GENERATIVE DECISION MAKING

Human First Works
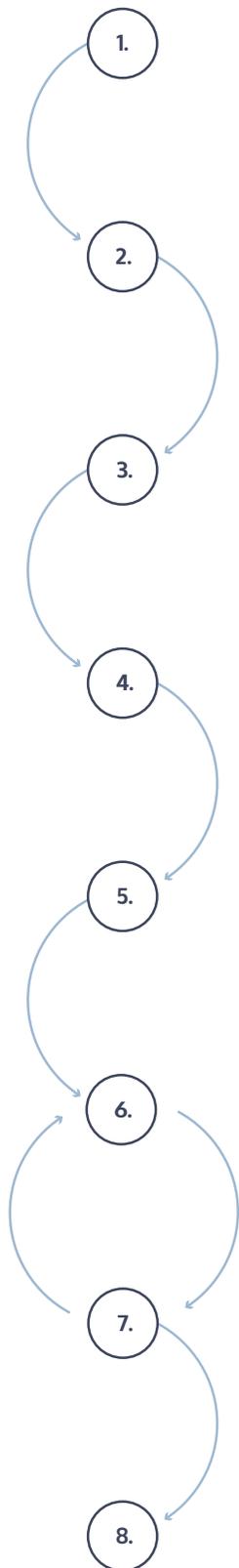
1. Recognizing the right time.

Do these people have the context & knowledge to make a decision on this?

2. Create a Proposal.

Anyone who senses a tension can create the proposal. They become the proposal holder.

3. Ask clarifying questions.

Go in rounds. The facilitator ensures questions are for the purpose of clarifying the proposal and don't drift into sharing opinions and reactions.

4. Express reaction.

Go in rounds. No cross talk or responding. The proposal holder may wish to capture notes on comments.

5. Amending and clarifying.

Optional, even if there is strong negative reactions. Anything the proposal holder wishes can be changed. Once again, this is not a time for discussion.

6. Expressing objections.

The facilitator invites objections by asking each person in turn, "Do you see any reason why adopting this proposal would cause harm or move us backwards?" If no valid objections surface, the proposal is adopted.

7. Integrating objections.

The proposal holder is responsible for crafting a proposal free of valid objections while still addressing the proposer's tension. Focus on each objection, one at a time.

8. Visual confirmation.

Fist to five voting to visually confirm. 3's and above confirm.

Valid Objections

For an objection to be valid, it must meet the following criteria:

(1) The proposal, if adopted, would move the team backward in its capacity to deliver on its purpose;

(2) A problem that doesn't already exist will immediately be caused by this proposal;

(3) A significant future problem is predicted based on this proposal and there will not be sufficient time to sense and respond. Having a better idea or believing that the current proposal is unuseful are not valid objections. For these reasons, many objections tend to melt away during the objection round.

Fist of Five

0 fingers (a fist): No way, terrible choice, I will not go along with it.

One finger up: Object strongly, needs to be resolved now.

Two fingers up: Objection that needs to be addressed before we can move forward.

Three fingers: OK with proposed solution.

Four fingers: I like this idea.

Five fingers: Highly positive and could champion it.

Facilitator Role

(1) Keeps conversation going- asks if there are clarifying questions, limits discussion and limits cross talk. Limiting cross talk is probably the most challenging role. **(2)** Asks if there are objections. Helps participants understand if it's a valid objection by going through the criteria one by one **(3)** Lead visual confirmation round.

CREATING PROPOSAL

Identify an owner.
Who is accountable for this experiment?

Express the 'tension'.
The difference between what is and what could/should be; and how it shows up.

Describe the experiment.
Describe the experiment you propose to try. Keep it simple (if possible); remember, smaller proposals are safer to try.

Risks.
What might happen if we are wrong, or this experiment goes badly?

Name the participants.
Who will be involved or affected? Again, stay small to reduce risk.

Set the duration.
The length of your experiment; use the shortest amount of time that is likely to produce meaningful feedback, i.e. 'working' or 'not working.'

Choose your metrics.
Create a feedback loop; how will we know this is working (or not)? What data do we have to work with?

Identify resources.
Do you need anything to execute your proposal? People, time, money? Remember, the more resources needed, the more risk is involved.

Express conditions (if any).
What else must be true for this to have a chance of success?

Next steps:
What happens next if this proposal receives consent?

Adapted from Pete Dignan at https://www.everbetter.co/

Applying generative decision making in your organization? Reach out for help at **connect@humanfirstworks.com**