

Consensus Decision Making

Many of the projects that Footprint Environmental Strategies is involved in require some kind of public process and meetings that include people who represent very different sectors. We use the consensus decision making model to run our meetings, as we find it to be an effective model that strives to include all voices and ideas.

Just like a meeting run with 'Robert's Rules of Order' can run off the rails, go too long, or miss the point completely, so can consensus based processes. It is even more important to make sure that the process is adhered to in a consensus process, because there is no simple solution like a 50% plus 1 vote to end a discussion.

The following are a list of resources that explain consensus decision making and elements of an effective meeting. There are many more resources on the web – have a look for what works best for you.

Excellent Resource General Overview

<http://www.vernalproject.org/RPapers.shtml#CoopDecMaking>

Consensus Workshop Ideas

<http://www.vernalproject.org/Papers/ConsensusAgenda-53W.pdf>

Quick Checklist for a Consensus Process

<http://www.vernalproject.org/Papers/Checklist-22W.pdf>

Group Decision Making Tool Kit

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/communities/tools/decisions/>

Flow of Consensus Decision Making Handout

<http://www.toolsforchange.org/resources/org-handouts/consensus-process.pdf>

Managing Difficult Behaviors in a Meeting

<http://www.casagordita.com/difficult.htm>

Effective Meeting Basics

<http://www.effectivemeetings.com/meetingbasics/training.asp>

A facilitator's guide to effective consensus meetings

<http://www.ic.org/nica/book/Cover.htm>

Planning and Conducting Effective Public Meetings

<http://ohioline.osu.edu/cd-fact/1555.html>