



CAREER COMPASS

Steer Your Career. Accelerate Our Mission.

Dealing With Ambiguity

Participant Workbook

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Introduction

Objectives:

- Participants will learn how to manage ambiguous situations when making decisions.

Agenda:

1. Categorizing types of decisions
2. Gathering data to make decisions
3. Understanding ambiguity in decision making
4. Understanding initiative risk factors
5. Tips to start taking action



Decisiveness

In your opinion, what is decisiveness? Use the space provided here to capture your response.

Decisiveness



Decisiveness: The ability to make decisions quickly and confidently. Being decisive is about having the power or quality of deciding. (Cambridge Dictionary)

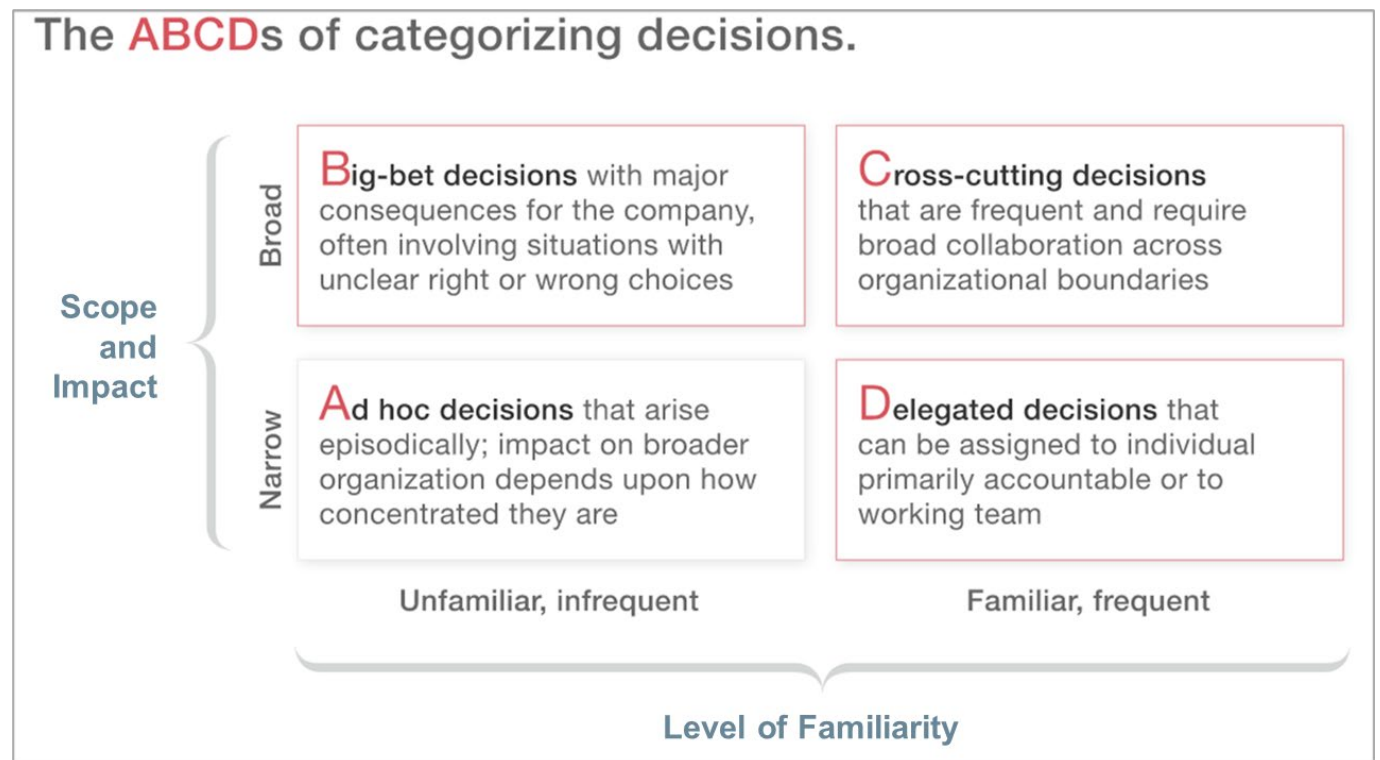
What are the benefits of being decisive? Use the space provided here to capture your response.

Why is decisiveness important? Use the space provided here to capture your response.

Importance of Decisiveness:

- Reduces ambiguity
- Deals with change effectively
- Improves the speed of decisions
- Reduces time, bringing down the overall project costs

Types of Decisions



Source: <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/untangling-your-organizations-decision-making>

List the points to remember while making Ad Hoc Decisions. Use the space provided here to capture your response.

List the points to remember while making Big-Bet Decisions. Use the space provided here to capture your response.

List the points to remember while making Cross-Cutting Decisions. Use the space provided here to capture your response.

List the points to remember while making Delegated Decisions. Use the space provided here to capture your response.

Raman is used to making Delegated Decisions, which are frequent and low impact. Now he's been asked to make a Big-Bet decision, which is infrequent and high impact. He's never done this before so asks for your help.

What are some things Raman could do to break down the decision-making process? Use the space provided here to capture your response.

Gathering Information to Make Decisions

Type of Data	Description	Example
Salient Data	Data that grabs instant attention because it's awe-inspiring and startling	Revenue of travel & tourism industry in 2020 is \$396.4 billion, a fall of 42% compared to 2019.
Contextual Data	Data that has a framework which may lead to a wrong perception	Gluten free is healthy.
Patterned Data	Data which seems to have a repeated pattern	Getting a succession of heads or tails while flipping a coin establishes a pattern.

All these types of data may lead to bias in decision making.

- *Bias is a tendency to believe some ideas are better than others.*
- There's nothing wrong with that, as long as we are aware of it.
- However, if we're not aware, our bias can influence our decisions.

Where have you seen bias in decision making? Use the space provided here to capture your response.

Bias While Making Decisions

Type of Bias	Description
Salient Bias	Results in getting more attention, which may result in discarding old and relevant data
Contextual Data	Results in usage of information as received and not understanding its actual context
Patterned Data	Results in usage of arbitrary occurrences as information to make decisions

A player rolls four sixes in a row during a dice game and believes the next roll will also be a six. What kind of bias is reflected here?

- A. *Salient Bias*
- B. *Contextual Data*
- C. *Patterned Data*

Ambiguity In Decision Making

Uncertainty simply means the state of being uncertain; doubt; hesitancy.

The Four Levels Of Uncertainty:

Level of Uncertainty	Description
<p>Clear Outcome</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projection points to a unique strategic path • Uncertainty is inconsequential • Information is readily available
<p>Alternative Outcome</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projections point to some alternative outcome • Exact outcome cannot be determined, but probability of each alternative can be estimated • All possible outcomes seem to be clear
<p>Range of Outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of potential outcomes can be predicted • This range is based on a few important factors • But actual outcome may be anywhere within the range • All possible outcomes are not clear
<p>Uncertain Outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various levels of uncertainty combine to create scenarios which are impossible to anticipate • A range of potential outcomes cannot be predicted • These situations are very limited, but do exist

What is the kind of ambiguity you face in your decision making? Use the space provided here to capture your response.

Tips To Start Taking Action

What are some ways you make decisions in ambiguous times? Use the space provided here to capture your response.

Ask Effective Questions:

1. Open-ended Questions:

Open-ended questions require elaboration and sharing of information. They avoid questions containing will, did, have and why. Instead, they use what, who and how.

- A few examples of such questions are:
 - **Instead of asking:** *Will the project be done on time?*
Ask: *What might stand in the way of meeting the deadline?*
 - **Instead of asking:** *Did you check all of the requirements?*
Ask: *Which of the requirements concerns you the most?*
 - **Instead of asking:** *Have you notified Sarah about the changes?*
Ask: *How will you go about bringing everyone up to speed about the changes?*

2. Short Questions:

Use questions that are 8 words or less. This allows you to listen more and gather verbal data while the other person talks.

- A few examples of such questions are:
 - *What does success look like?*
 - *What's the impact of that on the team?*
 - *Where haven't you looked for a solution?*

3. Forward-Focused Questions:

Forward-focused questions will help you think about the future instead of the past.

- A few examples of such questions are:
 - *How do you want it to go in the future?*
 - *Where do you want to be in 6 months?*

Use the space provided here to capture your thoughts.

Final Reflection

- What did you take from this learning session that you can apply to your current position today?
- What is the most important tip you will share with a co-worker that wasn't able to participate today?

Use the space provided to capture your response.

Contact Information

BD17 Contact Information: Write to us! We are always seeking to improve our learning and development products and encourage your feedback. Please email us with your suggestions and we will incorporate them into future work. Additionally, we are available to answer any questions about the content you may have and provide additional resources to support your learning endeavors.

- NAVFACHQTotalForceDevelopment@navy.mil

Development Resources

Career Compass Resource Center: An online source of information that provides NAVFAC civilian employees access to professional growth and development opportunities.

- <https://www.navfac.navy.mil/ccrc>

To access more content specific to the **Decisiveness** competency:

- <https://www.navfac.navy.mil/decisiveness>

Career Compass Catalog: an online tool which provides you with information to help you take ownership of your professional development. It identifies options to assist in planning and creating a successful career path within NAVFAC.

- <https://www.navfac.navy.mil/cc>

Course Credit

You will receive credit for participating in this course. Email the address below. Make sure to include all the following information:

Component	Include in Email
Address	W_NAVFAC_PRTN_NITC_NFI_ADMINS_US@navy.mil
Email Subject Line	Self-Certification – Dealing With Ambiguity
Course Name	Dealing With Ambiguity
Course Completion Code	Code will differ for the live versus recorded webinar and will be available at the end of each respective course.