

# The Step-by-Step Guide to Facilitating Team Decision Making

POST by JAMIE JOHNSON

In a business environment, the most successful teams are the ones that have learned to work through problems and make decisions together. But as a team leader, facilitating successful team decision making is no small feat.

This is especially true in a work environment where personal agendas and office politics (<https://tallyfy.com/office-politics/>) can cloud people's judgment and lead to petty arguments.

It is, however, common knowledge that an effective team will outperform individual efforts any day. The right combination of skills and different perspectives can lead to something much more impactful than what any one person could have come up with.

So how can team leaders facilitate successful team decision making? Well, that's what we're here to teach you. It should be noted, though, that the dynamics of each team will be unique. So, while there is no one-size-fits-all solution, including the right one for your business can greatly improve your team's chances for success.

# The Advantages of Team Decision Making

Team decision making can be formal or informal, depending on the environment and the goal the group is working toward. Many people worry that team decision making will be a slow, arduous process that will result in a lot of arguing. And while this certainly does happen, there are also many advantages to team decision making.

One of the biggest advantages of team decision making is that the collective wisdom of the group can be much more profound than what any individual could have come up with. Every person on the team will have different strengths and backgrounds that shape their perspective.

This means that everyone on the team can contribute different high-quality solutions to the problem they are trying to solve. For that reason, teams are especially helpful in dealing with urgent tasks that require a short deadline or very complex problems.

Are you looking to document and run your processes?

Don't use MS Word or Google Docs, **and don't use flowcharts**

Documenting your processes using flowcharts might look pretty and nice – but **you can't run them**. Even worse – **nobody looks at flowcharts**.

[SEE WHY HERE](#)

When more people are involved in the decision-making process, the decisions tend to be better because a greater level of ideas and expertise were brought to the surface. And the team members are usually more committed to implementing the solution because they understand the thought and effort that went into it.

# 5 Steps to Facilitating Successful Team Decision

When you think about team decision making, you most likely have mixed reactions. As we already established, bringing together a group of people with diverse backgrounds and perspectives can be a powerful source of change. By working through the problem together the solution will often be more thoughtful and innovative than what any one person could have come up with.

On the other hand, the team leader is given the enormous responsibility of bringing together a variety of schedules, personalities, and priorities in hopes of finding some sort of middle ground. This scenario can just as easily lead to a lot of frustration and arguing. Finding the right process for successful team decision making is crucial. Here's a couple of things, however, that can help facilitate team decision making:

## Break down the problem

Unless your team knows what, exactly, the problem is, you'll end up wasting a lot of time. Everyone needs to know what the underlying problem is, otherwise, it'll lead to Arguing & Chaos.

Everyone starts solving a different problem, which eventually leads to conflicts. Each team member thinks the other is severely wrong, while everyone's actually on the same side. So, you'll end up wasting hours of your team's time, with no real gain out of it.

So, the first step is to always break down the problem into the tiniest details, ensuring that everyone knows what it is.

## Analyze the available data

Now that the team has outlined and understands the problem, they need to gather more information. The team leader should try to guide the team toward focusing on data rather than relying on opinions or anecdotal evidence. This will help the team members to focus on the facts rather than relying on emotion.

It is important to make sure the data is collected ahead of time so the process won't be slowed down or temporarily stalled.

## Brainstorm possible solutions

The next step in the process is for the group to brainstorm possible solutions to the problem. It is a good idea for the group to agree on a deadline for the brainstorming session ahead of time so the discussion doesn't drag on indefinitely. It is also important that everyone is allowed to offer their input without criticism.

## The team leader should navigate the group discussion

It is hard to make sure that everyone has a chance to share their ideas, that the group stays on topic, and that the discussion remains cordial. For that reason, the team leader should navigate the discussion to make sure the group stays focused on their main objectives and everyone has a chance to participate.

## Settle on a solution and action steps for moving forward

Now that everyone has offered their input and you have come up with a variety of solutions, it is time to choose the best alternative. To select the best alternative, the team must know what their desired outcome would look like and also what are the possible consequences of that outcome.

Once the team decision making is complete, it is important that everyone on the team stands behind that decision. If everyone on the team is not committed to fully supporting that decision you risk invalidating it entirely.

## Conclusion

Now that you know how to facilitate successful team decision making, you have the potential to be a much better leader. After all, what defines a good leader is how efficient their team is.