DECIDE

Tips and tools for **meetings to inform and make decisions**

When it makes sense to involve a group in decision-making, a well-designed meeting is the perfect forum to discuss options, see all angles, and inform or reach a decision.

⚠ Essential Guidance

Consider: Maybe you need to make the decision on your own or with one or two other people.
A meeting might not be the best approach. If the decision calls for urgency or specialized expertise, or if confidentiality is an issue, or if it's your responsibility to make the decision, skip the meeting.

Avoid inviting too many people.
An alarm should go off if you're up to six or so people. Invite a select few who know the context, options, and stakes – and have the expertise and collaborative style to make a great decision.

Circulate key information afterward.
Share the decision(s), what needs to be done, who's responsible, and when it should happen.

☑ Additional Recommendations

Define the key decision-making criteria.
When people are clear on the key factors that need to be top of mind when evaluating options, discussions and decisions are so much easier.

Guard against groupthink.
Encourage different perspectives, critical thinking, and open dialogue – even when it might go against the grain of your own thinking.

Aim for consensus.
It can take extra time to build consensus, compared to calling a vote to make the decision, but it's a far better approach for getting shared agreement and ensuring genuine support.

💼 Tools and Techniques

- Consensus Building
- Decision Balance Sheet
- Decision Matrix (Criteria Rating Form)
- Multi-Voting Technique
- Pareto Diagram
- Force Field Analysis

Go to sc.edu/excellence for step-by-step guidance on all these tools.

🕐 **TIMESAVER TOOLKIT FOR MEETINGS**

Use the **Meeting Time Calculator** to see how much time you spend in meetings – and how much time you could save.

ALL For ALL meetings

Define the intended outcomes. Set the stage by clarifying the decision to be made.

Plan the flow. Create a concise agenda with time blocks for topics.

Get the group ready. Send the agenda and any pre-meeting materials in advance.

Make it visible. Use flipcharts, sticky notes, etc. to write and draw out key points.