

## DECISION-MAKING TIP SHEET

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- Before making a decision, it can be helpful to think through how the decision will be made, by whom, and the criteria that will need to be considered. Some examples include cost, timeline, feasibility, interpersonal factors, etc. Consider how important each of those criteria are.
- Where possible, leverage the talents and ideas of those around you when making decisions. Get the opinions of the key stakeholders, the people who will be affected, and trusted others. Listen without judgment, in order to get a well-rounded picture of how others are feeling. While you may not be able to make everyone happy with your decision, having a sense of how others may react can be very helpful when you determine how best to communicate your decision.
- Consider the pros and cons of the various courses of action
  - Make a list of the pros and cons of potential decisions, weighing them against the criteria previously listed. Make sure to include others, to guard against overlooking an important consideration.
- It can be useful to use the Z-Model of decision-making from the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. According to this model, when making a decision, you should consider these four areas:
  - Sensing - What are the practical considerations related to this decision? What does common sense suggest? What are the costs/benefits? What are we doing now that's working? What have others done?
  - Intuition - What are the possibilities? What are the patterns in the data? What are other ways to look at it? Are there any theories that could inform our decision?
  - Thinking - What are the logical pros and cons? What's wrong with what we've considered? Is this a reasonable thing to do? What are the consequences of each alternative?
  - Feeling - How will people respond to this decision? What impact does this have on others? Is there a way to reach a satisfaction that will satisfy everyone? How does this align with the organization's values?
- Make sure to consider your organization's goals, vision, values, and strategic plan as you make your decisions.

- When you have delegated decision-making responsibility to someone, resist the urge to jump in and make the decision for him or her. As a rule of thumb, grant only as much responsibility and authority as a person is ready for, which is usually more than they think they are ready for.
- To gain buy-in and engagement, allow teams to make decisions on issues that impact them, where appropriate. Consider doing this for decisions that have issues that are of interest to the team, when the team has adequate information, knowledge, or expertise and enough time to process the issues and reach a decision.
- Be mindful of the pace of your decision-making. Are you someone who tends to rush to judgment too quickly? Or, are you someone who can over-analyze to the point of diminishing returns? Knowing your natural tendency can help you to monitor yourself to guard against your potential liabilities.
- Are you afraid to make decisions? Consider:
  - Do you consistently ask for approval before deciding?
  - Do you pass decisions onto others?
  - Do you shy away from making decisions that may be unpopular?
  - Are you constantly seeking more data before choosing a course of action?
  - Do you second-guess yourself a lot?
- If you tend to be afraid to make decisions, re-visit the first bullet point and at the onset, get clear about what you will need to make a decision. Then, stick to that commitment.
- Recognize that in leadership, there is risk involved. While you shouldn't intentionally aim to make mistakes, know that the odd mistake is par for the course for leaders, and an important part of personal development.