
Using Short-Form Decision Analysis

You'll often encounter situations on the job which require you to choose among alternatives, but which do not permit you to invest the time in a full Decision Analysis. For example, you may need to make a decision before the end of a phone conversation or a meeting. In situations where you cannot afford the luxury of a full Decision Analysis, you'll need tools that require less time, while still providing a process to assess the key factors surrounding the choice. Short-form Decision Analysis will provide you with those tools when you're under time pressure, or when you're dealing with low priority, simple, or routine decisions:

Under time pressure

Here are some things to consider when faced with a quick decision:

- Establish a Decision Statement (probably mentally) and key objectives.
- Perform a quick mental review to help you examine the alternative being considered. The following questions will help to ensure that a better alternative is not being overlooked:
 - Is there another way?
 - What objectives are met by doing it this way?
 - What are the risks and adverse consequences of doing it this way?

A quick mental rundown of risks and adverse consequences may be your best guide to a decision. This is the case if there is only one objective, if you're under extreme time pressure, or if you're dealing with a few objectives that are met easily by the alternatives.

Other situations where you can use short-form Decision Analysis:

- Simple decisions: A decision which has a limited number of objectives, alternatives, or adverse consequences may not require a full Decision Analysis.
- Low-priority decisions: If the impact of choosing a particular course of action is low, the concern is probably not of sufficient priority to warrant a full Decision Analysis.
- Decisions that are not your responsibility: You may create a list of objectives for someone who will be creating an alternative for you, or submit your objectives for a decision that someone else is making.
- Routine decisions: You're making a decision that shares the same Decision Statement and objectives as a previous decision. Use the objectives to evaluate the new alternatives.

After you've used short-form Decision Analysis, consider documenting the facts of the decision and actions taken in the Decision Analysis Excel worksheet.