

# PROCESS FOR DECISION MAKING

Meetings Don't Make Decisions. Leaders Do.



## 1. EVERY DECISION HAS A DECISION MAKER

Our meetings can't exist without a decision to support. Not a question to discuss – a decision. A decision maker must be identified prior to the discussion. No decision is made at the table.

## 2. GATHER DATA

If a decision maker needs advisement pre-decision, he should get it from a brainstorm session or personally from others via one-on-one conversations.

If you need help making the decision there are two primary methods to gather information.

### **One-on-one Discussion**

Initiate contact with those impacted by the decision for personal discussion and reflection.

### **Brainstorm**

The purpose is to gather information to help make a decision.

No decision will be made during the brainstorm.

## 3. DECIDE

Decisions are handled in one of two ways:

### **Decision: Evaluation**

A decision is made and the decision-maker engages in discussion that evaluates the implementation of the decision. An evaluation includes discussion about modifications, or addressing concerns. You cannot bring a critique without a proposed solution. The decision-maker either affirms the decision or retreats to reflect on the evaluation and makes a new decision.

The second type of agenda item focuses around the implementation of the decision.

### **Decision: Coordination**

A decision is made after the decision maker has collaborated with different people, teams and leaders. Together they coordinate an action plan and agree to the steps necessary to accomplish the objective.

# NOTES:

This resource is adapted from The Modern Meeting.

<http://modernmeetingstandard.com/the-modern-meeting-standard/>

The Modern Meeting focuses on the only two activities worth convening for: conflict and coordination.

## **Conflict**

The individual should own her decisions and champion them strongly, but in our organization we must be open to input from others. We should be resolute, without being stubborn. Conflicting opinions spur debate that can open the door to intelligent decisions. The Modern Meeting welcomes conflict. After a preliminary decision is made, if there are differing opinions or serious objections, the Modern Meeting gets them all out on the table to be considered.

In traditional meetings, individuals may hesitate to voice their true opinions or edgy ideas for fear of criticism. They may think: Is it the right time to dissent? The Modern Meeting meets only for the purpose of dissent. Conflict is expected, so participants feel safe to let their ideas fly indiscriminately.

One caveat: Upon making a decision, if you're not willing to alter it or modify it in any way, don't bother having a Modern Meeting. Just go. Conflict is useless unless you, the decision maker, come to the table with an open mind. That doesn't mean that you shouldn't be confident in your decision, nor should you easily compromise, but you should be moveable. Otherwise, don't call a meeting. Make the decision, send a memo, and be done with it.

## **Coordination**

Decisions can lead to profound action, but that action happens only with proper coordination. Once a decision is reached, sometimes the resulting action is straightforward. The division of labor is clear; the intersections between teams and departments are obvious. No need to have a meeting. Other times, the scenarios are tricky, the steps are vague. It's worth having a Modern Meeting to engage in collaborative problem solving. Getting smart people in a room to figure out how to support a plan or launch a product makes sense.

For more on conflict and coordination, visit:

[modernmeetingstandard.com/2016/03/conflict-or-coordination-two-different-kinds-of-decision-oriented-meetings/](http://modernmeetingstandard.com/2016/03/conflict-or-coordination-two-different-kinds-of-decision-oriented-meetings/)