

QuickTip - Fist to Five

To use this technique, the facilitator restates an action the group might take and asks the team to show their level of support. Each team member responds by holding up a closed fist or the number of fingers that corresponds to her level of support. If a team member holds up fewer than three fingers, she is given the opportunity to state her questions, objections, or recommendations for improvement. Then the team may respond, modify the idea under discussion, or generate new ideas.

This encourages several positive behaviors that may lead the team toward a higher quality decision.

- Dissenters make a case for their position to the rest of the group.
- Proponents hear and consider differing points of view.
- Everyone works together to make the proposal better.
- Reduces the chance that silent disagreement later leads to lack of support or sabotage of the course of action.

The facilitator continues the fist to five process until the team achieves consensus (everyone holds up three or more fingers) or agrees to move on to the next issue.

Closed fist - No. A closed fist is a way to block consensus.



1 finger - I have major concerns that could potentially be addressed.



2 fingers - I would like to discuss some minor issues or get more information.



3 fingers - I'm not in total agreement but I feel comfortable enough to let this proposal pass without further discussion.



4 fingers - I think it's a good idea and will work for it.



5 fingers - It's a great idea and I would like to take the lead when we implement it.



Definition modified from an entry on the agile-focused site whatis.com., which was retrieved 7/3/17 from <http://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/fist-to-five-fist-of-five>