

Unit #1 Decision Making / Lesson #8

Gathering Information: Looking at Alternatives

PURPOSE: The purpose of this lesson is to identify looking for alternatives, positive and negative, as the first task in the second step in a decision making strategy.

OBJECTIVE: Upon completion of this lesson, the participant will:

1. 100% of the time identify the first task in the second step of strategic decision-making is looking at the alternatives positive and negatives:
2. 100% of the time list at least three (3) of the positive alternatives to the five (5) major decisions they have identified.
3. 100% of the time list at least three (3) of the negative alternatives to the five (5) major decisions they have identified.

PROCEDURE:

1. Read and consider the following:

After you have identified the problem and all in relationship to it, you are ready to start working on your first task in the second step of your decision-making process of gathering information, which is looking for and at all of the alternatives, both positive and negative.

Now you can take out your piece of paper and draw a line down the middle of it to list all of the alternatives, the positive alternatives in the left column and the negative in the right column.

You've done this before, so this should be easy to do. Right? Really? Have you really thought about all of the positive and negative alternatives, prior to your identifying and defining the problem and other problems in relationship to it?

Every decision has alternatives, because without alternatives, there exists no decision. In fact usually every decision has several alternatives, both positive and negative. Now that you have identified the problem and all problems in relationship to it, this should be much easier.

Now if you decide there are no alternatives and therefore you have no decision, you are in error. You just made a decision, using the default method. You decided to do nothing and not even try to go further. If so, what is/are the limits to your decision? What is your level of control of the decision?

So think about it. What are the alternatives? If there are only negative alternatives, then you have what is called a "dilemma" and your choice (decision) is for the lesser of all other evils.

Are you sure you identified and defined the problem correctly? That's usually a good place to start. And no this is not a step backwards. You are still moving forward, however, it just doesn't feel that way. You may even move on to the next step of "Predicting Outcomes" and find you need to go back to identifying and defining the problem. You're still making progress!

2. Complete the following exercises:

A. Think of the five (5) major decisions you listed in lesson #5 and answer the following:

1) Decision #1: _____

a. Positive Alternative #1 _____

b. Positive Alternative #2 _____

c. Positive Alternative #3 _____

d. Negative Alternative #1 _____

e. Negative Alternative #2 _____

f. Negative Alternative #3 _____

2) Decision #2: _____

a. Positive Alternative #1 _____

b. Positive Alternative #2 _____

c. Positive Alternative #3 _____

d. Negative Alternative #1 _____

e. Negative Alternative #2 _____

f. Negative Alternative #3 _____

3) Decision #3: _____

a. Positive Alternative #1 _____

b. Positive Alternative #2 _____

c. Positive Alternative #3 _____

d. Negative Alternative #1 _____

e. Negative Alternative #2 _____

f. Negative Alternative #3 _____

4) Decision #4: _____

a. Positive Alternative #1 _____

b. Positive Alternative #2 _____

c. Positive Alternative #3 _____

d. Negative Alternative #1 _____

e. Negative Alternative #2 _____

f. Negative Alternative #3 _____

5) Decision #5: _____

a. Positive Alternative #1 _____

b. Positive Alternative #2 _____

c. Positive Alternative #3 _____

d. Negative Alternative #1 _____

e. Negative Alternative #2 _____

f. Negative Alternative #3 _____