

# Decision Making



**Lesley Morrissey**

**Book Eleven**

HANDS ON MANAGEMENT  
Managing Yourself Series

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Managing Yourself Series

Written by

**Lesley Morrissey**

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## **About the Author**



Lesley Morrissey is CIPD qualified and has worked as a training manager, human resources manager and management training consultant.

She has worked in the UK and overseas with a diverse range of nationalities and with managers of many levels of expertise. Without exception, her practical approach to solutions has been received with enthusiasm by trainees and companies with who she consults.

A great believer in 'getting what you expect', Lesley helps people to focus on what they want and then create a path to success.

Practical and pragmatic approaches to real world results are a particular focus for Lesley's development

strategies. “Does it really work?” is the benchmark all these techniques focus on. In the end the success of anything is in the results achieved.

Lesley now runs Inside News Limited specialising in Reputation Marketing.

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# How to use this book

This book aims to be a practical guide for you. There are many exercises that you will want to do – and should do to get the most out of what you will learn. You remember much more about something when you've actually done it for yourself, rather than when someone has told you how to do it!

There are places in the book where you can write notes and carry out the exercises. You'll recognise them when you see this sign:



By all means use these spaces to make this book truly your own.

If you have purchased an electronic copy you will need to print some, or all, of this out – or have paper handy. I find that it is a wonderful way to recycle the backs of old letters, printouts and photocopies that would otherwise have been thrown out!

If, like me, you have been indoctrinated at birth that defacing books is sacrilegious, then have a pad of paper at the ready!

If you simply read and don't take action you'll find the useful lessons will quickly fade and this will

become another of those books that gather dust (or fill up your computer hard disk).

**If you've bought this book because you want to improve your skills and your life - make this one count and take action!**

## **What's it all about?**

We all make decisions every day – shall I get up when the alarm goes off, or stay in bed another 10 minutes; do I want cereal or a cooked breakfast; do I want to walk or get the bus?

Whichever decision we make there is an associated negative and positive impact. The decision may be a 'gut reaction', but the consequences have also had an effect on that final decision.

Deciding what to have for breakfast is not good training for business decision-making! In business decisions can be far-reaching in their effect and that makes it really important to make a good one.

Decision-making is sometimes done alone, sometimes in groups and sometimes in a linear system – where one person makes the initial decision and then has to justify it to someone else who then amends, changes or agrees to it. This chain can extend to three or four people at times.

Sound decision-making is a useful skill – however, it does not guarantee that your decisions will always be right! Robert Townsend, who launched the car hire giant Avis, reckoned he made a good decision once out of every three times!



Given that he is considered to be a very successful businessman it gives the rest of us some hope, and reassurance when we find we made a poor decision.

This Book is designed to give you some tools and guidance on scientific decision making so at least you can be sure that you did everything humanly possible to make a good decision.

# What's in it for me?

The minute you get people to manage you will find yourself being asked to make decisions. Sometimes just so you can be held to account if it all goes pear-shaped later! However, there is an up side to being a good decision maker.

## Personal benefits

Your decisions can be justified and explained

- A strong process generally produces more consistent outcomes – the sign of a good manager
- Other people will understand why you made the decisions you have and will argue less
- Understanding creates commitment so those people who will be involved with taking action on your decisions are not going to be half-hearted.
- People will trust your judgement

What other benefits will you get from improving your decision making skills?



## **Where to start**

1. First you need an issue that requires a decision-making.
2. Then you need a process for decision-making to take place.
3. You also need to know what the key criteria are against which the decision will be judged.

These three key elements may seem simplistic, but they are not as simple as they may appear.

### **The issue**

Firstly, people ask you to make decisions that they are more than capable of making themselves. Or they bring you a big decision to make from scratch when they might easily have brought you a couple of feasible options instead.

### **Imagine the scenario:**

You are a senior manager with several managers and supervisors reporting to you. You are sitting in your office and one of your supervisors comes in. “Good morning boss, I have a problem,” she says.

“What can I do for you?” you respond. There follows a long saga about a personality clash between two of