less Important	Importance	More Important
Less Need/Probability	Acceptance	Less Need/More Probability
Less Need/Probability	Commitment	More Need/Probability
More Overall Typically Less Upfront More on Tail End	Chance of Conflict	Less overall Typically More Upfront Less on Tail End
Less Time	Time	More Time
Less Clear	Problem Clarity	More Clear
Less Developed	Trust	More Developed
Less	Team Information	More
More	Leader Information	Less

The approach to a decision may change due to shifting dynamics of the stakeholders. In ALT’s experience, transparency with the decision making approach and subsequent changes develops trust.

# Straw Voting (N/3)

Straw voting helps teams quickly reduce a large number of listed items down to two–six choices. It is often used after the idea generation phase to narrow the ideas that came up in, for example, a brainstorm. It also tends to eliminate an individual's close identification with what he/she put up on the board.

### Voting Process

1. Count the number of items generated and divide that number by 3.
2. Each person gets the number of votes that is the result of that division.
3. Ask people to vote for the ideas they think are the ones that should be pursued, using as many votes as they were given.
4. Review the top 3 (or so) choices based on number of votes.
5. From here, you can use consensus process to choose one or pursue the top three choices.

### Example:

- You have generated 11 ideas for a theme for this year's holiday party.
- $11 \div 3 = 3.67$
- Round up to 4. Each person gets 4 votes. They do not have to use all of them but they cannot vote more than 4 times.
- You count the total number of votes given to each item and select the top 3.
- You give the group a choice of agreeing on one efficiently or having conversations about each of the 3 and then voting N/3 again (each person has one vote!)
- Note: You can also use "sticky dots" for this. In that case, each person would get 4 sticky dots.

# Fist of Five

Fist of Five helps teams check in, gain consensus and move forward.

## Voting Process

1. State the question: "Is everyone okay with \_\_\_\_\_,"
2. Everyone votes at the same time and hands must be held high. by holding up 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 fingers.
3. The vote caller tallies the votes
  - 0 fingers (a fist): Block consensus
  - 1 finger: Serious reservations. Must resolve the concerns before supporting
  - 2 fingers: Some concerns, but I'll go along and try it
  - 3 fingers: I will support
  - 4 fingers: I like it
  - 5 fingers: Best idea ever!

## Best Uses

- Check-in - Start a conversation
  - How could we move you from a two to a three?
  - What reasons is it a five for you?
- Gain consensus
  - 0s, 1s, or 2s, ask for reasons.
  - What are your reservations? Does this change anyone else's vote?
- Move forward
  - If everyone has two fingers or more up, we move forward.