

Basic Rules for Making Good Decisions

Zig Ziglar

1. If I'm really tired, I don't make significant decisions (except in emergencies).
2. If someone is pressing me to decide something "right now," unless an immediate decision is critical, I say, "If I have to decide now, the answer is no. After I have had a chance to catch my breath and review the facts, there's the possibility it could be yes." Then I put the ball back in his or her court and ask, "Do you want my decision now, or should we wait?"
3. I like to determine the maximum benefit of a decision, assuming that everything goes my way. Then I ask, "Suppose nothing goes my way? Suppose this doesn't develop and materialize as I expect it to? What is my maximum exposure? What would I lose?"
4. For significant business-related decisions, I run them past my advisors. These people are successful in their businesses and professions and have a considerable amount of knowledge, experience, and wisdom, all of which are musts in the decision-making process. I get their advice and follow their recommendations, with good results in most cases. If the decision is too minor to involve my advisors but I still want input, I get my family together to look at the pros and cons.
5. I like to pray about my decisions. I ask God to help me see the truth of my motives and to lead me in the way I should go. If I'm about to make an unwise decision, I simply don't have peace about that decision, and I consequently act on that feeling of unease. I ask myself, "How will this decision affect all the areas of my life—personal, family, career, financial, physical, mental and spiritual?" Obviously, not all decisions affect all areas, but if the decision involves a financial reward but also carries considerable family sacrifice, for example, I think carefully as to whether what I give up is compensated for by what I gain.

One final note: Prioritize your decisions. Some are more urgent than others!