

**Step-by-Step Process**

1. Prepare for the meeting:
	* Invite all participants well in advance, with full details about the meeting.
	* Collaboratively prepare the agenda.
2. Get started:
	* Begin with a gathering ritual appropriate to your community.
	* If participants don’t know each other, have each person introduce themselves.
3. Set the stage:
	* Review the definition of consensus, Respect Communication Guidelines and Mutual Invitation.
4. Present the agenda and give an estimate of the end time of the meeting.
	* Read an agenda and make sure everyone knows what you are seeking to do in the meeting, make a decision, invite comment or hear the concern for the first time.
5. Discuss each agenda item:
	* Make sure everyone has an opportunity to give an opinion using mutual invitation. If there are various points of view, assess how they might be accommodated.
6. Assess progress toward a decision:
	* Use Levels of Consensus to assess how close you are to agreement to move forward.
	* When an issue seems to be nearing resolution, the facilitator should pause the discussion to summarize the positions presented in the discussion and ask for corroboration.
7. Confirm the decision:
	* When an issue seems to either be resolved or become apparent as unable to be resolved at this time, have the facilitator ask for confirmation of this from the group. Have that put in the minutes.
	* Then move on to the next agenda item and repeat steps #6-8.
8. Close the Meeting:
	* After all agenda items have been addressed, have the facilitator recap what has been decided and the status of unresolved issues.
	* End the meeting with closing ritual appropriate to your community.