



**BASIC
DECISION-
MAKING
for
LEADERS**

Decision making is a process of identifying a decision after selecting from a series of choices. It's a skill we've developed even as toddlers. It's a process we've seemingly developed so much so that making multiple decisions on a daily basis can be done almost without putting much thought into it. However, fast forward to the years where people climb the corporate ladder, this process isn't as easy as it seems. Ever wondered why some business fail, why employees choose to leave because of their bosses, why employee performance is at a standstill if not declining?

In this book, we're not going to tackle something new. We will go right back to the basics and build that awareness of how we can make better decisions. Who can use this? My primary audience is anyone who handles employees. It doesn't matter how many people you have in a team. You can be a manager, a team lead, a supervisor, a director, a teacher, a trainer, a coach etc. If you handle people, you speak to people, you make some choices for your team, your company or for your business, this is for you.

The objectives are:

- Discover what influences decision making
- Improve the decision-making process by identifying triggers and learning to manage them
- Practice the right decision-making process for your team's needs and ultimately for your company
- Learn a few tips that will help you with the decision-making process

We've all made terrible decisions in life and have suffered the consequences for it directly or indirectly. The role of this book is not to pinpoint the right way to decide but rather to raise awareness in making BETTER decisions. There is no sure and easy way to make those big ones because that's just how dynamic choices are.

A pain point in making decisions as leaders is making hasty ones that are marred with emotion combined with a time element. It should be understood though that the need to decide in a short amount of time is sometimes necessary. What's important is that we be prepared. How?

Let's go back to the basics and try to understand first what influences the decision-making process.

- Past experiences - The norm is that if past experiences result in a positive outcome and if given the same situation, people would make a similar decision. Mistakes are avoided at all costs if possible. The lesson here is that not all future decisions based on past experiences are successful.
- Biases - thinking patterns based on observations and generalizations. These are limited to beliefs. Some people tend to rely on expected observations and previous knowledge and lose sight of the bigger picture.
- Liability – individuals will invest more time, money and commitment to decisions that they're committed to; people are more likely to decide when they know it counts
- Emotional state – don't make decisions when upset. This is key.

Reflection:

On a clean sheet of paper or Word document enter your responses to the following questions.

What big choices have we made lately? Name one.
How much time was spent planning and deciding?
Was it easy for you?
What were some difficulties you experienced?
How did you go about addressing those?
How did those decisions make you feel towards the end?

Now that we understand what influences our decisions, remember 2 basic ingredients in decision-making.



- Being logical helps us organize information, it ensures that it's based on facts and allows you to be fair.
- The emotional side of our brain helps bring value to our relationships hence rash decisions made because of anger, fear, and even pride should be avoided.

Strike a good balance between the two. Tipping the scales more to one side would not hurt as a measure of each would also depend on the decisions we need to make. We cannot have one without the other.

Tips to Remember:

- Our values, beliefs, experiences help determine what we think we know about people and things. But it isn't everything.
- Sometimes what we think is true or a fact is based on our limited experience. Open our minds to other's experiences
- When you understand yourself, you can then determine more proactively what you want to do.
- Values change and get shaped when we discuss issues with each other.
- List down the pros and cons
- It can be difficult sharing information in groups when people have opposing opinions and values. Know that it is perfectly OKAY to disagree. Agree to key. Sometimes, planning is easier when done with others as opposed to being alone.
- Measure effectiveness by considering impact to your team, company or business.



disagree. Communication is

To do:

Before you make the next big decision for your team, follow the tips above. After you've reached a decision, ask yourself the questions below.

What big decision did you have to make?
What part of the decision-making process was the hardest to do?
What steps did you go through to come up with the choices you had to select from?
Did you have to make this decision alone or with someone?
If you were alone, would it have been better to have made it with someone else's guidance?
If you made that decision with someone, what worked and what didn't?
How can it be better the next time?
What was it's impact to the team, company or business?

References:

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3. Dietrich, C., & Cindy. (2010, February 01). Decision Making: Factors that Influence Decision Making, Heuristics Used, and Decision Outcomes. Retrieved from <http://www.inquiriesjournal.com/articles/180/decision-making-factors-that-influence-decision-making-heuristics-used-and-decision-outcomes>

Note from the author:

I hope that you were able to take inspiration from this short book. Some upcoming materials to look forward to are:

1. A PowerPoint presentation with a facilitator's guide. This includes activities that you can roll out in class. This costs \$10.
2. An audio version of the book for \$20.
