Multivoting

Is…

A method for narrowing down and prioritizing lists of ideas.

Use it…

When there are too many ideas to decide the ones on which to focus.

Applications

- To prioritize which "gaps" are most important to focus on when identifying strategic priorities

- To determine which goals are most worthy of pursuit

- To decide which strategies are most worth investing in

How to do it

1. Complete a brainstorming process or use some other method to generate a list of ideas/options.

2. Determine how many votes each group member will receive.

   Divide the number of items by 3 and round up to the nearest whole number. That is how many votes to give each person. For example, if there are 29 items on your list, each member gets 10 votes.

3. Distribute colored "sticky dots" to the group. Each person should get as many dots as there are votes.

4. Have people place their dots next to the ideas they favor most.

   Votes can be distributed one per idea or if the group agrees, can be loaded up (that is, any individual can place 2 or more of their dots on one item).

5. After the dots are distributed, refine your list by eliminating any items that received no votes at all or only a few votes.

6. If the refined list still has too many items for the group to reasonably handle or address, repeat the process.

   Count the number of items on the reduced list and divide by three. That's how many votes people get in the next round. Distribute different-colored sticky dots and have people revote.

smartlearningsystems.com

7. Continue multivoting until the final priorities reach a manageable number.

Modification

Instead of using colored sticky-dots, record ideas on a flipchart and number them. Individuals vote by writing down the numbers of the ideas they prefer on index cards or separate sheets of paper.

Source: *The Handbook for SMART School Teams (Second Edition): Revitalizing Best Practices for Collaboration*, pages 118-119.