

Critical Thinking & Problem Solving

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6 Simple Steps for Solving All Your Problems

Problem Solving and Decision Making

A Process

Seven steps that provides a rational and analytical way of looking at decisions.

Decision Making Process

- * Identify the Problem
- * Collect Relevant Information
 - * Develop Alternatives
 - * Evaluate each Alternative
- * Select the Best Alternative
 - * Implement the Decision
 - * Follow-up and Evaluate

What is a Problem?

A discrepancy between an existing and a desired state of affairs.

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Identifying the real problem is no easy task.

Problem Identified

What are the surrounding
circumstances

&

Is there more than one way
to resolve the issues

???

Alternatives Developed

Identify the strengths and weakness of each alternative

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Select the one that best addresses the salient discrepancies

Make a Decision

Implement the decision and take the steps necessary to ensure correct timing and execution.

Follow-up and evaluate the results

Decision Tools

* Expected Value Analysis

It permits decision makers to place a monetary value on the various consequences likely to result from the selection of a particular course of action.

Decision Tools

* Decision Tree

— Encompass' expected value analysis by assigning probabilities to each possible outcome and calculating payoffs for each decision path.

Decision Tools

* Marginal Analysis

Analyzing decisions in terms of their incremental costs.

* MIS

A mechanism to provide the manager with needed and accurate information on a regular and timely basis.

Decision Making Styles

Everyone brings their own unique personalities and experiences to the decisions they make.

Notwithstanding however,

The decision-style model outlined in your text has identified four principle styles.

Decision Making Styles

The decision-style model assumes that people differ along two dimensions:

- * **Their way of thinking**
(How they process information)
- * **Tolerance for Ambiguity**
(How clear does everything have to be)

Directive

- Low tolerance for ambiguity.
 - Seeks rationality.
- Efficient and logical.
- Makes quick decisions.
 - Short term focus

Analytic

- High tolerance for ambiguity.
- Requires more information.
- Considers more alternatives.
 - Careful and adaptable.

Conceptual

- Very broad in outlook.
- Considers many alternatives.
- Good at finding creative solutions.
 - Focus long range.

Behavioral

- Work well with others.
- Concerned with achievements of subordinates.
- Receptive to suggestions.
 - Avoids conflict.
 - Seeks acceptance.

Ethics in Decision Making

Common Rationalizations

- * “Its not really illegal or immoral.”
- * “Its in my (Organization’s) best interest”
- * “No one will find out”
- * “Since it benefits the organization it will be protected”
- * “Everybody does it”

Ethics in Decision Making

Different Views of Ethics

* Utilitarian

Decisions are made solely on the basis of their outcomes. The greatest good for the greatest number.

* Rights View

Decisions emphasize respecting and protecting the basic rights of individuals.

Ethics in Decision Making

Different Views of Ethics

* Justice View

A view that requires individual to impose and enforce rules fairly and impartially so there is an equitable distribution of benefits and costs.

Group Decision Making

Advantages

- * Provides more complete information.

Group Decision Making

Advantages

- * **Generates more alternatives.**

Group Decision Making

Advantages

- * **Increases acceptance of a solution.**

Group Decision Making

Advantages

- * **Increases legitimacy.**

Group Decision Making

Disadvantages

- * **Time consuming**

Group Decision Making

Disadvantages

- * **Minority domination**

Group Decision Making

Disadvantages

- * **Pressure to conform** (Groupthink)

Group Decision Making

Disadvantages

- * **Ambiguous responsibility**

Group Decision Making

Tends to be:

- * More accurate
- * More creative
- * More acceptable
- * More time consuming

Group Decision Making

Special Techniques

* Brainstorming

Group Decision Making

Special Techniques

* Nominal Group Technique

Group Decision Making

Special Techniques

- * **Electronic Meetings**

Reference and sources

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