

Fist to Five: HFJ's Scale



Fist = Block

"I object and will not support this proposal moving forward."

NOTE: this is used for serious concerns, often around major misalignment with values or goals.



One

"I have significant concerns or see significant problems that need to be addressed before I can pass this"



Two

"I have moderate concerns or see moderate issues that need to be addressed before I can pass this"



Three

"I am fine with this / I can live with this / I have minor concerns that I don't need to discuss"



Four

"This sounds good to me"



Five

"I am an enthusiastic yes! I am fully on board"

*If a decision passes with **all 4s & 5s**: **No discussion is needed.***

*If a decision passes with **4s, 5s and 3s**: **Give 3s the space to name any concerns**, if present, so that those moving forward the proposal can be aware of any potential issues.*

Any blocks, 2, & 1 votes: Pause decision-making process for discussion.

*If a vote includes any **blocks, 1s, or 2s**, **discussion must reopen with those people naming concerns and problems. Those who vote 2 and below are strongly encouraged to bring counter proposals to the group.** If blocks, 1s, & 2s cannot pass the proposal after discussion & additional clarification, the proposal must be reworked. The re-work and re-vote may happen during this session or at a future time.*

3, 4, & 5 are all passing votes. If all votes are 3, 4, & 5, decision moves forward.

About Fist-to-Five voting (from [HFJ Culture, Decision Making, and Structure, July 2024](#) pg. 7)

The Fist-to-Five model is a consensus decision making tool that Headwaters uses to make decisions throughout the organization. Fist-to-Five allows a decision-making group to move forward proposals while allowing for more input and nuance than simple yes/no votes. This tool allows a group to understand the "quality of a yes" - whether a group is neutral, satisfied, or enthusiastic about a proposal - as well as identify areas of concern. It can be used both at a "temperature check" tool and as a tool to take a formal vote when making a decision about a proposal.

To use fist-to-five voting, individuals or groups present decision-makers with a proposal and provide time to discuss any questions, concerns, and get clarity on the proposal. Once all voting participants have clarity on the proposal at hand, participants vote by raising their hands with the number of fingers that indicate their degree of agreement with the proposal. Votes can be seen by everyone in the room, allowing everyone to understand the level of agreement in the group.