Deciding with Confidence

Common Reasons for Poor Decisions

Lack of Information or inaccurate information: One of the most common reasons managers make poor decisions is because they do not have all the information they need. It's a classic case of - if I would have known that, I wouldn't have done this.

Bias: We are human and have biases that may influence our decision-making. This happens anytime we make a decision based on emotions versus objectivity. For example, a manager may favor a team member or have a preconceived notion about a particular project, which can cloud their judgment.

Time Pressure: Managers are often under a lot of time pressure, which can result in rushed decision-making. When you do not weigh all the options and consider the implications, you can make poor choices.

 Lack of Communication: Another reason for poor decisions is not communicating effectively with the team. When managers do not take the time to listen to their team members' perspectives or provide clear guidance, they may make decisions that are not in the best interests of the team or the organization.

11 Steps to Great Decisions

1. Identify the problem or decision: This involves defining the problem or issue as clearly as possible and determining the outcome you want.

2. **Gather Information:** The next step is to gather all the necessary information so that you do not base a decision on assumptions and guesswork. How much data depends on the criticality of the decision. If you're expanding a product line, this step would be in-depth.

Something to be cautious about at this stage is that more is not always better**.** Data overload can work in reverse, and you will end up in analysis paralysis. Focus on collecting accurate, reliable, timely data relevant to the specific decision you are making. Once you have what is essential, then move on.

3. **Check your biases:** Managers must be aware of their biases and work to overcome them. This means being open to different [perspectives](#)and setting aside emotions that may creep into the decision.

4. **Review all Options:** Another aspect of decision-making is considering all available options and evaluating their potential outcomes. You may want to brainstorm with your team members to share their ideas and opinions.

5. **Consider the impact of your decision:** Before making a decision, it's crucial to consider its potential impact. This involves thinking about short-term and long-term consequences, and potential risks and rewards.

6. **Seek Advice:** No manager has all the answers. Advice from other experienced managers, mentors, or industry experts can help you make better decisions by gaining valuable insights into the challenges you are facing. Also, seek input from your team members. They are most familiar with the day-to-day operations of your business and may have innovative solutions you have not considered.

7. **Use Data and Analytics:** In some cases, analytics are beneficial. For instance, if you are trying to decide whether to launch a new product, you can use data analytics to determine the potential market demand and the most profitable pricing strategy. By using data, you can make more informed decisions based on facts rather than assumptions.

8. **Use Frameworks:** Frameworks provide a structured approach to decision-making that can help you evaluate all available options. These would typically be used for more critical decisions and often involve a team. An example is the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) framework. Frameworks help you make more objective decisions that are based on facts rather than emotions. You can also use techniques like brainstorming, and mind mapping to involve your team and get creative. .

9. **Take action:** Once you have considered the above steps, make the decision! Don't let the grass grow under your feet, especially when you have a tough decision. The more you [procrastinate](#), the worse it will be.

Many managers are hesitant to make tough decisions because they are afraid of making mistakes. However, failure is a natural part of the decision-making process; embrace it as an opportunity to learn and grow. Take action quickly and decisively by communicating the decision, developing an action plan, implementing the solution, and monitoring progress to ensure it achieves the desired results.

10. **Don't be afraid to change your mind:** As a manager, it's essential to be confident in your decisions. However, it's equally important to be open to changing your mind if new information or insights emerge. [Admit when you're wrong](#) and adjust your course of action accordingly. Being flexible and adaptable is essential in every business environment.

11. **Take Time to Reflect:** By reflecting on past decisions, you can learn from your mistakes and improve your skills. This can help you avoid making the same mistakes in the future and make better decisions overall. Analyze your failures and determine what went wrong and how you can do better. There is nothing like real-world experience to help enhance your skill set.

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