FACILITATION TECHNIQUE	**Dotmocracy**
CORE PURPOSE / FOCUS	#decision making #group prioritization #ideation #idea generation #collaboration #team-work
PHASE	#action
SKILL / CONTENT	#evaluation #communication #leadership #big picture #creativity
TIME FRAME IN MINUTES	#15-30
GROUP SIZE IN PERSONS	#1-5 #6-15 #16-30 #>30
FACILITATION LEVEL	Beginner
COMFORT ZONE	Safe

Introduction

Dotmocracy is a simple method for group prioritization or decision-making. It is not an activity on its own, but a method to use in processes where prioritization or decision-making is the aim. The method supports a group to quickly see which options are most popular or relevant. The options or ideas are written on post-its and stuck up on a whiteboard for the whole group to see. Each person votes for the options they think are the strongest, and that information is used to inform a decision.

Necessary tools (what you need)

- Pick an online whiteboard tool that allows using large, zooming able canvas.
- Use a video conferencing tool where you can assign the participants into breakout rooms (e.g. Zoom).

Steps

1. This method is often used when a set of possible ideas have been generated and need to be assessed or prioritized. But it is useful for quickly making decisions in any group situation with multiple options. Place all the ideas/options up on an online whiteboard, one idea per post-it.
Facilitate the group to cluster similar ideas/options and remove any duplicates. The fewer options there are, the clearer and easier the voting will be.

2. Check, that all of the options on the whiteboard are clear to all members in the group, by running through them all and inviting clarifications where necessary.
Facilitator notes: *This is a fast and effective tool, but be wary of "vote splitting", where a weaker option might win due to several stronger but very similar ideas receiving shares of the same vote.*
Also be wary of the "bandwagon effect", where people who vote later may be influenced by votes that have already been place. You might also try another method of large group prioritization, Idea Rating Sheets, also developed by Jason Diceman who is the key reference for this tool.

3. The group will now vote on which options they think are best by using dots, made simply with a marker on the post-it. Each group member gets 5 dots to vote with (or less if there are less options).These dots can be distributed in any way: one dot each to five different ideas, all five dots to one idea, etc.

4. Once all members have distributed their dots, the group could proceed in a variety of ways:
   - Simply choosing the option/s that received the most dots.
   - Conducting an open dialogue about the prioritization. Exploring which ideas got more dots, which got less, what the next steps should be.
   - Organize the ideas on a line from most to least dots, then discuss their relative merits.

Tips & Tricks

- If you are not using an online whiteboard, we'd recommend using a collaboration tool such as Google Docs to collect the information for each step under a separate heading. Invite everyone into the document but be very clear in regards to editing rights.
- Use voting features such as Mural's voting session tool during the dot voting process. You can also add comments inside Google Docs or ask participants to add a thumbs up emoji to an idea in Slack to collect votes when using those tools.
- Set up each topic at a different area of the board, spread them out just like you would do it on the walls of a room.

The exercise is successfully completed when? Conclusion?

The exercise should support a group in decision making to quickly see which options are most popular or relevant.

Source

http://toolbox.hyperisland.com