

## **Exercise: Decisions Have Consequences**

We make thousands of decisions every day. Many are easy, but others are complex, stressful, or both. Because there are so many decisions and because they are literally forks in the road with dramatic impact on results, costs, time, feelings, and relationships, how you make decisions is extremely important. This is why decision-making is a top priority when we work with clients to create a culture of clarity. But how to make difficult decisions? Sometimes we are not able to make a decision due to several factors:

- We are afraid of making the wrong choice.
- We don't know what consequences the decision will have.
- We have too much unorganized information and we don't know which is relevant.
- We are not used to making important decisions every day.

A writing-based method is effective if you already have a clear goal and need to weigh the options to reach it because it helps you to analyse how to reduce the negative impact that each decision can have. It is therefore also suited for decisions that cannot be answered by a simple yes or no. To visualize every option in writing gives more structure to your thought process and helps you to stick to your decision.

For this exercise, you should plan at least 20 Minutes. If you can, get feedback from colleagues or friends on your result.

1. Identify the steps of the decision making process. For example:

- Describe your problem.
- Clarify the goal: What you want to achieve with your decision and why?
- Describe your options.
- Describe the consequences of each option, both positive and negative.
- Assess the probabilities: There are some consequences that are more likely to occur than others, your decision-making needs to factor that in.
- Prioritise: After describing the possible outcomes, evaluate the high or low impact of the consequences.
- Evaluate the consequences and make your decision.

(Or follow the 8 Steps to Making a Good Decision [\[LINK\]](#) in the previous exercise.)



2. Identify and explain factors that can affect the decision-making process, and give examples of decisions that have been influenced by one or more of these factors (e.g. economic, social, personal values, etc.).
3. Identify and explain decision-making strategies that you have used in the past and give examples of when you used them.
4. Identify how the strategies have worked/not worked. What factors might have influenced the choice of strategies?
5. What consequences did that have?

Now, apply your decision-making skills:

- Identify three decisions you are trying to make (e.g. taking a break, moving homes, buying a car, changing jobs, etc.).
- Apply your decision-making strategy to each decision.
- Analyse the decisions: What consequences will the decisions have?