

# Decision Making Approaches

## Five Approaches

The following are five approaches that can be used by managers when a decision needs to be made.

### **Tell**

This is an approach that involves the manager making a decision without the involvement of others. Those affected are simply told what the decision is, after it has been made.

### **Persuade**

In this approach the manager will still make the decision, but it is 'sold' to those affected by it. The manager will give some thought to how the decision will benefit others and highlight these benefits to achieve greater buy-in. He/she is likely to ask questions from those affected, but the primary purpose of these is to identify the selling points for the idea or clarify understanding of the decision.

### **Consult**

Those affected are consulted before a decision is made, and their ideas/concerns are listened to carefully. However, responsibility for the final decision still rests with the manager.

### **Negotiate**

A decision is agreed by those affected. The manager and team will work together to build an understanding of the various parties' needs and feelings, and to try and find the best possible solution to the problem/situation.

### **Devolve**

The decision is left up to the team. With the advent of self-managed teams, this approach is more common. Here, responsibility for the decision rests fully with the team, although parameters are likely to be agreed by the manager in advance.

## Exercise

Consider what approach you would use when the following decisions need to be made:

1. Dismissing a member of staff. You have concerns about the performance of a member of staff during their probationary period.
2. Introducing a new process or service. Your Head Office has approached you with a request that you offer a new service or take on an additional process. A decision needs to be made quickly.
3. Changing an existing process. A process needs to be changed in order to improve efficiency and remove duplication. The question is how to change it.
4. Introducing flexible working. Deciding whether or not to introduce a flexible working policy and how it would work in practice.
5. Restructuring the team. You need to decide how to restructure a team – the changes will undoubtedly result in team members changing roles, reallocating tasks and responsibilities and changing seating positions.
6. Introducing an 'out of hours' service. This will mean introducing new shift patterns or having staff 'on call' so that a support service to customers can be provided outside of normal office hours.
7. Hiring a new member of staff. You need to decide which applicant to appoint to the role of team leader.
8. Arranging training. A decision needs to be made about what training is required by the team this year, and how it should be delivered.
9. Team objectives for the year. You need to decide what objectives/targets to set the team this year.
10. Replacing equipment. Some of the equipment used by the team is due for renewal. What will you replace it with, and how much will you spend?

What discrepancies in approach are there? Record any significant ones you'd like to discuss below.

What changes will you make?

## Learning points

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