



SESSION 5

Four Attributes of a Good Consensus-Building Process

Building a consensus within the institute for results is a key challenge of strategic property planning. A good working definition of “consensus” religious institutes may find useful for strategic property planning is:

“A broad agreement among institute members that (a) is a product of dialogue and conversation where all voices are heard, (b) results from bona fide attempts to work through differences where they exist and (c) is designed to maximize the support of institute membership.

A GOOD CONSENSUS PROCESS:

- 1. Is layered and iterative with:**
 - a. Multiple opportunities for input
 - b. Affirmation happening in stages from preliminary to final results
- 2. Effectively synthesizes since:**
 - a. Diversity of input and perspectives adds breadth and color
 - b. Richer viewpoints and outcomes result
- 3. Has integrity because:**
 - a. Gradual movement to consensus demonstrates clearly how results were shaped
 - b. Members see themselves as being integral and vital
- 4. Is developed concentrically with:**
 - a. Consensus first formed in core group
 - b. Movement outward to other groups (e.g., regional groupings of members)
 - c. Strong, institute-wide consensus ultimately brought into existence

