

# WORKING AS A TEAM

## Session 7

**60 minutes**
**OBJECTIVE:**

Youth will understand different forms of decision making and agree on what form to use in this group or project.

**MATERIALS AND PREPARATION:**

- Butcher paper, tape, and markers.
- Post three pieces of blank butcher paper around the room.
- Review *Forms of Decision Making - Facilitator Example* (Master Copy 1.7a) and create a poster of the *Forms of Decision Making chart* (Master Copy 1.7b) and place it at the front of the room. (Leave the spaces in the chart blank – you will fill them in with youth during the session.)

**I. OPENING: ATTENDANCE, SNACKS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AGENDA OVERVIEW (10 MINUTES)**

Opening Circle Statement (Around the World): Name a decision you made or were part of recently.

**II. WARM UP: FOLLOW THE LEADER (10 MINUTES)**

Assemble participants into a circle (facing in). Ask for a volunteer to be the "guesser." This person will then step out of the room. Once that person is outside, pick someone in the group to be the leader. Her or his role is to lead the group without the guesser figuring out that he or she is the leader. Have the leader start a motion that everyone else must follow (e.g., clapping

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## Making Decisions

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hands, waving, rubbing belly). Once everyone is doing the motion, ask the guesser to come back in and stand in the middle of the circle, and try to guess who in the group is initiating the motions. The leader must change motions when they think they can do so unobserved. The rest of the group tries to follow as quickly as possible to make it harder to guess who is leading. Once the person in the middle guesses correctly, repeat the process with a new guesser and leader. Debrief: what does this say about leadership? Is it always easy to tell who is leading? Ask youth to think of examples of leaders who led by supporting others and keeping a group focused.

**III. DEFINING AND EXPLORING DECISION MAKING (20 MINUTES)**

**Step 1:** Divide the group into three smaller groups and arrange each by a butcher paper. Have each group appoint a note taker and a reporter. Ask youth to recall different times in their lives when they have had to make decisions and the processes they used to make these decisions. Offer scenarios such as:

- Think back to a time recently when you needed to make a decision with your friends (like what to do after school, what movie to see, or where to sit at lunch). How was it decided what you would do?
- Now think about a time in one of your classes when there was a decision about what activity you would do. How was it decided what you would do?


**Facilitation Tip:**

*When explaining each type of decision making it may be helpful to role play: For instance, acting as an autocratic decision maker, you might say, "I, ruler of all of you, declare that you are no longer allowed to wear jeans;" while as a representative, you might say, "After having listened to each of your recommendations for a dress code, I have decided that we will no longer wear jeans."*

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- When the city needs to decide whether or not to build a new park, how is it decided what will happen?
- What about in your family: Who decides what you eat for dinner or whether or not you go to church?

**Step 2:** In the full group, explain the general categories of decisions:

- Autocratic: Made by one person
- Representative: Made by one person with input from others
- Democratic: Made by group together, majority rules
- Consensus: Made by group together, all must come to agreement

Discuss the pros and cons of each category, using the *Forms of Decision Making* chart you have prepared. Fill in youth's answers and ideas.

**Step 3:** Back in their small groups, ask the youth to again discuss the examples they came up with and decide which category best fits with each of their examples. Then ask them to identify the most common forms of decision making they experience and to identify some ways they would change the decision-making structures in their lives.

**Step 4:** Have a representative share out from each of the groups.

#### IV. DEBRIEF AND DECIDE: WHAT WORKS FOR THIS GROUP? (15 MINUTES)

Bring the entire group back together, explain the importance of having a procedure for making decisions together, and ask each group's reporter to state which model they think would be best for this group or program and why. Let the group know that others who have used this curriculum have found that democratic processes work best to ensure a fair process where everyone's voice is heard and decisions are made in a timely way. Also, let the group know that there may be some cases when the adults will need to make decisions. For example: The adult leader may decide to plan an activity or retreat that addresses a particular issue or conflict that they notice in the group. Review the procedure that has merited the most support. Be certain to ask if there are any objections, questions, or revisions given their earlier discussions.

#### V. CLOSING (5 MINUTES)

Closing Circle Statement (Around the World): Share something you noticed in or about the session today.

## Forms of Decision Making - Example

DECISION STYLE	PROS	CONS
<p><b>Individual (Autocratic)</b></p> <p>One person decides</p>	<p>Decisions are swift.</p> <p>Requires no consultation.</p> <p>Everyone knows who is responsible for the decision.</p>	<p>Might not be the best decision.</p> <p>Might arise only from what the individual knows or is most comfortable with.</p> <p>Action might not be agreeable to most or even any.</p> <p>Most will not feel deeply committed to the decision unless they are deeply committed to the individual.</p>
<p><b>Representative</b></p> <p>One person (or a small group) receives advice from others and makes decisions that impact everyone.</p>	<p>Decisions are swift.</p> <p>More ideas expand possibilities.</p>	<p>Those consulted might feel pressure from the decision maker(s).</p> <p>Might not be the wisest decision.</p> <p>Action might not be agreeable to most or even any.</p> <p>Some points of view are not heard.</p> <p>Most will not feel deeply committed to the decision unless they are deeply committed to the individual or group.</p>
<p><b>Majority (Democratic)</b></p> <p>An issue is widely discussed, but the majority rules the decision-making process; voting.</p>	<p>Can be used with small and large groups.</p> <p>Most people are familiar and comfortable with this process.</p> <p>Everyone has a voice initially, if they use it; many points of view are heard.</p> <p>Individuals feel a sense of equality.</p>	<p>A win-or-lose mentality can develop.</p> <p>There may be a lack of commitment by those who fought for a different position.</p> <p>Issues become personal, based on who has supported whom, rather than who believes in what.</p> <p>People tend to look at traditional alternatives when using traditional methods.</p>
<p><b>Consensus</b></p> <p>An issue is widely discussed and everyone agrees that the decision is acceptable.</p>	<p>More opinions and perspectives are aired.</p> <p>Individuals feel a sense of equality.</p> <p>Promotes synthesis of ideas.</p> <p>Elicits broader commitment.</p> <p>Can prompt further education about a topic.</p>	<p>Can take a lot of time.</p> <p>Requires members to be mature about carrying out ideas that didn't rank first on their list.</p> <p>Progress can be blocked by one person.</p> <p>Difficult in large groups.</p> <p>When new members join they must learn to trust the group and the process.</p>

## Forms of Decision Making

DECISION STYLE	PROS	CONS	EXAMPLE
<p><b>Individual (Autocrat)</b> One person decides.</p>			
<p><b>Representative</b> One person (or a small group of people) receives advice from others and makes decisions that impact everyone.</p>			
<p><b>Majority (Democratic)</b> An issue is widely discussed, but the majority rules the decision-making process; voting.</p>			
<p><b>Consensus</b> An issue is widely discussed and everyone agrees that decision is acceptable.</p>			