

30 Questions to Ask Yourself BEFORE Making Major Decisions

Note: *Not every question in this list will help you in every situation. This is simply a checklist to help you keep from overlooking important considerations before confirming and carrying out major decisions. The thirty questions can save you many hours and a lot of grief. So, weigh your answers and jot down your thoughts. Then, interact with a trusted colleague or coach and “peer review” your thinking and the process. DNB ~ 2006*

1. At its essence – in one sentence – what is the decision we are really facing? What is the “bottom, bottom line?”
2. What facts should we have before we can make this decision with total confidence?
3. What trends, changes, or problems are behind the need for this change? How long will these continue to be a factor?
4. Are we dealing with a cause or a symptom? A means or an end?
5. What does the Bible say about this situation?
6. Am I thinking about this situation with a clear head, or am I fatigued to the point that I shouldn't be making major decisions?
7. What would the ideal solution be in this situation?
8. Should we seek outside counsel in making decision?
9. What are the hidden agendas that are “pushing” for a decision in this situation? Why do “we” or “they” want a change? What is the source of the emotional fuel that is driving this decision?
10. If I had to decide in the next two minutes... what decision would I make, and why?

11. What decision would I expect each of my three most respected advisers to favor in this situation?
12. Can an overall decision in this situation be broken up into parts, with “sub-decisions” made at a few “go/no go” points along the way?
13. What are the key assumptions in our thinking that underlie the decision we’re leaning toward? What do we assume it will really cost? What do we assume will be its benefits?
14. Who? What? When? Where? Why? How? How much?
15. Have we given ourselves twenty-four hours to let this decision settle in our minds?
16. What difference will this decision make a year from now? Five years? Twenty years? A hundred years?
17. Is this decision consistent with our values in the past, or does it mark a change in direction or standards?
18. How will this decision affect our overall Master Plan? Will it sidetrack us?
19. Will this decision help to maximize our key strengths?
20. Have we verified what the results have been for others who have made a similar decision in similar circumstances? Have we checked this thoroughly?
21. How do we really *feel* about this decision?

22. Is this the decision we would make if our budget was twice as large as it is? Half as large? Five times as large? One-tenth as large? Is it the same decision we would make if we had twice as many staff members? Half as many?
23. What would happen if we did **not** carry out this decision?
24. If we didn't carry it out, what would be the best three alternative decisions?
25. Is this the best timing for carrying out this decision? If not now, why? And when?
26. Is this decision truly appropriate in scope and size to the situation we face? Are we possibly hunting an elephant with a BB gun, or a rabbit with a cannon?
27. As I pray about this decision, and look at it from God's perspective, do I have a sense of peace about it?
28. How do our families feel about this decision? How will it affect them?
29. What questions still linger in our minds? What aspects of the situation will not be resolved or solved by this decision?
30. Should we write a policy about this decision to guide us in similar situations in the future?

Note: *Working through these Questions in a spirit of prayer consistently gives "clarity by the process." One friend uses Psalm 25 and Psalm 37 with his favorite Worship CDs. Whatever Scripture is a "centering point" for you ~ use it in your decision making retreat.*