**Decision Making Process Tools**

1. Levels of Involvement in Decision Making
2. Fist to Five
3. Dot Voting
4. Impact-Feasibility Matrix

**1. Levels of Involvement -** Adapted from Interaction Associates “Facilitative Leadership: Tapping the Power of Participation

 Group Ownership

 Group Engagement

**2. Fist to Five**

Unlike simple majority vote based on a for/against approach, the Fist to Five process allows participants to express their level of support for an idea, and provides a concrete way to test consensus within a group. This is accomplished by raising hands as in voting, with the number of fingers raised indicating each member’s level of agreement**.**

• **A fist** means "I object and will block consensus.”

• **1 finger** means “I have strong reservations but would not block consensus.”

• **2 fingers** means “I have some concerns but will go along with the group’s decision.”

• **3 fingers** means “I’m in the middle somewhere, but can still support the motion.”

• **4 fingers** means “I support this motion.”

• **5 fingers** means “I am in full support this motion.”

When consensus is tested and a member raises a fist—or if there are low levels of support—the facilitator will give those opposing or expressing low support a chance to explain their concerns and objections. The group will attempt to address those concerns until consensus can be reached, or until time has expired for that particular proposal. If after multiple attempts at consensus, no decision can be reached, the group might decide to have a smaller group attempt to work out a way to achieve broader consensus, or if action must be taken immediately, the group can fall back to a vote using a supermajority (2/3 of those present).

**3. Dot Voting** - Materials adapted from the University of Wisconsin: Facilitator Toolkit

Dot voting is a very simple and quick method for groups to use in setting priorities when there are many options. It can be used to identify where to start in addressing an issue, which project to start first, what is our top core value, etc. For example, suppose a group has generated a list of all the things they believe they should address this year. They know they can’t do it all. This method would help give a sense (albeit unscientific) of which items are most important and should be addressed first.

***Steps in the Dot Voting Method***

1. Begin by brainstorming all the options and list on a flip chart in any order. Leave enough space between the items to place sticky dots.

2. Give each person in the group 10 dots (for this exercise, color is irrelevant). Instruct them that to indicate their priorities, they are to “use all 10 dots but no more than 4 on any ONE item.” Therefore, 4 dots would indicate their top priority. Some items will have no dots.

3. Participants walk up to the flip charts and place their dots under the items. If you have a larger group, split the items on 2 flipcharts on opposite sides of the room so as not to take too much time or cause congestion. Start half the group on each chart.

4. When everyone has placed his/her dots, count the number of dots for each item and make a priority listing on a new flipchart page. There usually are a few clear winners. You may then discuss with the group if they agree those should be top priorities on which to start working. It does not mean the others are eliminated.

This exercise creates a “fun” activity, good visual, and limits discussion if it has gone on too long, as well as getting input from the entire group.

**4. Impact – Feasibility Matrix**

Stakeholders write each recommended strategy, activity, proposal on an individual sticky and places it where he/she thinks it belongs within the grid.

* Feasibility: consider the energy, resources, capacity to get it done.
* Impact: consider the level of influence to the desired outcome.

**Feasibility**

**Impact**