DECISION MAKING

- **Be Inclusive** and have shared ownership of process and decision
- Appreciate different viewpoints: listening, keeping an **open mind**, asking, being heard
- Be **respectful**/mindful of others
- Be **gentle** with each other
- Recognize people's **contributions** and qualities
- Compromise, build consensus, - **win – win**
- **Accept** other people's work and decision
- Be proactive in **participation**
- **Trust** the process, each other, results and implementation
- Take ownership and **responsibility**
- Build on and respect everyone's **expertise**
- **Listen** to each other; don't go off on tangents; don't rehash – keep **moving forward**
- Respect and **follow up** on plans made

Decision Making Process

1. Decision is already decided	▪ Not a priority or someone has already made a decision ▪ Is the process even needed?
2. Issue raised or need identified	▪ Understand the need to create or revise a plan ▪ Consider who needs to be involved and why ▪ Does it fit into an overall plan?
3. Gather knowledge (research or consult) (check accuracy of knowledge)	▪ Why is the issue important? ▪ What is the priority level for this? ▪ Outcome: Who is helped by addressing the issue and to what degree? ▪ Are there current requirements, standards, laws, best practices, guidelines relative to the issue? ▪ Who else might be affected? ▪ Does the issue have a prior history? If yes, how addressed in past? Any lessons to be learned? ▪ Timeframe – How quickly does this issue need to be addressed? Based on what need/information? ▪ What is the work effort? ▪ What is the consequence or risk?
4. Arrange for decision making	▪ Include right people (based on interest/expertise) ▪ Options: regularly scheduled meetings, special meeting for this issue – Face to Face or teleconference ▪ Send participants relevant materials/synopsis of issue prior to meeting ▪ Participants read the materials
5. Meet (Include the people who will be executing the decision)	▪ Include people who will be executing the decision ▪ Use action oriented agenda (outcomes, times, action items) (Prioritize) ▪ Use a variety of tools for problem solving and decision making (e.g., Nominal Group Process) ▪ Determine decision making process/criteria ▪ Topic leader support facilitation ▪ Define the real issue ▪ Define goals and intended outcomes of the decision ▪ Generate good alternatives for decision making ▪ Explore alternatives: consider evidence, impact, resources ▪ Choose best alternative ▪ Check your decision: step back and reconsider the decision ▪ Create a plan for checking the efficacy of the decision ▪ Create a plan for communicating the decision: who are the critical stakeholders?
6. Share Decision	▪ Share decision with stakeholders and relevant background ▪ Share with initiator of the need/issue, close the loop ▪ Provide rationale for decision, people involved in making decision, implications for decision ▪ Take action to change the decision if there is good reason to do so ▪ Put information in the appropriate place
7. Examine Decision	▪ After sufficient time, evaluate the decision – How do you know its working? What isn't working? What might need to be modified? How and who will make changes? How will the changes be communicated? To whom? ▪ If there is good reason for a decision to be changed, repeat this cycle

Tools for Decision Making

Decision Step	Decision Making Topic	Tools
All Steps	**Decision Making – all topics**	Mind Tools http://www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN_TED.htm How Good is Your Decision-Making?
Issue Raised or Need Identified	**Stakeholder Analysis**	Stakeholder Analysis is important in making an effective decision, and you'll want to ensure that you've consulted stakeholders appropriately even if you're making an individual decision.
Meet	**Engage everyone**	The Stepladder Technique is a useful method for gradually introducing more and more people to the group discussion, and making sure everyone is heard.
	Ask the right question	The 5 Whys technique is a classic tool that helps you identify the real underlying problem that you face.
	Generate new ideas	Brainstorming is probably the most popular method of generating ideas.
		Another approach, Reverse Brainstorming, works similarly. However, it starts by asking people to brainstorm how to achieve the opposite outcome from the one wanted, and then reversing these actions.
		The Charette Procedure is a systematic process for gathering and developing ideas from very many stakeholders.
	Consider different perspectives	The Reframing Matrix uses 4 Ps (product, planning, potential, and people) as the basis for gathering different perspectives.
		If you have very few options, or an unsatisfactory alternative, use a Concept Fan to take a step back from the problem, and approach it from a wider perspective. This often helps when the people involved in the decision are too close to the problem.
		Appreciative Inquiry forces you to look at the problem based on what's 'going right,' rather than what's 'going wrong.'

Meet	**Organize ideas**	Use Affinity Diagrams to organize ideas into common themes and groupings.
	Determine risk	Risk Analysis helps you look at risks objectively. It uses a structured approach for assessing threats, and for evaluating the probability of events occurring - and what they might cost to manage.
	Implications	Six Thinking Hats helps you evaluate the consequences of a decision by looking at the alternatives from six different perspectives.
	Validate resources	Starbursting helps you think about the questions you should ask to evaluate an alternative properly.
		To assess pros and cons of each option, use Force Field Analysis, or use the Plus-Minus-Interesting approach.
		Cost-Benefit Analysis looks at the financial feasibility of an alternative.
	Choose alternatives	Grid Analysis, also known as a decision matrix, is a key tool for this type of evaluation. It's invaluable because it helps you bring disparate factors into your decision-making process in a reliable and rigorous way.
		Use Paired Comparison Analysis to determine the relative importance of various factors. This helps you compare unlike factors, and decide which ones should carry the most weight in your decision.
		Decision Trees are also useful in choosing between options. These help you lay out the different options open to you, and bring the likelihood of project success or failure into the decision making process.
		Delphi Technique: uses multiple cycles of anonymous written discussion and argument, managed by a facilitator. http://www.seanet.com/~barkonwd/school/DELPHI.HTM
	Check decision	Blind Spot Analysis: technique to review whether common decision making problems like over confidence, escalating commitment or groupthink may have undermined the decision making process. http://www.robmillard.com/archives/tools-for-strategists-blindspot-analysis-uncovering-strategic-bias.html