Consensus-Building Process: Weighted Ranking

Purpose: Process for evaluating multiple alternatives, with a weighted-relative rank.

Application: This process is most commonly used when evaluating a large number of alternatives or when evaluating alternatives for a critical decision, such as:

- Source selection contract award to multiple contractor offers
- Management and budget allocation of multiple program areas
- Hiring or promotion or multiple candidates.

Benefits: Unique benefits to this process over a nominal prioritization or voting process.

- Large number of alternatives: Easily handles from two to hundreds of alternatives.
- Criteria-based decision: Ranking is determined based on chosen criteria, which are weighted. The decisions are thus logic-based and less emotion-based.
- Justified decision: Critical decisions such as budget allocation and contract awards are easily defended, given their documented criteria basis.
- Adjustable re-ranking: Late changes don’t require starting over. New alternatives or new/modified criteria are easily entered into the original matrix, for ranking.
- Software & Easels: There are several online, software and spreadsheet means to accomplish this. It works equally well on flip charts, white boards and Stickywalls, on short notice.

Process: NOTE: At each step, review the “purpose” and gain strong consensus.

1) Identify / review the purpose of the ranking.
   a) Clarify purpose, i.e. which house to buy, vs. which house to rent for vacation.

2) Identify & clarify the alternatives
   a) Don’t assume that all participants are aware of the nuances and details of each alternative
   b) Clarify all the alternatives with sufficient detail to level the understanding

3) Identify the criteria (typically 7-12 criteria)
   a) Identify through Listing technique, to ensure quality, to avoid dependencies, and to avoid overlap
   b) Ensure all criteria are positive vernacular, to avoid any voting reversals

4) Weight the criteria with Dot voting.
   a) Rule of thumb = each participant gets # of dots = to 20-40% of # of criteria
   b) Rule of thumb = No more than 1 dot per criteria per voter
   c) Consider blind voting if needed, of the subject is sensitive.
   d) Add the dots. If any criteria earn no dots, assign it one dot and increase all others by one dot.
   e) Hide the result, for use later

5) Apply the criteria to the alternatives
   a) Review the rank’s purpose and the alternatives.
   b) Vote using simple H-M-L, or 3 finger voting, etc.
   c) Assign values. Typically H=5, M=3, L=1.

6) Calculations:
   a) Re-enter the criteria weights
   b) Multiply criteria weight X H-M-L values
   c) Add all the values for each alternatives

7) Evaluate, summarize & document results
   a) Graph the results, usually in a histogram chart
   b) Note the relative ranks, breaks, groupings, etc.
   c) Brainstorm relevant management decisions

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote H-M-L Purpose: 1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
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<td>Totals</td>
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<td>H=? M=? L=?</td>
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