

# **GUIDELINES FOR CONSENSUS DECISION MAKING**

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## **DEFINITION**

Consensus is defined as everyone on the team being at least 70% comfortable with the solutions being set up for action and willing to give the solution 100% of their individual support. If any team members are not 70% comfortable, they accept the obligation to share the basis of their discomfort with the rest of the team so that the proposed solution can be re-phrased until every team member is 70% comfortable with the action to be taken and can give it 100% support.

It is not the same as a unanimous decision

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR CONSENSUS**

Every member must be committed to arriving at a decision

Every member must be a willing participant

It is not required that every member be FULLY comfortable

The consensus process breaks down when an individual member persists in blocking the decision by

- not participating
- not accepting the needs or views of others
- not being willing to achieve a decision

If the consensus breaks down, a decision must be made in another way.

## **CONDITIONS WHEN CONSENSUS IS APPROPRIATE, USEFUL, OR WORTH THE TROUBLE**

- When support and commitment for the decision is essential
- When different ideas and approaches are useful
- When exact circumstances are unknown or ambiguous
- When participation for ownership is as or more important than technical correctness.