

GROWTH STRATEGIES

Five Tips for Making Better Decisions

Being able to pull the trigger is one of the benefits of being your own boss, but some entrepreneurs are still gun shy.

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Making a decision is one of the most powerful acts for inspiring confidence in leaders and managers. Yet many bosses are squeamish about it.

Some decide not to decide, while others simply procrastinate. Either way, it's typically a cop-out -- and doesn't exactly encourage inspiration in the ranks.

To avoid pining over what to do and what to skip, it can help to learn how to make better decisions. You'll be viewed as a better leader and get better results overall. Here are five tips for making quicker, more calculated decisions:

1. **Stop seeking perfection.** Many great leaders would prefer a project or report be delivered only 80% complete a few hours early than 100% complete five minutes late. Moral of the story: Don't wait for everything to be perfect. Instead of seeking the impossible, efficient decision makers tend to leap without all the answers and trust that they'll be able to build their wings on the way down.
2. **Be independent.** Good decision makers are "collaboratively independent." They tend to surround themselves with the best and brightest and ask pointed questions. For instance, in a discussion with subject-matter experts, they don't ask: "What should I do?" Rather, their

query is: “What’s your thinking on this?” Waiting for committees or an expansive chain of command to make decisions could take longer. Get your information from credible sources and then act, swiftly.

3. **Turn your brain off.** Insight comes when you least expect it. Similar to suddenly remembering the name of an actor that you think you'd just plumb forgotten. The same happens when you're trying to make a decision. By simply turning your mind off for a while or even switching to a different dilemma, you'll give your brain the opportunity to scan its data bank for information that is already stored and waiting to be retrieved.
4. **Don't problem solve, decide.** A decision can [solve a problem](#), but not every problem can be solved by making a decision. Instead, decision making often relies more on intuition than analysis. Deciding between vendors, for instance, requires examining historical data, references and prices. But the tipping point often rests with your gut. Which feels like the right choice?
5. **Admit your mistakes.** If your feelings steered you wrong, correct the error and fess up. Even making the wrong decision will garner more respect and loyalty when you admit you've made a mistake and resolve it than if you are habitually indecisive.

