Good Group Handout
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Consensus Decision Making Meetings

A meeting is usually just a step in a much larger consensus process – lots of stuff happens before and after the meeting – yet meetings are critical and it's always in a meeting that the actual decision is finalized and documented. So here are some tips for good meetings where the group is trying to achieve consensus.

Agenda Components

Opening - everyone feels welcome, comfortable, empowered, positive

Roles defined (facilitator, scribe(s), time-keeper, other?)

Initial consent:

- consensus process
- meeting ground rules or guidelines
- agenda (items, order, timing) - draft agenda typically prepared in advance

Information sharing

DECISION MAKING ←

- This is where the magic happens
- The biggest and most important part of the meeting, in the middle
- See Consensus Decision Making Steps and other resources for details

Review decisions

Affirm next steps (including how basket items will be handled)

Final words

Adjourn

Helpful for Productive Meetings

- A skilled, objective facilitator
- A neutral, comfortable meeting space
- A basket or parking lot
- Good food and breaks