DEBATE AND COMMIT: Making decisions stick

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Rebecca Fernandez
Principal Program Manager, Scaling Our Open Organization, Red Hat
@ruhbehka
WHEN IS DEBATE VALUABLE AND HELPFUL?

(And when is it not?)
THINK ABOUT A TIME WHEN YOU KEPT BRINGING UP SOMETHING...

(Why?)
COMMON CAUSES OF RECURRING DEBATES

- I do not feel heard
- I do not feel valued
- I do not trust the intentions of the decision-maker
- I do not know someone made a decision
- I cannot make sense of the decision
- I dislike or disagree with the decision
- We have competing or conflicting interests
- I want to overturn or revisit the decision
- I enjoy argument for argument’s sake? :-)  
- ...anything else?
HOW TO MAKE DECISIONS STICK

Follow a predictable process, based on the Open Decision Framework.
FOLLOW A PREDICTABLE PROCESS

THINK AND DRAFT

Decision details and ideal process

- What is the decision you’re trying to make?
- When does the decision need to be made?
- How do you intend to go about making it?
- Who might be impacted or care?
- Who gets a voice? Who gets a vote? How?
- Who is the ultimate decision-maker, and why?
- What are the known constraints and requirements?
FOLLOW A PREDICTABLE PROCESS

Decision details and ideal process

- Invite (time-boxed) discussion and debate of all those factors.
- Make it safe for everyone to disagree, question, and alert you to mistakes.
- Listen far more than you respond.
Call for comments > Changes to glog and foo

As the maintainer for glog and foo, I wanted to give you all a heads up about some decisions I’m making that may impact your workflow. I am planning to do <these things>, for <reasons>. <These individuals, groups> could be impacted <in these ways>. I’m unaware of any other impacts, so please respond by Feb 23 if there’s something or someone I’m missing.

Based on what I hear from everyone between now and then, <explain the process, e.g. I will make the decision / I will put it up for a vote by these individuals / etc.>.

Disagree with my approach? Let’s talk ASAP.

Thanks, Glog & Foo Maintainer
FOLLOW A PREDICTABLE PROCESS

THINK AND DRAFT

CALL FOR COMMENTS

REVISE PROCESS

- Publish any process revisions (and why)
- Clarify decision details
- Highlight process changes made in response to feedback
- Acknowledge process feedback that you are not acting on (and why)

Decision details + process
[Revised] Call for comments > Changes to glog and foo

Thanks for the input. A few changes to the decision process, based on what I heard:

1. It makes sense to move forward with <one of the decisions> only if <these three individuals> all vote yes. That’s because <reasons>.

2. For <the other decisions>, I will make the decision as maintainer, because <reasons>.  
(There was a request for a community vote, which I declined on-list for those reasons.)

3. <Someone helpful> pointed out <downstream project> that will be greatly impacted, so I am extending the call for comments by <time box> to get their input.

I will send a final announcement on Mar 2 re: these decisions and implementation timing.

Thanks!
FOLLOW A PREDICTABLE PROCESS

1. THINK AND DRAFT
2. CALL FOR COMMENTS
3. REVISE PROCESS
4. PUBLISH DECISION

- Recap process
- Identify conditions or timeline for revisiting

Decision details + process
Decisions reached > Changes to glog and foo

Hi all. Thanks for your input and discussion. Here’s where everything landed:

<The three individuals> all voted yes on moving forward with <one of the decisions>. They cited <reasons> as key factors. This will happen on <date>. We heard <specific concerns> and thus, will revisit that decision <when or under what conditions>.

For <the other decisions>, I decided to <do these specific things>. You will see these changes implemented on <dates>. There was some concern from <individuals> about <thing>, which is why I am <doing this>. I also heard <concern>, but ultimately, I had to make a judgment call. Hopefully we can reduce that risk by <doing a thing>. If you see questions about these decisions in the future, please refer people to this thread for context.
DEBATE CONTINUES? LOOK FOR CLUES.

- They do not feel heard?
- They do not feel valued?
- They do not trust intentions of decision-maker?
- They do not know someone made a decision?
- They cannot make sense of the decision?
- They dislike or disagree with the decision?
- Do we have competing or conflicting interests?
- Do they want to overturn or revisit the decision?
- Do they enjoy argument for argument’s sake?

Closing reminder: You do not have to attend every argument you’re invited to. :-(
Q&A
RESOURCES

- The Open Decision Framework
  github.com/red-hat-people-team/open-decision-framework
THANK YOU

+RedHat
linkedin.com/company/red-hat
youtube.com/user/RedHatVideos
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