

4 Critical Questions to Make Great Decisions

Decision-making is an essential skill for effective leadership. It's non-negotiable for making progress in a healthy organization.

- Insecurities can cause you to procrastinate in making a decision.
- Fear can prevent you from making a decision at all.

No leader wants to make a wrong decision, but you can't avoid risks. You will make mistakes. The goal is to make many more good decisions than bad ones.

The encouraging news is that decision-making is a skill, you can practice and get better at it.

There are two key factors in decision-making.

1. **Accuracy:** making the right decision at the right time.
2. **Speed:** making the decision as quickly as reasonably possible.

The first factor involves making the best decision. There will be several potentially good choices, and your job as a leader is to make the best choice at the right time.

The second factor is about making the decision as quickly as prudence will allow. You can't rush the process, but it's far more common to go too slow than too fast. In fact, it's not uncommon that a leader knows the right decision but just won't pull the trigger.

What prevents making the decision?

Two primary components:

- The objective component — insufficient information.
- The subjective component — lacking in wisdom.

Insufficient information and a lack of wisdom result in a lack of confidence.

In question form, they look like this:

1. Are you not making the decision because you need more information?
2. Are you not making the decision because you are not sure what to do?

There is a significant difference between needing additional information and having all the information you need, but you still don't know what to do.

Gathering relevant information is a finite process and can be done with relative speed. It is not necessary to accumulate infinite amounts of data to make a good decision.

Wisdom is different, it's more subjective, but it's not elusive. You can have all the information, but still be unsure or unwilling to make the decision. However, when you include your best advisors in thought and prayer, you can gain the wisdom you need.

Then it's about courage. Make the decision.

It's fear and or insecurity that shuts decision-making down at this point in the process.

When you know you have all the information you need, and your wise counsel gives a green light, make the decision and act!

I know it's still not easy to make a tough decision. So, let me offer four good questions that are helpful in the decision-making process.

4 helpful questions:

Does it matter?

I can't tell you how much time I've wasted on deciding whether a training meeting should be on Saturday morning or Monday night. You could probably give an example or two of things you have deliberated on that were just not that important.

And remember, if you decide and no one gets upset, you just made a decision that doesn't matter.

What are the risks?

Is the risk worth the reward?

Write down the risks you see in play. Are there other alternatives to lessen the risk that still provide the results you want? If not, are you willing to take the risk, yes or no?

Any important decision you make has a risk factor. As I've said, risk is inescapable.

Evaluating the risk also requires the incredibly important factor of writing down the potential results of not taking the risk. Avoiding the risk may seem safer at the moment, but in the long run, it can be disastrous for the church.

Do you know all that can be known?

- Have you done all your homework?
- Is the research complete?
- What is left that you need to know?
- Can you get this information on your own or do you need help?
- Do you need to hire a consultant to help you accurately gather all the information you

need?

When you know you have enough information, make a mental declaration, or a public one to your key leaders that “We have all the info we need.”

“It’s time to decide, so team, do we have a sense of the right decision? Do we have the wisdom we need?”

Again, like information, if you don’t have the wisdom, get it from other sources. God does not lack in wisdom; it is available if you ask.

Does the decision require soak time?

There are a few decisions that even when you have all the information and wisdom, you still need some time to let it marinate.

My practical advice is that you usually don’t need long to decide. Sometimes a few days, maybe a few weeks, on very rare occasions a few months.

Take the time you need to soak and pray. Make sure you know God’s mind, but your decision is not a mystery to God, and if it’s about His work, He’s not likely to withhold from you.

If it’s an issue of timing, you can still make the decision and put a date on when you activate the decision.

Ultimately, following the practical guidance in this post will help you not only make decisions, but make better decisions, and increase your confidence for future decisions.

> [Read more from Dan.](#)
