

10 Steps to Making Great Decisions

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Your life is largely defined by the quality of your decisions. **There's a big difference between choosing a career and spouse that's right for you and choosing poorly.**

And, that's only two decisions among the thousands you make each month. Will you choose to eat an apple or a bowl of ice cream? If you consistently choose one or the other, imagine the difference 20 years from now.

Great decisions come from a great decision-making process.

Try this process to make decisions that are right for you:

- 1. Know your objective.** What are you trying to accomplish with your decision? Suppose you're planning a family vacation. What's the objective? Inexpensive? Relaxing? Adventurous? Family bonding?
- 2. Know your values.** Some decisions are more dependent on your values, such as choosing a career, a spouse, or deciding what charity to contribute to. Can you rattle off your values without giving it some thought? If not, you have some work to do. **Know your values and many decisions become clear.**
- 3. List your options.** Take the time to write a complete list. You always have more options available to you than you realize. Too many people discover that the best choice they had available to them was one they never considered.
- 4. Consider the benefits of each option.** What are the benefits and advantages of each option? List those as well.

5. Consider the disadvantages and potential risks of each option. Now, take a look at the other side of the coin. What are the negatives? What are the risks? Think carefully and list them all.

6. Sleep on it. Assuming you don't have to make a decision immediately, take a night to sleep on it. Your brain is working away on the issue, even if you don't realize it. A night of sleep will provide new insight and understanding. **You might be surprised how your perspective changes in the morning.**

7. Make a decision. It's time to pull the trigger and make your decision. Avoid taking too long to make up your mind. If you're stuck, it probably means that the options you're considering are all acceptable. Taking more time won't help. It will just waste time.

- Compare the advantages and disadvantages. Consider your values. Now, choose. Avoid procrastinating. You can do it.
- Most people avoid decisions because it's more comfortable to be in decision mode than working mode.

8. Consider the worst possible outcome and have a plan. Now that you've made a decision, prepare for the worst possible outcome. You'll be ready if it should happen, and you'll also feel more confident. If you can handle the worst, you can handle anything else.

9. Stick with it. A common cause of failure is changing your mind. Once you make a decision, stick with it. Only if it's obvious that you've made a mistake should you change your mind. Hang in there and persevere.

10. **Re-evaluate.** Learn from each decision you make. What was good and bad about it? How can you enhance your decision-making process for next time? Each decision is a learning opportunity. Ensure that you're learning as much as possible.

Decisions are important. **The quality of your decisions determines the quality of your life.** Obviously, making wise choices will enhance your life.

How do you currently make decisions? Do you have a process or just shoot from the hip? Create and follow a process that will lead to making great decisions. You'll be happy with the impact on your life.