

Information sheet: Models of decision making

Authoritarianism

One person or a very small group makes the final decision.

Random choice

Ideas or people are chosen randomly with no bias.

Consensus

Decisions are made collectively. People discuss all the options together and come to an agreement. Not everyone might agree but all will accept the outcome after engaging in a discussion involving everyone's ideas and perspectives.

Representative democracy

Representatives are elected. This usually occurs by majority vote. These representatives then act similarly to those delegated responsibility (see delegation of responsibility).

Direct democracy

Everyone has the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process. Decisions are made through a majority vote or referendum. The size of the majority can vary.

Delegation of responsibility

The power to make decisions is turned over to someone else. This person or group of people is selected and given the right to make decisions on behalf of others. They are usually required to report back to the group or person they are responsible to.