Making Decisions

Preparation

Review Reference Manual

Equipment, Materials, Supplies

❑   Newsprint, Easel, Markers, Masking Tape

Exercise Preparation

❑   Review the methods of decision making and think of examples of each method's use that occurred in the last two days..

❑   Review *Exercise 1: Interventions for ineffective decision making.* Prepare ideas for answers

❑   Review *Exercise 2: Cash Register*

    ❑   Make extra copies of the Cash Register Worksheet to give to the recorder of each small group.

Room Arrangements

Participants should be seated at tables in groups of 4 to 6 people so they face each other.

Overview

Purpose

The purpose of this module is to enable participants to enhance a team's ability to make decisions.

Objectives

At the end of this module participants will be able to:

*   Identify stages of decision making.
*   Discuss advantages and disadvantages of four different decision-making strategies.
*   Recognize challenges to decision making.
*   Facilitate consensus decision making.

Content	Time
Introduction	2 minutes
Stages of Decision Making	5 minutes
Decision-Making Model	3 minutes
Decision-Making Methods	10 minutes
Ineffective Decision-Making Behaviors	10 minutes
Cash Register Exercise	30 minutes
	Total time: 60 minutes

Time/Materials   Content/Activities

Introduction   **DISCUSS** the purpose, objectives, and overview of the content.

2 Minutes   *Purpose*

Slide 1   **TELL** participants the purpose of this module is to enable participants to enhance a team's ability to make decisions.

Slide 2   *Objectives*

PREVIEW objectives from the reference manual.

Slide 3   *Overview*

PREVIEW the module content and tell participants they will have several opportunities to practice facilitating decision making.

Stages of Decision-Making   **PRESENT** an overview of the stages of decision-making from the Reference Manual.

EMPHASIZE the need to implement what is decided, and to evaluate the effectiveness of decisions.

5 Minutes

Slides 4-8

Decision-   **DISCUSS** (based on the reference manual) the two dimensions that

Making Model	correlate with a decision's effectiveness: quality and acceptance.
3 Minutes	**EXPLAIN** the Decision-Making Model from the reference manual and **REFER** to it when describing the decision-making methods.
Slide 9	

Decision-Making Methods

10 Minutes

Slides 10-16

DISCUSS the methods of making decisions, based on reference manual information.

DESCRIBE the decision making methods based on reference manual information (listed below). Note advantages and disadvantages of each, where pertinent.

- Decision by Lack of Response
- Decision Made by Expert(s) on the Team
- Voting
  - Rank Ordering
  - Multi-voting
  - Majority Vote
- Criteria-based Decisions – Decision Matrix
- Consensus

ASK participants for examples of each that may have occurred in the past 2 to 3 days. **PROVIDE** examples if needed.

Ineffective Decision Making Methods

10 Minutes

Slide 17

DISCUSS that teams may use a variety of avoidance strategies - discussion-limiting strategies - to cope with decisional conflicts (based on reference manual).

DISCUSS that the role of the coach is to observe and intervene appropriately in group process – to help a team recognize when it is using ineffective methods, and facilitate them to improve decision making processes

Exercise 1: Interventions for ineffective decision making

Exercise 1: Interventions for ineffective decision making

INTRODUCE the activity.

- **TELL** participants that the purpose of this exercise is to practice facilitating decision making using the 4-step approach to group process intervention.
- **TELL** participants they may take out and review from

Exercise 1 of *the "Coach as Facilitator" Module - Step Approach To Group Process Intervention.*

- **TELL** participants this exercise will be done as a large group.

CONDUCT the activity.

- **ASK** different participants what they would say, following the 4-step approach, to facilitate a team engaging in each of the following behaviors. (Descriptions of the behaviors are in the reference manual)

  - Procrastinating
  - Bolstering
  - Avoiding responsibility
  - Ignoring alternatives
  - Satisfying
  - Trivializing the Discussion

SUMMARIZE the activity.

- **ASK** participants about their experience using the 4- step approach to group process intervention.

Slides 18-20   **"Groupthink"**

DESCRIBE symptoms of "groupthink", a barrier to effective decision making, based on reference manual information.

ASK participants to speculate about which stage of development is likely to promote "groupthink" (may be more a risk in norming, but can occur in any stage).

DISCUSS that "groupthink" may look like consensus, but is a false consensus. **DISCUSS** ways to probe apparent consensus to avoid this (based on reference manual information.)

Exercise materials   **Exercise 2: Cash Register**

INTRODUCE, CONDUCT AND SUMMARIZE the exercise
30 Minutes   as described in *Exercise 2: Cash Register*.

Transition   **REVIEW** the main themes and topics of this module.

TRANSITION to discussion of creativity and conflict management by saying that these are all areas in which team building may be beneficial.

Exercise 1: Interventions for ineffective decision making

Use the 4-step method of making group process interventions to predict how a coach should facilitate each of the following circumstances:

- **Procrastinating:** The team postpones a decision, rather than studying alternatives and arguing over their relative merits.

- **Bolstering:** The team quickly, but arbitrarily, formulates a decision without thinking things through completely. Then, to legitimize the solution, the value of favorable consequences are exaggerated and the importance or likelihood of unfavorable consequences are minimized.

- **Avoiding responsibility:** The team denies responsibility by relegating the decision to another group or by diffusing accountability throughout the entire organization.

- **Ignoring alternatives:** The team considers only choices that are very similar to the existing situation; they "play it safe" and do not apply any creativity to the issue.

- **Satisfying:** Members accept as satisfactory any solution that meets minimal criteria even if superior solutions exist.

- **Trivializing the Discussion:** The team avoids dealing with larger issues by focusing on minor sub-issues.

The 4-step model for group process interventions

1. Give the team feedback on the observed behavior.

2. Describe the potential or actual effect of the behavior.

3. Ask the team for input.

4. Ask the team to decide on action.

Exercise 2: Cash Register: Group Decision Making

Goals

- To demonstrate how decision making is improved by consensus seeking.
- To explore the impact that assumptions have on decision making

Group Size

An unlimited number of groups of four to six participants each.

Time Required

Approximately thirty minutes.

Materials

- A copy of the Cash Register Worksheet for each participant and for each group.
- A pencil for each participant.

Physical Setting

A room large enough for groups and individuals to work without being distracted or overheard by others.

Process

1. Tell participants to turn to the first page of *Exercise 2: Cash Register* Worksheet in their Participant Manuals. Tell participants that they have five minutes to read "The Story" paragraph and then to indicate whether each of the "Statements About the Story" is *true, false,* or *unknown* (indicated by a question mark). This step is done individually.

2. Remind participants that, while working in teams, they should identify a leader, recorder, timekeeper and a coach (as facilitator) if needed.

3. Give each recorder one copy of the Cash Register Worksheet and tell participants that each group has approximately ten minutes to reach consensus on whether each statement is *true, false,* or *unknown.* The recorder should put their decisions on the Worksheet.

4. End group work after 10 minutes.

5. Announce the "correct" answers. (Statement 3 is false, statement 6 is true, and all other statements are unknown.)

6. Lead a brief discussion of the experience, eliciting comments from participants about the difficulty of reaching consensus, how assumptions can color decision making, how easy it is to fall into "groupthink" and about the value of consensus in group decision making.

Exercise 2: Cash Register Worksheet

The Story

A businessman had just turned off the lights in the store when a man appeared and demanded money. The owner opened a cash register. The contents of the cash register were scooped up, and the man sped away. A member of the police force was notified promptly.

Statements About the Story

Indicate whether you think each of the following statements is *true, false,* or *unknown*.

1. A man appeared after the owner had turned off his store lights.　　T　　F　　?

2. The robber was a *man.*　　T　　F　　?

3. The man did not demand money.　　T　　F　　?

4. The man who opened the cash register was the owner.　　T　　F　　?

5. The store owner scooped up the contents of the cash register and ran away.　　T　　F　　?

6. Someone opened a cash register.　　T　　F　　?

7. After the man who demanded the money scooped up the contents of the cash register, he ran away.　　T　　F　　?

8. While the cash register contained money, the story does *not* state *how much.*　　T　　F　　?

9. The robber demanded money of the owner.　　T　　F　　?

10. The story concerns a series of events in which only three persons are referred to: the owner of the store, a man who demanded money, and a member of the police force.　　T　　F　　?

11. The following events in the story are true: someone demanded money, a cash register was opened, its contents were scooped up, and a man dashed out of the store.　　T　　F　　?