

OPTION ONE-AND-A-HALF

Option One and Half is useful for resolving two apparently different ideas or proposals. In a modified form it can be used to resolve more than two.

The main phases of the technique are as follows.

- i. List the two solutions (options). Use questions for clarification to ensure that all participants understand both solutions.
- ii. Use processes for information collection and analysis to identify the important advantages and disadvantages of option 1. Do the same for option 2.
- iii. Use creative information generation procedures to develop option 11/2, which is a best-of-both-worlds combination of options 1 and 2.

a. List the solutions

List the two solutions. Give participants a chance to understand the two options by asking questions for clarification only.

- List the two options at the top of a sheet of newsprint.
- Supporters of one option may ask questions for clarification about the other option. Debating the merits of the options is not permitted. Those asking questions may only request information, while those replying must limit themselves to answering the question.

b. Analyse the options

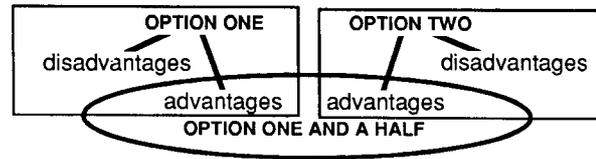
List first the advantages and then the disadvantages of option 1. Select the key advantages and disadvantages. Then repeat this for option 2.

- List the advantages for option 1.
- List the disadvantages for option 1.
- Supporters for option 2 vote to choose the key disadvantages of option 1.
- Supporters for option 1 vote to choose its key advantages.

Then use the same procedures to list the advantages and disadvantages for option 2 and select the most important. Supporters of option 1 choose the disadvantages, supporters of option 2 the advantages.

c. Devise a third option

List possible ways of achieving the best of both option 1 and option 2.



- Use idea-generation processes and perhaps creative problem solving techniques to list ideas for achieving the best of both options. This is done as a joint problem solving activity by the supporters of both options. Small groups or pairs (equal numbers of the two groups of supporters) are often very appropriate. List ideas as they are contributed.
- Use a voting procedure, cyclic if necessary, to reduce the list of suggestions to a manageable length.
- Have participants combine the key suggestions into one solution, which by definition is an attempt at a best-of-both worlds approach (that is, option one-and-a-half).

Check that the solution does avoid the key disadvantages of both options.

BOB WILLIAMS ADDS :-

There are four common results of this exercise. All four in their own way allow the group to become unstuck and move on :-

1. Once all the pro's and con's have been displayed, everyone agrees on one option as being better. This often demonstrates that the problem has been one of *miscommunication*, or *misunderstandings*.
2. An amalgam of both options (probably the most common result). Often the problem was one of *misunderstandings*.
3. A genuinely new option. Often the problem was of a conflict that was able to be resolved in an innovative way.
4. No option emerges. There is a conflict that is unresolvable. This is fairly common and is extremely useful, since it demonstrates to a group that is doggedly trying to resolve an issue, that it may be unresolvable. At least in its current form. This allows the group to move on from debating the issue, towards reframing it, putting it aside or working out what needs to be done in order to begin resolving it.