

Triangle Associates' Guide to Facilitated, Collaborative Decision-Making



An outcome is satisfying if it meets people's emotional, procedural, and substantive needs. As the group moves toward a decision, the facilitator uses these techniques to help the group achieve a durable result:

Making A Satisfying Decision

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- Develop draft proposals in conjunction with group members
- Ground-truth agreements to make sure they meet the original goals set by the group
- Name sticking points and differences and working with the group to overcome them
- Celebrate successes along the way and at the end

There are several best practices that a facilitator uses to help the group work together productively:

Working Together

Once the pre-work has been done, the collaborative process can begin.

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- Develop agreement on the group's purpose, goals and methods
- Define the roles of all group members
- Define consensus and levels of agreement and disagreement
- Develop ground rules to support effective meetings
- Seek to understand the root cause of an issue
- Give people the chance to share their hopes and priorities with the group, and to listen to the same from others
- Coach participants on speaking to their interests rather than their positions
- Foster side conversations between participants where they work out differences in more private settings

Some of the techniques used in this phase include:

Inclusive Preparation

True collaborative work requires that the group or group leaders lay the groundwork by beginning to discover the nature of the problem and bring in diverse perspectives, ideas and feelings.

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- Convene a planning or steering committee to help guide pre-work
- Articulate the need for and purpose of the work at hand
- Conduct a stakeholder assessment to determine who is impacted and what their hopes, fears, and ideas are
- Conduct background research into the problem, which might include interviews with key people or research into statute/regulations
- Articulate what happens if no action is taken
- Define who decides and how a decision will be reached
- Identify potential obstacles
- Determine who will be part of the process

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Proposed Category	Subgroup/Individual Development of Recs <i>if needed</i>	Full Commission Discussion	Subgroup/Individual Development of Recs	Staff Writing	Full Commission Discussion and "sorting" of Draft Recs	Public Outreach Sessions to Orgs?	Final Recommendation
Technical Updates		completed	completed	March	April 24		June 26
Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement	Week of March 11	March 27	Week of April 8	Week of April 15	April 24		June 26
Which Officials should be elected?	Week of March 11	March 27	Week of April 8	Week of April 15	April 24		June 26
Public financing of campaigns	Week of March 11	March 27	Week of April 8	Week of April 15	April 24		June 26
Surplus land for housing	Week of March 11	March 27	Week of April 8	Week of April 15	April 24		June 26
Representation of the deceased family in inquests	Week of April 8	April 24	Week of May 6	Week of May 13	May 22		June 26
Ranked Choice Voting	Week of April 8	April 24	Week of May 6	Week of May 13	May 22		June 26
Size of the County Council	Week of April 8	April 24	Week of May 6	Week of May 13	May 22		June 26
Meeting population growth	Week of April 8	April 24	Week of May 6	Week of May 13	May 22		June 26
Other topics							

*Proposal to extend the April 24th and June 26th meeting to 3 or more hours

