

Decision Making Tips

Just as people are different, so are their styles of decision making. Each person is a result of all of the decisions made in their life to date. Recognizing this, here are some tips to enhance your decision making batting average.

- Do not make decisions that are not yours to make.
- When making a decision you are simply choosing from among alternatives. You are not making a choice between right and wrong.
- Avoid snap decisions. Move fast on the reversible ones and slowly on the non-reversible.
- Choosing the right alternative at the wrong time is not any better than the wrong alternative at the right time, so make the decision while you still have time.
- Do your decision making on paper. Make notes and keep your ideas visible so you can consider all the relevant information in making this decision.
- Be sure to choose based on what is right, not who is right.
- Write down the pros and cons of a line of action. It clarifies your thinking and makes for a better decision.
- Make decisions as you go along. Do not let them accumulate. A backlog of many little decisions could be harder to deal with than one big and complex decision.
- Consider those affected by your decision. Whenever feasible, get them involved to increase their commitment.
- Recognize that you cannot know with 100% certainty that your decision is correct because the actions to implement it are to take place in the future. So make it and don't worry about it.
- Use the OAR, O. A. R. approach in decision making. Look at O, Objectives you are seeking to attain, A, the Alternatives you sense are available to you and R, the risk of the alternative you are considering.

- It has been said that a decision should always be made at the lowest possible level and as close to the scene of action as possible. However, a decision should always be made at a level insuring that all activities and objectives affected are fully considered. The first rule tells us how far down a decision should be made. The second how far down it can be made.
- Remember that not making a decision is a decision not to take action.
- To be effective a manager must have the luxury of having the right to be wrong.
- Trust yourself to make a decision and then to be able to field the consequences appropriately.
- Don't waste your time making decisions that do not have to be made.
- Determine alternative courses of action before gathering data.
- Before implementing what appears to be the best choice, assess the risk by asking "What can I think of that might go wrong with this alternative?"
- Many decisions you make are unimportant-about 80% of them. Establish operating limits and let your secretary or others make them for you.
- Consider making the decision yourself in lieu of a group, but recognize the potential for less commitment by those affected.
- As part of your decision making process, always consider how the decision is to be implemented.
- As soon as you are aware that a decision will have to be made on a specific situation, review the facts at hand then set it aside. Let this incubate in your subconscious mind until it is time to finally make the decision.
- Once the decision has been made, don't look back. Be aware of how it is currently affecting you and focus on your next move. Never regret a decision. It was the right thing to do at the time. Now focus on what is right at this time.
- Mentally rehearse implementation of your choice and reflect in your imagination what outcomes will result.
- Brainstorming alternative solutions with your staff or others will gain fresh ideas and commitment.

- Discontinue prolonged deliberation about your decision. Make it and carry it through.
- Once you have made the decision and have started what you are going to do, put the "what if's" aside and do it with commitment.

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