

## **How Do You Make a Difficult Decision?**

A few years ago, following the release of my book *The Art of Decision Making* (2019) I took part in the BBC Radio 4 programme 'Should I stay or Go?' named after the hit song from 1981 by the Clash. This is the question that we all have to answer every now and then, regardless of whether the question is regarding a relationship, a job or even our home. [Sneak a peek at this website](#) to find out breaking news about decision-making.

My job as an executive coach involves helping people make these hard choices for themselves, and ultimately independently. In contrast to a mentorship it is not about giving guidance. It's about giving people the confidence and tools to make their own decisions and then take action.

In this guide I'll provide you with an overview of some of these techniques and tools that you can utilize them to speed up and enhance your decision-making.

### **Why can it be difficult to make choices?**

In the end, what makes an uneasy decision isn't so that the decision itself and how it's perceived by the decision maker. You might consider a decision to be difficult because:

The stakes are very high for those who are.

You can think about two or more possibilities with your head the same or

This can bring back memories and fears that are not helpful.

### **What are the best options for you?**

It is recommended to read this article with a key choice in mind, and then use the exercises to guide you in this. This should be something that you're currently facing. You may reconsider a decision you made in the past, but that's impossible.

### **Recognize the parts of yourself that want different things**

When faced with difficult choices, it is likely that you have different parts of yourself who might want different things. One part of you might think that a trip with a lot of expense is too costly. A different part of your brain (prudent) might find it absurd. Another part (hedonistic), wants to live your life to the fullest and make the most of every opportunity. Still another part (serious) believes that work should always be the first priority. The process of making a decision requires a discussion between your different sides of yourself. This conundrum can be solved by inviting the different parts of you to meet around a table and decide on an answer. In practice, write down the things each of you desires and see what you can come up with a solution that optimises the joint aspirations of your different inner selves. Even if you don't get there yet, the simple act of recognizing your own competing desires will help you to think about the choice more effectively.

## Create distance from the decision

The more you have to wrestle with tough decisions, the less space you have from them and the more overwhelmed you'll become. Yet, psychological distance can offer a perspective essential to making a sound decision. Already in the 16th century, the Spanish theologian and priest Ignatius of Loyola offered three methods by which to achieve greater psychological distance from difficult decisions.

## Think outside the box

This was her first awareness that imagination was the key to creating. Think about what you want, you'll get what you envision; finally, you can make whatever you like. George Bernard Shaw explains poetically in this quote the process of creation. It begins with imagination. This applies to [decision-making](#) because we tend to limit our choices. It's possible to not be aware that you've got at least one creative option if you're presented with more than three options.

## To test different options, use a weighting system

It is possible to choose the best option by comparing your options with a complete set of objectives. In many instances, however there will be more work needed.

## Be aware of your emotions.

The weighting exercises that are systematic require you to determine scores and probabilities in a manner that isn't entirely scientific. It's also a requirement that you trust your senses. But this isn't a weakness of these approaches, as engaging with the emotional side of your psyche is key for making decisions that are effective. It can be the most significant factor in some cases.

## Utilize micro-decisions in order to overcome the inertia

Once you've made your choice you must then take action on it. This is the issue that afflicts many people. It is often difficult to even to begin. You can get out of this dilemma by breaking down the major decision into smaller decisions.