

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.