Models of Decision-Making

Adapted from Eli Mina, *The Complete Handbook of Business Meetings*
AMACOM 2000. Pages 25-27

Model	Pros	Cons	Appropriate Situations
Consensus (more than a simple majority)	▪ Broad support for an initiative is generated ▪ The decisions reflect a broad spectrum of views and are more likely to endure ▪ Decisions are viewed as legitimate and are less likely to be undermined	▪ Time consuming, slow ▪ Risk of being blocked or undermined by the minority ▪ Risk of a proposal being so diluted (to accommodate all interests) that it becomes meaningless	▪ Complex or controversial initiatives where time is available, and it is important to get more than a simple majority to endorse and support the initiative
Majority-based voting	▪ Inclusive, yet efficient ▪ Potentially measured and deliberate ▪ Unanimity is not required and hence disputes can be settled by a vote ▪ If minorities are heard, the decisions are likely to be viewed as legitimate and are therefore more likely to be respected and implemented	▪ Potential for creating winners (majorities) and losers (minorities) ▪ Potential for important decisions being pushed through by impatient majorities, possibly causing "losing minorities" to leave the organization or stay but undermine the implementation	▪ Complex decisions that stand to benefit from broad input ▪ Controversial decisions that affect people and stakeholders in a significant way ▪ Decisions that cannot wait, where the number of options is limited, and a middle ground between positions is hard or impossible to find within the time available ▪ No time is available to obtain much more than a simple majority support for a proposal
Autocratic	▪ Expeditious ▪ Simple	▪ Not inclusive ▪ Lacks the benefit of a broad perspective ▪ Potential for a lack of commitment by followers, or even undermining of the decision by them	▪ Routine, administrative, or non-controversial decisions ▪ Urgent decisions that cannot wait for collective decision-making