

## Definition

**Consensus decision-making** is a group decision-making process in which group members develop, and agree to support a decision in the best interest of the whole...as an acceptable resolution, one that can be supported, even if not the "favorite" of each individual.

## Objectives

As a decision-making process, consensus decision-making aims to be:

- **Agreement Seeking:** A consensus decision-making process attempts to generate as much agreement as possible.
- **Collaborative:** Participants contribute to a shared proposal and shape it into a decision that meets the concerns of all group members as much as possible.
- **Cooperative:** Participants in an effective consensus process should strive to reach the best possible decision for the group and all of its members, rather than competing for personal preferences.
- **Egalitarian:** All members of a consensus decision-making body should be afforded, as much as possible, equal input into the process. All members have the opportunity to present, and amend proposals.
- **Inclusive:** As many stakeholders as possible should be involved in the consensus decision-making process.
- **Participatory:** The consensus process should actively solicit the input and participation of all decision-makers.

*[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Consensus\\_decision-making](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Consensus_decision-making)*

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## What is consensus decision making?

**Consensus decision making is a creative and dynamic way of reaching agreement between all members of a group. Instead of simply voting for an item and having the majority of the group getting their way, a group using consensus is committed to finding solutions that everyone actively supports, or at least can live with.** This ensures that all opinions, ideas and concerns are taken into account. Through listening closely to each other, the group aims to come up with proposals that work for everyone.

By definition, in consensus no decision is made against the will of an individual or a minority. If significant concerns remain unresolved...the whole group has to work hard at finding solutions that address everyone's concerns rather than ignoring or overruling minority opinions.

Consensus is used widely by people around the world working towards a more just and equitable society. The exact process may differ depending on the size of the group and other factors, but the basic principle of co-operation between equals remains the same.

*[https://www.seedsforchange.org.uk/consensus#core\\_skills](https://www.seedsforchange.org.uk/consensus#core_skills)*

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Consensus is different from other types of decision making because it emphasizes the cooperative development of a decision with group members working together rather than competing against each other.

*<https://www.onecommunityglobal.org/consensus/>*

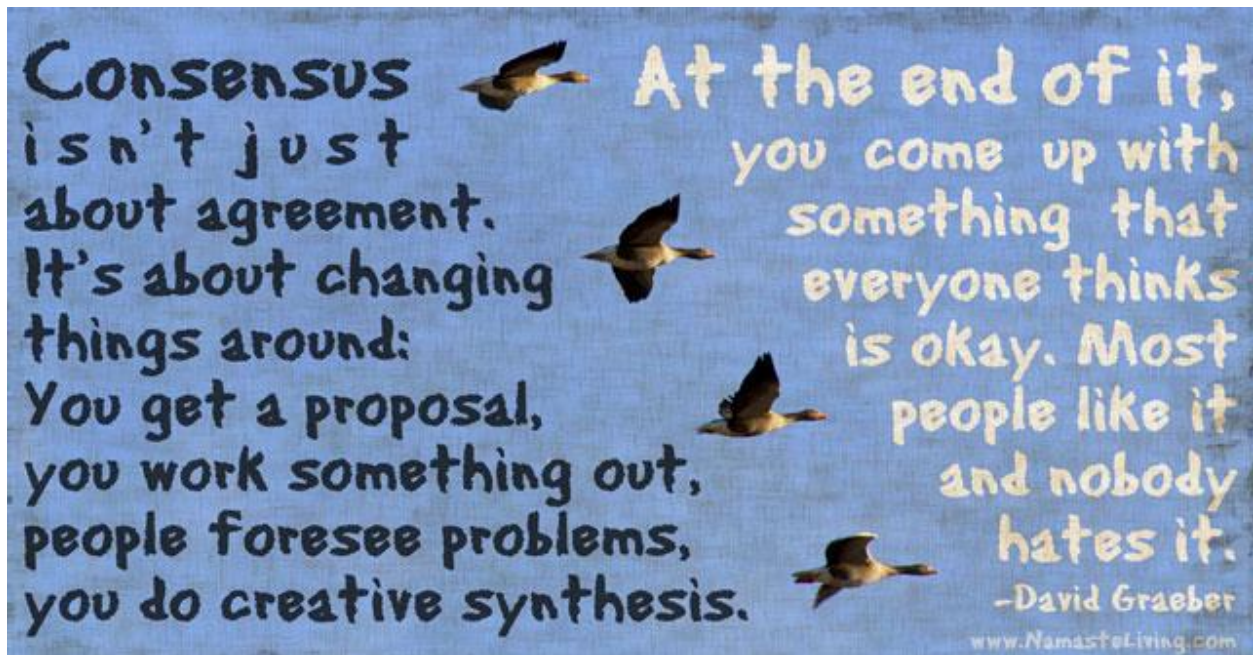
**It is valuable for people to clearly understand what consensus is NOT:**

- Democracy as we know it
  - A method of compromise
  - A selection among alternative, competing proposals
  - A forum for egotism, manipulation, or “power over”
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**How can we benefit from consensus decision-making?**

If groups want high-quality decisions with strong support for follow through, and they are willing to invest time to create a proposal or plan, they will benefit from consensus decision-making. <http://www.extension.umn.edu/community/civic-engagement/tip-sheets/consensus-decision-making/>

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<https://www.onecommunityglobal.org/consensus/>