

How to Make a Decision Using the Advice Process



Overview

- 1) Identify the person responsible for the decision, who should be someone close to the decision and/or most well-equipped to be the decision-maker.
- 2) That person chooses the right decision-making approach.
- 3) That person proactively seeks advice from:
 - a. Everyone who will be significantly impacted by the decision.
 - b. People who will help them make a better decision (due to particular experience/expertise they may have).
- 4) That person makes the decision as an individual, or may choose to ask a group of people to make the decision together.

Step-by-Step Process

Fill this out completely. Don't skip anything! Remember that this is a learning tool for you to share with other people so that they can understand your decision-making process, so be sure to write everything out clearly.

1: Lay the Groundwork

What decision needs to be made? What specifically are you trying to solve with this decision? If it's a cluster of decisions, assess whether they all need to be made at the same time or if there's a chronological order. Write all of those decisions down.	
What is the deadline for making the decision(s)?	
Who will be responsible for this decision? And who will make the decision? The person responsible should be the one closest to the decision and/or most well-equipped. This person is in charge of coordinating the decision-making process and ensuring a decision is made, by either making the decision themselves or ensuring a group makes the decision. Balance decision-making across the organization; don't over-burden someone who is already holding too many decisions.	
Who will be consulted for advice? Include everyone significantly impacted	

and people with experience/expertise regarding the decision, like your supervisor, your team, and those you serve. Make sure they understand the full impact of the decision and have enough time to process. Consider organizing individuals by primary/secondary priority based on how heavily impacted they are by this decision.	
What support do you need in order to make a good decision? What information do you need? What feels uncertain? What barriers are you personally facing in making this decision? What unconscious biases/personal desires do you need to be mindful of?	

2: Make a Plan

What criteria will you use to make this decision? Consider the implications of this decision . Share the criteria when you ask for feedback. You may need to refine the criteria during the process, particularly if those who are most impacted tell you that there should be different criteria. Sometimes you just need feedback on the right criteria, and once you have the right criteria, you can make similar decisions on your own much more quickly in the future.	
How will you make the decision? Use this tool to choose the right decision-making process(es) . Outline the timeline and a step-by-step process. For bigger decisions, consider using as a this framework (IISC's " open-narrow-close ") to plan your decision-making process: 1. Start with open-ended brainstorm/idea collection involving those most impacted. 2. Identify a process for narrowing down to a few options or a single	

proposal, using the criteria listed above. 3. Given the decision-making process you selected, how will you “close” and make the final decision? For important/complicated decisions, you may need to develop a proposal, which could involve multiple rounds of feedback. Plan ahead, outlining all the steps. Remember you can mix and match different processes. Consider involving folks in different steps of the process depending on how impacted they are by the decision. For example, the primary (most impacted) folks might be invited to a group conversation, while others might get asked to share feedback via email.	
When and how will you first announce to others that this decision-making process is underway? Use staff-wide communication tools and share this document.	
When and how will you inform people about what decision was made and why? What are the next steps after you make this decision? How will you help people understand how you incorporated their feedback, and if you did not, how will you explain why not?	
On what date will you revisit this decision and learn from it? What outcome do you expect to have from this decision? Write that down and schedule it on your calendar. When you revisit the decision, assess your expected outcome against the actual. How did this decision impact your work/the people you serve? Did you accomplish your goal? Was it the right decision-making process? Were there unintended consequences?	

3: Follow the Plan and Make Your Decision

Be sure to track any changes you had to make during the process. You can’t predict everything- it’s fine if things change over time. Taking time to document those changes will help you stay on task to make the decision, and help others transparently understand what’s going on. *And congratulations! You are using an excellent process to make a healthy decision for your organization! Please give yourself a pat on the back.*