

Win-Win Decisions:

PART 1

Building harmonious decision in a team

By Preston Ingalls

Getting a team to reach a mutual decision can be more than challenging. Individual members have viewpoints that are influenced by their paradigms, experiences, and personalities.

So, why not just take a vote when it comes time to make a choice? A simple question like, “Can I see a show of hands for everyone in favor of using Option A instead of Option B?” It is short and unassuming.

The majority raise their hands for the option while those opposed would vote when the question is, “So who is in favor of Option B instead?” The majority rules. Those with the most votes won over those with the least votes.

However, we just set up a “Win-Lose” proposition. The majority are in favor of the choice, but the minority voters are against it. So, if a team or group chose Option A over Option B, only a select section of the team would be supportive while the remainder would be backing the losing choice. The Winners Won and the Losers Lost.

The downside to this situation is the entire team is not on board with the final decision, only the majority. The losing voting block didn’t get the decision they wanted, and therefore, have no obligation to support the final decision. They can leave with the feeling that team chose Option A over B but I didn’t and therefore, have no

obligation to back A. A few holdouts can say, “Look, they chose Option A, not me. I wanted Option B. They picked Option A over the one I think was correct.”

We now have a team that is only partially supportive of the end decision, clearly split over the right choice.

MODES OF DISAGREEMENT

First, let’s look at why people disagree. After all, if everyone agreed to a course of action, the decision is simple—do it. But life is entertaining, and challenges keep us on our toes. But, why do people disagree?

There are eight categories or Modes of Disagreement:

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1 **Disagreement Mode One:** They don't understand the other course of action. This situation could be caused by inattentiveness, lack of clarity when it was presented, or misinterpretation of the proposal. In other words ... I don't understand.

2 **Disagreement Mode Two:** They have heard and understood, but their experiences and paradigms are driving a preference for a different option. Beliefs and core values may alter their perceptions. This could be caused by a strong pet peeve or paradigms driving their choice which may blind them from other options. In other words ... my experiences instruct me differently.

3 **Disagreement Mode Three:** The disparity is based on history with someone, personality issues, strong dislike or even hatred. In other words ... I don't like you so you must be wrong.

4 **Disagreement Mode Four:** They are defending their self-

worth. Some people can be defensive due to their perceptions of themselves. This may be insecurity, a need to appear more knowledgeable than they are, fear of appearing ignorant, or defending their educational level. In other words ... I really know better than you.

5 **Disagreement Mode Five:** Competitiveness and a need for superiority can drive disagreement. Someone may need to win for ego gratification and to feel superior over someone else. A need to prove someone wrong to win or feel a sense of superiority. An inability to accept that they could be wrong. In other words ... I can't be wrong so you must be.

6 **Disagreement Mode Six:** An interpretation of semantics. Semantic disagreements are when people are using the same word to mean different things. One person can interpret a Bible verse one way while another sees it different. In other words ... this is the what it is actually saying.

7 **Disagreement Mode Seven:** Some people feel unimportant and overlooked. A disagreement gives them the opportunity to be seen and heard and exert influence. They may attempt to elevate their importance by disagreeing just to be heard. In other words ... listen to how I feel it should be.

8 **Disagreement Mode Eight:** Facts can be from different sources or be interpreted differently. Various sources will expose people to different facts about the world, which can naturally lead to disagreement. "Facts lie and liars figure" is an adage. In other words ... my facts back it this way.

Based on all the ways that people can disagree with one another, how do you go about reaching a common supported agreement? ■

Look for part two of this article in the next issue of MCS as consensus building takes center stage.

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