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# Using Decision Analysis Under Time Pressure

## Purpose

To apply the concepts of Decision Analysis to situations where quick action is required.

## Introduction

It is clear that a person will not go through a complete or written analysis for every decision made in the course of a day. Many decisions must be made quickly; sometimes, even very important ones have to be made rapidly. It is not unusual to get a telephone call that requires you to make a decision before you hang up. Or, an employee comes into your office and needs an answer in the next five minutes. Or, you are talking to a customer who asks for a "yes" or "no" decision right then. This is a normal part of any busy day.

In these urgent situations, it is important to think about your objectives. A quick mental review can help you examine the alternative being considered. Raise the question, "Is there another way?" This ensures a better alternative is not overlooked. When the pressure is extreme, a quick mental rundown of adverse consequences may be your best guide to a "yes" or "no" decision:

## Instructions

1. Briefly describe a recent situation where you had to make an important decision under time pressure and the result was not satisfactory.

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2. What Decision Analysis questions could have improved this result?

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3. Identify one kind of time pressure decision you must repeatedly make on your job.

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4. What two or three specific Decision Analysis questions will improve your results in handling this kind of decision?

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5. How can you make sure you use these questions in handling this type of situation?

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