



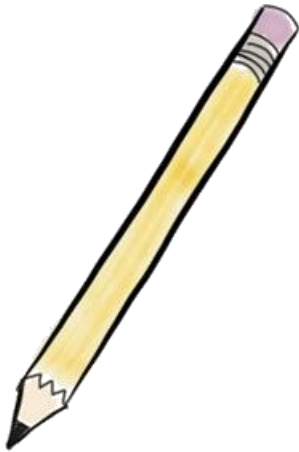
Upgrade Your Decision Making Toolkit

Strategies for becoming a better
decision maker

By Michelle Florendo

Write it down

The biggest mistake you can make when weighing multi-faceted, complex decisions is to try to do all of the analysis in your head.



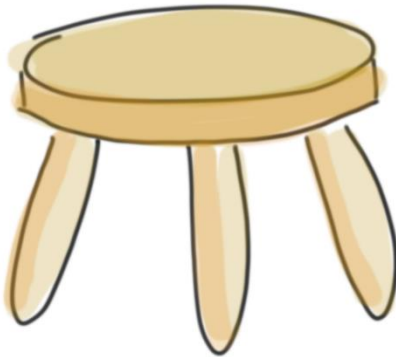
Writing down your thoughts, even if they're not perfect, will enable you to see things more clearly. Take some time to answer the following questions.

What do you need to decide in order to move forward and take action? (What is your decision problem statement?)

What is making this decision difficult?

A better way of evaluating decisions

A better way of approaching decisions is to evaluate its key elements. As Ron Howard, Stanford Professor Emeritus and father of the field of Decision Analysis, puts it, **every decision has three key elements:**



Options– What are the different alternatives you have to choose from?

Objectives– What is it that you are seeking in the outcome of your decision?

Information– What data do you have on how each option will deliver against the objectives you seek?

Examining each element of your decision will help you assess your decision thoroughly.

What is attractive or concerning?

Fill out the following table to help identify your objectives.

	option 1	option 2	option 3	option 4
attractive				
concerning				



Themes indicate key objectives

List your top 5 objectives:



Putting it all together

You've identified your options, defined your key objectives, and now it's time to assess what information you have on how the two intersect.

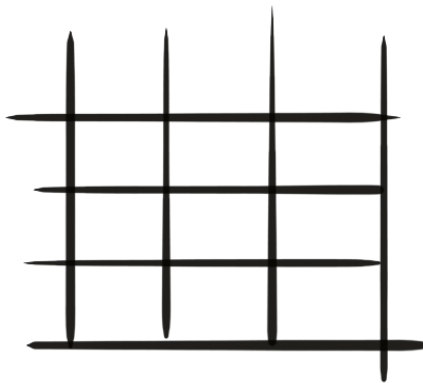
A Decision Matrix is a simple tool you can use to put all of this information in one place.

Step 1: Fill in your options across the top

Step 2: Fill in your objectives down the side

Step 3: In each cell, indicate to what degree each option meets each objective

Step 4: Put a question mark in the cell if you have no information on how that option meets that objective



Here's an example

Here is a sample filled-out decision matrix, using hypothetical options.

	tooth fairy	santa claus	boogie monster	cupid
minimum additional skill building				
interesting / rewarding				
pays the bills				
ideal location				
schedule				

totally! 😊

sorta... 😐

not at all 😞

Your turn to fill out a decision matrix

options →

objectives ↓

totally! 😊

sorta... 😐

not at all ☹️

Create your plan of action.

By when do you need to make a decision?

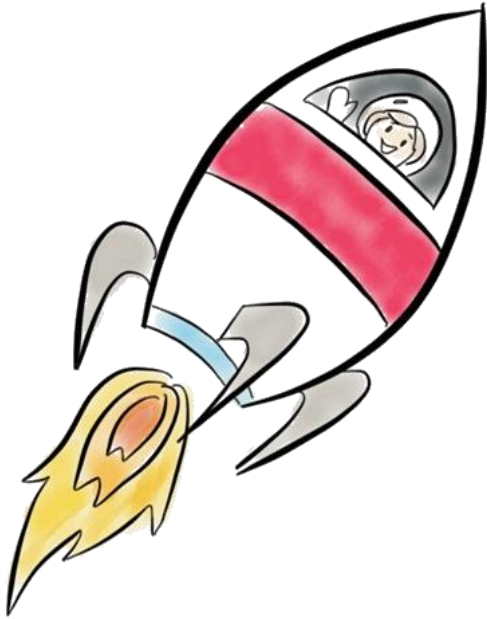


What can you do to close any information gaps that must be resolved prior to making a decision?

How will you handle any inherent uncertainty baked into the decision?

On what date will you evaluate how things are going and explore another decision if necessary?

Take things to the next level



The purpose of this guide is to get you started, but you may be eager to take action and **really make things happen.**

If you are interested in professional support navigating a big decision in the near future, check out [Michelle's offerings](#).

About the author



Michelle Florendo is a decision engineer and coach for Type-A professionals. She is known for her analytical approach to coaching - with a BS in Management Science and Engineering from Stanford University, and an MBA from UC Berkeley's Haas School of Business, Michelle uses a blend of decision engineering, design thinking, and lean startup principles to help her clients map their path forward.

Over the years Michelle has led workshops both domestically and internationally, showing hundreds of driven professionals how to use the principles of decision engineering to craft careers that energize them. She has been repeatedly invited to lead workshops at various conferences, and has guest-taught on career decision making in Stanford's famous [Design Your Life course](#). She has also served on the inaugural coaching team for [Seth Godin's altMBA](#), and is a founding member of the [Forbes Coaches Council](#).

Learn more about Michelle's work at
www.michelleflorendo.com