

*The Art of Consensus Building*  
*When It Works and When It Doesn't*

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*Women in Government*  
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*Presented by:*

*Chris Carlson*

*Policy Consensus Initiative*

# *Two Tracks for Democratic Decision Making*

	<b>Track One: Traditional</b>	<b>Track Two: Informal</b>
<b>Method</b>	Debate	Negotiation
<b>Rules</b>	Robert's Rules Mason's Manual	Established Norms
<b>Decision rule</b>	Majority vote	Consensus/ compromise

# WHEN SHOULD COLLABORATIVE PROCESSES BE USED?

## Two Philosophies

in the beginning. . .proactive  
approach

when an issue is known to be contentious, to get stakeholders involved to help manage inevitable conflicts and build consensus

after the fall . . .reactive

when a contentious issue has already developed into a dispute or impasse, to work out a resolution.



**UPSTREAM**

**DOWNSTREAM**

# *Moving from Conflict to Consensus*

CONFLICT-----COLLABORATION-----CONSENSUS

Divergent views  
and interests . . .



Struggle to overcome differences. . .

- Use Interest-Based Negotiation
- Build Respect and Trust



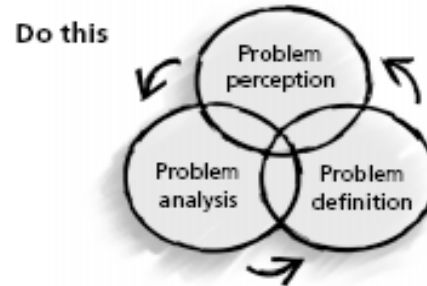
Leads to Collaboration



Group decides to work together to  
solve a mutual problem

# Collaborative Problem Solving

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before you  
do this



Many groups jump  
prematurely to solutions  
without agreeing  
on the problem

# What Does a Convener Do?



⌘ Calls people together to work out issues collaboratively, to seek consensus.

⌘ Doesn't dictate what the solution is

“It's a way of taking action without taking sides.”

# KEYS TO CONVENING



- ⌘ Be inclusive
- ⌘ Meet in a neutral place
- ⌘ Be impartial
- ⌘ Establish the purpose for the process
- ⌘ Direct, rather than dominate, the discussions
- ⌘ Keep things moving
- ⌘ Demonstrate visible commitment
- ⌘ Finally, make sure there's an outcome