

When to involve others in decision-making?

The challenge

It is often recommended to favor decision-making by consensus, in order to encourage the involvement of all stakeholders. In practice however, many executives are often tempted to make decisions alone: deadlines are tight, employees don't take sufficient initiative or lack experience... In practice, there is no ideal decision-making method, but several approaches, more or less suited depending on the situation.

Pick the right decision-making approach

Four main decision-making modes can be identified, depending on the number of people involved in the process, and on how widely responsibility is shared. It is up to you to evaluate the context in order to choose the most suitable approach.

DECISION-MAKER DECIDES ALONE

DECISION-MAKING PROCESS IS SHARED



You may – and sometimes must – reach a decision without consulting others. Don't forget to inform the others concerned, nevertheless.

To implement when:

- The problem is simple and with little impact
- Your conviction is strong and you don't wish to discuss it
- The information is confidential
- The decision is urgent

Necessary conditions:

- You have the necessary skills
- You have all the key information

You may entrust an employee with the decision. Be

available to provide help if required, yet without taking back responsibility for making the decision.

Delegation

To implement when:

- The subject is clearly within an employee's range of skills
- You want to develop an employee's skills

Necessary conditions:

- The level of risk is acceptable
- The other stakeholders trust the employee concerned

YOU KEEP DECISION-MAKING POWER

Consultation

You may make the decision after listening to various points of view. Be careful not to decide too quickly, to leave room for real discussion.

To implement when:

- You want to keep a right of veto
- The decision is complex and the team is not ready for
- Certain people are expert on the subject or particularly concerned
- · Discussions have reached deadlock

Necessary conditions:

- You have some time to reach a decision
- Individual involvement is not critical

YOU HAND OVER DECISION-MAKING POWER



The decision is debated until everyone agrees on the solution retained. Because consensus is demanding in terms of involvement and thus time, don't waste time applying it to secondary issues.

To implement when:

- Success depends on the support of others
- The problem is strategic
- Emotional stakes are high

Necessary conditions:

- The time required is available
- The information is widely shared
- The team gives precedence to the common interest over that of the individual

