**Group Norms and Protocols –Things to Think About**

*Worried about setting quality norms with your Group?*

Be clear and specific about the norms look like in action.

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| Procedural Norms | Behavioral Norms |
| * Start and end meetings on time * Have computers open only during appropriate work time * Keep cell phones on silent and ideally out of sight during meetings * Agree on decision- making process (see below) | * Tell the truth without blame or judgment * Assume positive intent * Be willing to push each other’s thinking * Monitor airtime |

Five Decision-Making Processes

1. Consensus: This process involves building consensus until the entire team votes at a 4 or 5 (out of 5) in a Fist to Five vote. This takes a lot of time to debate and listen in order to get to this consensus, but it means everyone buys in to the results.

2. Multi-voting: After an idea-generating session leads to many options (like 14 norms when the team wants to choose 5), everyone gets several votes (for example, four votes using stickers), and the scores are tallied to reveal the winning options.

3. Compromise: When a group is strongly divided, ask each group to give up a few items, and a middle option is created that includes ideas from both sides. A disadvantage is that both sides may feel as if they have lost something and are not satisfied with the outcome.

4. Majority Voting: Everyone is familiar with choosing the majority position after people have voted with hands or a secret ballot. The team needs to have time to discuss before voting, but this can be a quick option.

5. Unilateral Decision: This is when one person is designated to decide for the group. This can be tricky in a low-trust group.

*Concerned about holding the Group accountable?*

A useful structure for keeping norms present and holding members accountable to them is the role of **process observer.** This person’s job is to pay attention to the group dynamics in terms of the selected norms and report out on them at the end of the meeting

*Are members of the Group listening to one another?*

Ask them to do this exercise:

While someone speaks, team members think about what kind of listening they do and check off the appropriate boxes below:

- Listening to find connections. Your mind thinks, “Oh, I remember when that happened to me, too!”

- Listening to find a story of your own to share, “I can tell her about that time I…”

- Listening but wanting to jump in and finish the speaker’s sentence.

- Listening to find a point you agree or disagree with.

- Listening to understand the other person’s perspective.

- Listening to ask a clarifying question because you want more information.

- Listening to ask a probing question to keep the other person’s reflective capacity.

- Listening but feeling impatient, wishing the person would stop talking.

- Fake listening. Being bored and occasionally nodding and spacing out.