

Joint Decision Making



TOOL: Making Decisions in Partnership



Key Tip!

Don't assume what the interest level is of the other party. Have a discussion and then jointly determine the appropriate level of decision making.

At the work unit level, nearly all of the day-to-day decisions will be of some **level of interest** to employees and employees will have opinions as to how we can work smarter and better for our members/patients. For this reason, employees should be engaged in all workplace decisions that affect their work environment.

The **level of involvement**—that is, whether to inform, seek input, consult with or initiate the consensus process—depends on the level of interest and/or expertise related to the issue at hand and can never be determined unilaterally.

Remember, not all decisions are made by consensus. Some decisions require less involvement, depending on the situation. As a sponsor, you can help co-leads guide their team into using the appropriate level of involvement for the decision at hand. Teams should strive for consensus, but also be able to recognize when consensus is not feasible. However, the team must make the ultimate determination as to when, and if, consensus decision making should apply.

EIGHT FACTORS TO CONSIDER:

1. Openly and frequently share information.
2. Never assume what your partner's interest level is—always ask!
3. Jointly choose a level of involvement up front based on the level of interest and/or expertise of your partner.
4. As your relationship matures (and trust deepens), joint decision making becomes easier.
5. Exercise sound judgment—be sensitive to time constraints in urgent matters.
6. Be cautious about spending too much time on frivolous or insignificant matters.
7. In the absence of a joint decision, either party can make a decision/take action.
8. Before making a unilateral decision, consider the impact of that decision on the relationship.



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Source: Northern California UBT Handbook kpnet.kp.org/ncal/Imp (KP Intranet only)