

Establish the voting rules collaboratively

In order to counteract biased voting, it is important to jointly define the voting rules. Here are some options:

Make a decision in advance and write it down. Each person writes their votes on a sticky note before placing their dots. This method helps ensure that everyone is held accountable for sticking to their original vote.

Dictate order of voting to prevent biased voting due to the HIPPO effect (*Highest Paid Person's Opinion*). *Junior participants* have their turn first, while the stakeholders or subject matter experts come last. This approach protects the votes of those who might otherwise be led to make less authentic contributions and automatically follow their superiors.

Agree on further restrictions, such as: Votes are only cast where there is 1. ownership or 2. expertise.

Vary voting types, for example: Use small and large dots to rate relevance, or use multiple colors for categories such as “This is absolutely the way we should do it”, “We need to understand this better or discuss it in more detail first”, “We shouldn’t consider this”, “We should consider this”.



Example of instructions for online voting

In the virtual context, detailed preparation and small-step instructions are needed for the chosen medium. Meeting participants can comment on the content of a shared screen.

Sample media: *Zoom, Jitsi, Miro* and *neXboard*

- Share screen.
- Prepare together: Ask everyone to study the content first.
- Explain the comment function: At the top of the shared screen, click on Options. Select a stamp here, e.g. star. Don't use it yet!
- Explain commenting procedure: Communicate the subject of the vote.
- Establish voting rules.
- Votes are cast silently and simultaneously: Only after a sign has been given by the facilitator do video conference participants cast their vote synchronously.
- Analyze the outcome.
- Discuss the next steps.

