

HOW TO MAKE "SMART" DECISIONS

TIMELESS

SUCCESS IN THE WORKPLACE

Success:

In the workplace, we all strive for success. There are many so-called formulas for achieving it, but essentially, **success is a matter of making wise choices.** As F. W. Boreham has said, "We make our decisions and then they make us." That is why every decision has an element of risk to it. We cannot always predict the outcome. Are you dealing with any difficult decisions these days? Try following these eight steps for decision-making from the Bible's Old Testament book of Proverbs:



Inside this issue:

STEPS TO SUCCESS

STEP ONE

PRAY FOR GUIDANCE (Principle of Inspiration):

Start by asking God to help you see His perspective on the problem. Intuition is often wrong. *"A man is foolish to trust only himself. But those who use GOD'S WISDOM are safe"* (Proverbs 28:26).

STEP TWO

GET THE FACTS! (Principle of Information): Do not make decisions out of ignorance. First, find out as much relevant information as you can. *"Every prudent man acts out of knowledge"* (Proverbs 13:16). *"How stupid to decide before knowing the facts"* (Proverbs 18:13). *"Get the facts at any price..."* (Proverbs 23:23).

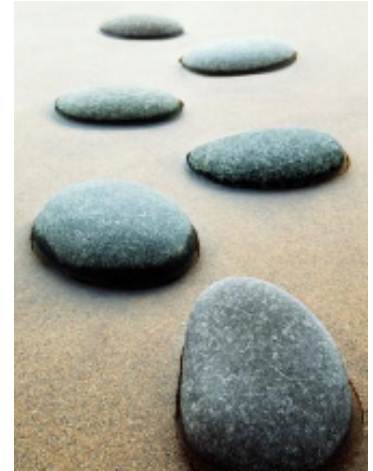
STEP THREE

ASK FOR ADVICE (Principle of Consultation):

If possible, talk to someone who has already taken a similar risk. It is wise to learn from experience – but it is even wiser to learn from the experiences of others! That way you do not have to learn everything the hard way. *“Get good advice and you will succeed”* (Proverbs 20:18). *“The intelligent man is always open to new ideas – In fact, he looks for them”* (Proverbs 18:15).

STEP FOUR

SET YOUR GOAL (Principle of Selection): Be sure you understand the reason and purpose for the decision you're about to make. You cannot chase two rabbits at the same time. *“An intelligent person AIMS at wise actions, but a fool starts off in many directions”* (Proverbs 17:24).



STEP FIVE

COUNT THE COST (Principle of Evaluation):

This is called a *calculated risk*. Ask yourself (1) Is it necessary? (2) What will it cost... in terms of time, energy, and money? (3) Is it worth it? *“It is a trap to dedicate something rashly, and only later to consider your vows”* (Proverbs 20:25).

“ What Questions to Ask”

STEP SIX

PLAN FOR PROBLEMS (Principle of Preparation): Remember Murphy's Law (“if something can go wrong, it will”) – and remember that Murphy was an optimist! Do not ignore problems – they will not ignore you. So be prepared. *“Don't go charging into battle without a plan”* (Proverbs 20: 18). *“A sensible man watches for problems and prepared to meet them. The fool never looks ahead and suffers the consequences”* (Proverbs 22:3).

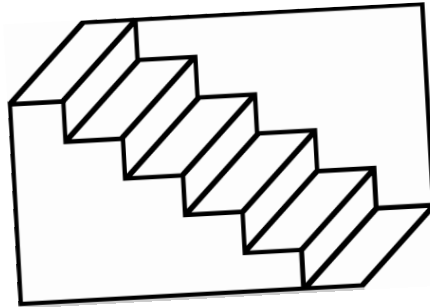
STEP SEVEN

FACE YOUR FEARS (Principle of Confrontation):

Fear is not a sign of weakness – it is a sign of your humanity. Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather it is moving ahead in spite of your fears. *“Fear of man is a dangerous trap, but to trust in God means safety”* (Proverbs 29:25).

STEP EIGHT

MAKE THE DECISION – GO FOR IT! (Principle of Initiation): This is the point at which you must stop talking and start acting. You must begin. *“Commit to the Lord whatever you do and your plans will succeed”* (Proverbs 16:3).



QUESTIONS TO REFLECT ON

Are you facing a difficult or very important decision at the moment? How successful have you been in trying to work toward a conclusion?

Do you agree with Mr. Warren’s statement that “success is a matter of making wise choices”? Why or why not?

What do you think of the steps or principles that he has suggested for making decisions? Which – if any – do you find particularly helpful?

How might any of these steps be useful as you work toward the significant decision you currently are confronting?

“Success is a matter of making wise choices”

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