

## **UNIT V: LEADERSHIP, EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE & CONFLICT RESOLUTION:**

### **LEADERSHIP**

#### **What is Leadership?**

Leadership is a process by which an executive can direct, guide and influence the behavior and work of others towards accomplishment of specific goals in a given situation. Leadership is the ability of a manager to induce the subordinates to work with confidence and zeal.

Leadership is the potential to influence behaviour of others. It is also defined as the capacity to influence a group towards the realization of a goal. Leaders are required to develop future visions, and to motivate the organizational members to want to achieve the visions.

According to Keith Davis, "Leadership is the ability to persuade others to seek defined objectives enthusiastically. It is the human factor which binds a group together and motivates it towards goals."

#### **Characteristics of Leadership**

1. It is an inter-personal process in which a manager is into influencing and guiding workers towards attainment of goals.
2. It denotes a few qualities to be present in a person which includes intelligence, maturity and personality.
3. It is a group process. It involves two or more people interacting with each other.
4. A leader is involved in shaping and moulding the behaviour of the group towards accomplishment of organizational goals.
5. Leadership is situation bound. There is no best style of leadership. It all depends upon tackling with the situations.

#### **Skills for a Leader**

- **Personality:** A pleasing personality always attracts people. A leader should also friendly and yet authoritative so that he inspires people to [work](#) hard like him.
- **Knowledge:** A subordinate looks up to his leader for any suggestion that he needs. A good leader should thus possess adequate knowledge and competence in [order](#) to influence the subordinates.
- **Integrity:** A leader needs to possess a high level of integrity and honesty. He should have a fair outlook and should base his judgment on the facts and logic. He should be objective and not biased.
- **Initiative:** A good leader takes initiative to grab the opportunities and not wait for them and use them to the advantage of the organization.
- **Communication skills:** A leader needs to be a good communicator so that he can explain his ideas, policies, and procedures clearly to the people. He not only needs to be a good speaker but also a good listener, counsellor, and persuader.

- **Motivation skills:** A leader needs to be an effective motivator who understands the needs of the people and motivates them by satisfying those needs.
- **Self-confidence and Will Power:** A leader needs to have a high level of self-confidence and immense will-power and should not lose it even in the worst situations, else employees will not believe in him.
- **Intelligence:** A leader needs to be intelligent enough to analyze the pros and cons of a situation and take a decision accordingly. He also needs to have a vision and fore-sightedness so that he can predict the future impact of the decisions taken by him.
- **Decisiveness:** A leader has to be decisive in managing his work and should be firm on the decisions are taken by him.
- **Social skills:** A leader should possess empathy towards others. He should also be a humanist who also helps the people with their personal problems. He also needs to possess a sense of responsibility and accountability because with great authority comes great responsibility.

### Assessing of Leadership skills:

Leadership goes beyond being appointed “the manager.” Leadership has to do with whom the people are following. Leaders influence others’ behaviors. To become more effective, leader-managers must learn how to influence others with the intent of effectively motivating them. Leaders possess qualities that make others want to follow them. The standard definition of leadership is the process of influencing other people’s behavior toward achieving a predetermined goal. It is imperative to note that leadership is a *means*, not an *end*.

Leadership traits are physical or personality characteristics that differentiate leaders from subordinates. There have been many attempts to define these qualities over the years, and perceptions of what distinguishes leaders have changed. In the 1980s, Warren Bennis, a leading management consultant, reviewed ninety successful leaders to determine commonalities among them. Sixty were Fortune 500 executives and 30 were from the public sector. Bennis identified the following basic leadership traits, which remain relevant:

- **Attention.** Leaders attract attention by exercising a strong vision and commitment to accomplishment.
- **Meaning.** Leaders use exceptional communication skills that make visions tangible to others.
- **Trust.** Leaders exhibit clear focus and consistent behavior, which generates trust.
- **Self-awareness.** Leaders know their limitations but remain optimistic.

## **Leadership Styles**

Leadership styles vary according to organizational structure, people, environment, and task. Leaders promote loyalty among subordinates by keeping an open mind, being self-aware, and being inquisitive.

Awareness is important in working effectively with diverse groups and individuals, regardless of personal bias. Anger and frustration indicate a closed mind. The effective leader asks questions with a genuine interest in learning more, rather than as a probe to expose a mistake or fault. Employee inquiries should be conducted with genuine interest and with demonstrated respect. Even more important is listening to the feedback, so that appropriate action (if necessary) may be taken.

One model for understanding leadership styles differentiates between four types of leaders:

- **Directing leader's** direct subordinates in what, how, when and where tasks should be done. These leaders maintain a standard of performance, and their style is high-directive and low-supportive in nature.
- **Coaching (participative) leaders** welcome input and consult with employees. These leaders are highly directive-oriented, but they are also highly supportive.
- **Supporting leaders** are friendly and show concern for the well-being of their subordinates; they treat subordinates as equals and offer a high-supportive and low-directive environment.
- **Delegating (achievement-oriented) leaders** encourage high achievement and sets challenging goals; the emphasis is on excellence, and these leaders outwardly show their confidence in subordinates' abilities. They operate in a low-supportive and low-directive environment, which allows employees to extend themselves and their abilities fully.<sup>2</sup>

The leadership style an individual uses is often a reflection of the individual's attitudes about workers, their competence, and how to get work done. Different situations will require different styles of leadership in order to maximize the productivity and well-being of subordinates.

## **STRESS MANAGEMENT:**

### **What Is Stress?**

Stress can be defined as any type of change that causes physical, emotional, or psychological strain. Stress is your body's response to anything that requires attention or action.

Everyone experiences stress to some degree. The way you respond to stress, however, makes a big difference to your overall well-being.

Sometimes, the best way to manage your stress involves changing your situation. At other times, the best strategy involves changing the way you respond to the situation.

*Developing a clear understanding of how stress impacts your physical and mental health is important. It's also important to recognize how your mental and physical health affects your stress level.*

## Signs

Stress can be short-term or long-term. Both can lead to a variety of symptoms, but chronic stress can take a serious toll on the body over time and have long-lasting health effects.

### **Some common signs of stress include:**

- Changes in mood
- Clammy or sweaty palms
- Decreased sex drive
- Diarrhea
- Difficulty sleeping
- Digestive problems
- Dizziness
- Feeling anxious
- Frequent sickness
- Grinding teeth
- Headaches
- Low energy
- Muscle tension, especially in the neck and shoulders
- Physical aches and pains
- Racing heartbeat
- Trembling

### **Identifying Stress**

Stress is not always easy to recognize, but there are some ways to identify some signs that you might be experiencing too much pressure. Sometimes stress can come from an obvious source, but sometimes even small daily stresses from work, school, family, and friends can take a toll on your mind and body.

If you think stress might be affecting you, there are a few things you can watch for:

- **Psychological signs** such as difficulty concentrating, worrying, anxiety, and trouble remembering
- **Emotional signs** such as being angry, irritated, moody, or frustrated
- **Physical signs** such as high blood pressure, changes in weight, frequent colds or infections, and changes in the menstrual cycle and libido
- **Behavioral signs** such as poor self-care, not having time for the things you enjoy, or relying on drugs and alcohol to cope

## **Causes of Stress:**

There are many different things in life that can cause stress. Some of the main sources of stress include work, finances, relationships, parenting, and day-to-day inconveniences.

Stress can trigger the body's response to a perceived threat or danger, known as the fight-or-flight response. During this reaction, certain hormones like adrenaline and cortisol are released. This speeds the heart rate, slows digestion, shunts blood flow to major muscle groups, and changes various other autonomic nervous functions, giving the body a burst of energy and strength.

Originally named for its ability to enable us to physically fight or run away when faced with danger, the fight-or-flight response is now activated in situations where neither response is appropriate—like in traffic or during a stressful day at work.

When the perceived threat is gone, systems are designed to return to normal function via the relaxation response. But in cases of chronic stress, the relaxation response doesn't occur often enough, and being in a near-constant state of fight-or-flight can cause damage to the body.

Stress can also lead to some unhealthy habits that have a negative impact on your health. For example, many people cope with stress by eating too much or by smoking. These unhealthy habits damage the body and create bigger problems in the long-term.

## **Types of Stress**

Not all types of stress are harmful or even negative. Some of the different types of stress that you might experience include:

- **Acute stress:** Acute stress is a very short-term type of stress that can either be positive or more distressing; this is the type of stress we most often encounter in day-to-day life.
- **Chronic stress:** Chronic stress is stress that seems never-ending and inescapable, like the stress of a bad marriage or an extremely taxing job; chronic stress can also stem from traumatic experiences and childhood trauma.
- **Episodic acute stress:** Episodic acute stress is acute stress that seems to run rampant and be a way of life, creating a life of ongoing distress.
- **Eustress:** Eustress is fun and exciting. It's known as a positive type of stress that can keep you energized. It's associated with surges of adrenaline, such as when you are skiing or racing to meet a deadline.

## **Impact of Stress**

The connection between your mind and body is apparent when you examine the impact stress has on your life.

Feeling stressed out over a relationship, money, or your living situation can create physical health issues. The inverse is also true. Health problems, whether you're dealing with high blood pressure or you have diabetes, will also affect your stress level

and your mental health. When your brain experiences high degrees of stress, your body reacts accordingly.

Serious acute stress, like being involved in a natural disaster or getting into a verbal altercation, can trigger heart attacks, arrhythmias, and even sudden death. However, this happens mostly in individuals who already have heart disease.

Stress also takes an emotional toll. While some stress may produce feelings of mild anxiety or frustration, prolonged stress can also lead to [burnout](#), [anxiety disorders](#), and [depression](#).

Chronic stress can have a serious impact on your health as well. If you experience chronic stress, your autonomic nervous system will be overactive, which is likely to damage your body.

## Stress-Influenced Conditions

- **Diabetes**
- **Hair loss**
- **Heart disease**
- **Hyperthyroidism**
- **Obesity**
- **Sexual dysfunction**
- **Tooth and gum disease**
- **Ulcers**

### **STRESS BUSTERS:**

The effects of stress tend to build up over time. Long-term stress weakens your immune system and can cause a number of health problems or make existing problems worse.

Since stress is an inevitable part of life, how can you protect your health? Here are 15 things you can do today to relieve stress:

1. **Breathe.** Take a deep breath and count to 10. Breathe in and out slowly and deeply. Deep breathing can help oxygenate your blood and clear your mind. Go even further and take a mental time out with mindful meditation.
2. **Take a walk.** A brisk walk can knock out stress and improve your mood almost instantaneously. If you're at work, even a short walk around the office, taking the stairs or standing up to stretch can help relieve stress.
3. **Laugh out loud.** Watch a funny video or find other ways to laugh. A good laugh can help decrease levels of stress-causing hormones. Also, when we laugh, we tend to stay in the moment, which is a stress reliever in itself.
4. **Join a class.** Head over to your local gym and join a class. Whether it be dancing, swimming, aerobics, or something more low key like tai chi or yoga, participating in an activity you enjoy can help relieve tension.
5. **Jump in the tub.** Warm baths are a great way to unwind and relax. For an extra calming effect, add in eucalyptus or lavender essential oils. If you're not a fan of baths, take a warm shower instead.

6. **Turn on music.** Music can do wonders to relieve stress. Whether ocean or nature sounds are your thing, or you would rather listen to pop, rock or reggae, your favorite music can help you feel good and de-stress.
7. **Get cooking.** Some people find it therapeutic to be in the kitchen cooking up a dish. Even if you aren't a top chef, cooking can be a great mood booster. Just make sure you avoid emotional eating.
8. **Try creative arts.** The creative arts can help you express yourself, calm your mind and feel better. Painting, ceramics, scrapbooking, photography and journaling can be great stress busters.
9. **Get in the garden.** There's something about being in the fresh air gardening — the sensory experience of putting your hands in the dirt — that can combat stress, and there's even some research to back it up.
10. **Get a massage or facial.** Massage can help relax tight muscles, enhance circulation and lower stress levels.
11. **Hit the sheets.** Your partner will enjoy this one. Studies have shown sex can actually decrease the physical symptoms of stress. Even physical intimacy in the form of hugging or kissing can help lower stress levels.
12. **Take a nap.** Stress and sleep issues go hand and hand. Taking a short 20-minute nap has been shown to reduce cortisol levels, which aids in stress relief.
13. **Cuddle up with a pet.** A pet's soothing presence is a great stress reliever. Studies suggest dog owners are happier overall. If you take your dog for a walk, you can the stress-relieving benefits of exercise too.
14. **Try acupuncture.** Acupuncture can provide a great sense of calm and relaxation, which in turn can help combat stress.
15. **Call a friend.** Stress management is one of the great gifts of friendship. When you're under a lot of stress, pick up the phone and talk it out with a trusted friend. You'll likely feel way better by the time you hang up.

## **EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE:**

When you think of a "perfect leader," what comes to mind?

You might picture someone who never lets his temper get out of control, no matter what problems he's facing. Or you might think of someone who has the complete trust of her staff, listens to her team, is easy to talk to, and always makes careful, informed decisions.

These are qualities of someone with a high degree of **emotional intelligence**

### **What Is Emotional Intelligence?**

Emotional intelligence or EI is the ability to understand and manage your own emotions, and those of the people around you. People with a high degree of emotional intelligence know what they're feeling, what their emotions mean, and how these emotions can affect other people.

For leaders, having emotional intelligence is essential for success. After all, who is more likely to succeed – a leader who shouts at his team when he's under stress, or a leader who stays in control, and calmly assesses the situation?

According to **Daniel Goleman** , an American psychologist who helped to popularize emotional intelligence, there are five key elements to it:

1. Self-awareness.
2. Self-regulation.
3. Motivation.
4. Empathy.
5. Social skills.

The more that you, as a leader, manage each of these areas, the higher your emotional intelligence. So, let's look at each element in more detail and examine how you can grow as a leader.

### **EMOTIONAL SCALE:**

There are three general ways to measure emotional intelligence: Self-Report, Other-Report and Ability measures. The MEIS is an ability test, which we believe is the best way to measure Emotional Intelligence. Let's take a look at each of these methods.

#### **Self Report**

Some tests use a self-report method. Self-report is the most common way to measure things such as personality traits. Personality traits include warmth, empathy, anxiety and so on. Here is an example of a self-report test of personality:

I often worry for no reason at all.	Not True	Somewhat True	Very True
It's hard to fall asleep at night.	Not True	Somewhat True	Very True
I feel down and blue a lot.	Not True	Somewhat True	Very True

How do you know if you are depressed, or not, by answering these questions? In a well-developed personality test, we would have many more questions of this type, and we would ask hundreds of people to take the test. By analyzing people's responses, we would be able to determine what a low, average and high score consisted of. For instance, we may find that by answering one question Not True, one question Somewhat True and one Very True that this score is actually well above the average score. Such a series of responses would then indicate that the person with this profile may be depressed.

Self-report tests have been around for decades and they serve a very useful purpose. As a way to measure emotional intelligence, they have serious drawbacks. Emotional Intelligence consists of a number of skills. Skills are best measured by ability tests, not by self-report.

This is akin to asking you a series of questions about your intelligence:



I am very smart.	Not True	Somewhat True	Very True
I am good at solving problems.	Not True	Somewhat True	Very True
I have a large vocabulary.	Not True	Somewhat True	Very True

This would be a great test of what you thought of your intelligence, and could be a measure of your self-image. But a test of intelligence? I don't think so.

**Other Report**

If Emotional Intelligence is all about people skills, why not ask other people what they think of us? On the face of it, this seems to be a legitimate means of testing emotional intelligence. But let's take a closer look at this method, called Observer Ratings, and in human resources, 360-Degree Assessment.

Observers, let's say team members, are given a form to complete about you. Here are some examples of questions that they may be asked:

Is able to read people well.	Not True	Somewhat True	Very True
Manages emotions effectively.	Not True	Somewhat True	Very True
Understands my emotions.	Not True	Somewhat True	Very True

One team member rates you Not True on all the items. Are you low in emotional intelligence? You certainly are, at least according to this person. But what does this person know about you? You see, their ratings of your behavior are based upon their own observations, as well as their own biases. They don't see you in all situations. They don't know how you think, or what you feel. Only you know that.

The other problems with the 360 approach are that the observers which you pick may just not like you. They have an ax to grind, and they grind that ax to sharpen the pencil as they give you uniformly low ratings. Or, if you pick people who work for you, they are probably not likely to tell you, even anonymously, that they think your leadership style reminds them of Attila the Hun.

Are 360's useless? No. They provide interesting information about how other people perceive you. They can help to better understand social skills, management skills, and so forth. They do not provide any information on whether you are emotionally intelligent or not.

**Ability Tests**

We saved the best for last. How do you determine whether you are skilled or not skilled? You test your skills of course. If you want to know if you can type, you take a typing test. A typing test does not ask you how fast you are, it does not ask a friend how fast you can type. It requires you to type.

Emotional Intelligence is a set of skills or abilities. They can be measured just like other skills or other abilities. An Emotional Intelligence ability test may have questions such as these:

A manager gives an employee unexpected negative feedback in front of other team members. How is the employee likely to feel?

Angry	Not at All	A Little	A Lot
Sad	Not at All	A Little	A Lot
Accepting	Not at All	A Little	A Lot
Happy	Not at All	A Little	A Lot

### ***Determining the Answers***

That's great, you may be thinking, but what is the correct answer? There isn't one. And I'm not being flip with you, because there really isn't a single, best answer. There are answers to this emotional intelligence test item, some of which are better than others. Here's how we figure out the best answers.

Hundreds of people have taken the MEIS. We then look at the frequency with which these people select each of the rating responses. For instance, lets say that these were the results for the example given above, listing the number of people who selected each of the ratings:

	<i>Not at All</i>	<i>A Little</i>	<i>A Lot</i>
Angry	0	25	75
Sad	10	50	40
Accepting	65	25	10
Happy	90	10	0

To score the MEIS, we would compare your responses on the test to those of the hundreds and hundreds of people in the database. If you said that the person was feeling Angry "A Lot" then you would get 75 points. If you said "Not At All" you would get 0 points, and so on.

Is this a legitimate way to score a test? We certainly think so. (We will be adding to this section later on. This issue is discussed in several research papers.)

### **Other Ways to Score the Test**

We have two other methods to score the test, but they tend to not be the best methods. I'll tell you about them so you can get a good idea of what they are about.

Expert Scoring - emotional experts indicate the best answers

Target Scoring - the person featured in the item tell us how they were feeling at the time and we use their answers as the correct answers

Each of these methods can be quite useful, and each has their own limitations. Expert scoring can tell us how people should feel, but we don't always follow such patterns of emotion. Target scoring is the self-report of emotions, the way we think we feel In reality, these three methods tend to yield pretty similar results, with the Consensus methods being the hands-down best way to score the MEIS.

## **WHAT IS THE MULTIFACTOR EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE SCALE (MEIS) ?**

The MEIS is the result of several years of research. It is also, we believe, the first and the only ability test of emotional intelligence on the market.

The MEIS, developed by Dr. Jack Mayer, Dr. Peter Salovey, and Dr. David Caruso, consists of a number of different parts. The MEIS measures the four branches of emotional intelligence, based upon the theory developed by Drs. Mayer and Salovey:

**Identifying Emotions** - the ability to recognize how you and those around you are feeling.

**Using Emotions** - the ability to generate an emotion, and then reason with this emotion.

**Understanding Emotions** - the ability to understand complex emotions and emotional "chains", how emotions transition from one stage to another.

**Managing Emotions** - the ability which allows you to manage emotions in your self and in others.

The original MEIS consisted of 12 separate sub-tests, or parts. After a series of analyses, we selected 7 sub-tests which work the best, those which have the best reliability and the best validity (see the MEIS manual for more information). These sub-tests are:

Identifying Emotions: Faces & Stories

Understanding Emotions: Blends & Progressions & Relativity

Managing Emotions: Others & Self

## **OTHER ATTEMPTS AT MEASURING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE**

Goleman provided a fun quiz on emotional intelligence which is available from the *Utne Reader* web site. The purpose of this quiz is to promote discussion on the topic as it is not a validated test.

A psychologist, Reuven Bar-On, has developed a self-report measure of a number of personality traits which he believes make up emotional intelligence. The Bar-On *EQi*, or *Emotional Quotient Inventory*, is available to qualified professionals from the test publisher MHS

There will be other tests of emotional intelligence. Many of them will probably be simple self-report measures of a grab-bag of personality traits that sound interesting

and important. Other tests will combine self-report with other report. Consider the arguments listed above when evaluating these approaches.

## **CONFLICT RESOLUTION:**

Conflict resolution skills are required for a wide range of positions across many job sectors. This requirement is based around the fact that conflict tends to reduce productivity and create a difficult work environment, leading to unwanted turnover in staff and reduced morale.

Individuals who are able to resolve conflicts are often excellent mediators, rational, and able to manage difficult personalities from a place of empathy.

### **What Is Conflict Resolution?**

Conflict resolution is the process by which two or more parties reach a peaceful resolution to a dispute.

In the workplace, there can be a variety of types of conflict:

- Conflict may occur between co-workers, or between supervisors and subordinates, or between service providers and their clients or customers.
- Conflict can also occur between groups, such as management and the labor force, or between whole departments.

Some conflicts are essentially arbitrary, meaning it doesn't matter who "wins," only that the problem is resolved so everyone can get back to work.

But some conflicts reflect real disagreements about how an organization should function.

## **CONFLICT IN HUMAN RELATION**

The **human relations** view argues that conflict is a natural occurrence in all groups and, as such, it should be managed and not eliminated. The **interactionist** view proposes that conflict can be a positive force in a group and explicitly argues that some conflict is necessary for a group to perform effectively. According to the interactionist view, conflict can be functional or dysfunctional. Functional conflict supports the goals of the group and improves its performance while dysfunctional conflict hinders group performance. Conflict can also be described by type: task, relationship, or process. Task conflict relates to the contents and goals of the work, while relationship conflict focuses on interpersonal relationships. Process conflict, in contrast, relates to how the work gets done. Studies indicate that relationship conflict is almost always dysfunctional, while low levels of process conflict and low to moderate levels of task conflict are functional.

The **process of conflict** consists of five stages: potential opposition, cognition and personalization, intentions, behaviour, and outcomes. The **first** step in the conflict process is the presence of conditions that create opportunities for conflict to arise.

These conditions may be condensed into three categories: communication, structure, and personal variables. Communication variables include semantic difficulties, misunderstandings, and noise in communication channels. Structure variables include factors such as size, degree of specialization, jurisdictional clarity, member-goal compatibility, leadership styles, reward systems, and the degree of dependence between groups. Personal variables, in contrast, include personality, emotions, and values.

The **second** state of the conflict process is cognition and personalization. For conflict to exist, perception is required. Further, the conflict must be felt and individuals must become emotionally involved.

The **third** state in the conflict process is intentions. Intentions intervene between people's perceptions and emotions and their overt behaviour and may be described according to two dimensions: cooperativeness and assertiveness. The way in which individuals handle conflict has been characterized into five distinct intentions: competing (assertive and uncooperative), collaborating (assertive and cooperative), avoiding (unassertive and uncooperative), accommodating (unassertive and cooperative), and compromising (midrange on both assertive and cooperative).

The **next** stage of the conflict process is behaviour. This is where conflict becomes visible, with statements, actions, and reactions made by the conflicting parties. Managers may control the level of conflict through conflict management and conflict stimulation techniques. Conflict management techniques include problem solving, superordinate goals, expansion of resources, avoidance, smoothing, compromise, authoritative command, altering the human variable, and altering the structural variables. In the event that a manager wishes to stimulate conflict, techniques such as communication, bringing in outsiders, restructuring the organization, and appointing a devil's advocate may be used.

The **final** stage of the conflict process is outcomes. These outcomes may be either functional, resulting in an improvement in group performance, or dysfunctional, hindering group performance.

## **The Conflict Resolution Process: APPROCHES TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

The resolution of conflicts in the workplace typically involves some or all of the following processes:

1. Recognition by the parties involved that a problem exists.
2. Mutual agreement to address the issue and find some resolution.
3. An effort to understand the perspective and concerns of the opposing individual or group.
4. Identifying changes in attitude, behavior, and approaches to work by both sides that will lessen negative feelings.
5. Recognizing triggers to episodes of conflict.
6. Interventions by third parties such as Human Resources representatives or higher level managers to mediate.

7. A willingness by one or both parties to compromise.
8. Agreement on a plan to address differences.
9. Monitoring the impact of any agreements for change.
10. Disciplining or terminating employees who resist efforts to defuse conflicts.

## **DECISION MAKING:**

### ***Meaning of Decision Making:***

Decision Making is an important function in management, since decision-making is related to problem; an effective decision-making helps to achieve the desired goals or objectives by solving such problems. Thus the decision-making lies all over the enterprise and covers all the areas of the enterprise.

Scientific decision-making is well-tried process of arriving at the best possible choice for a solution with a reasonable period of time.

Decision means to cut off deliberations and to come to a conclusion. Decision-making involves two or more alternatives because if there is only one alternative there is no decision to be made. R.S. Davar defined decision-making as "the election based on some criteria of one behavior alternative from two or more possible alternatives. To decide means 'to cut off' or in practical content to come to a conclusion."

According to McFarland **"A decision is an act of choice where in an executive forms a conclusion about what must be done in a given situation. A decision represents behavior 'chosen from a number of possible alternatives."**

Henry Sisk and Clifton Williams defined **"A decision is the election of a course of action from two or more alternatives; the decision making process is a sequence of steps leading to that selection."**

### ***Characteristics of Decision Making:***

**From the above definitions the following characteristics can be listed below:**

1. It is a process of making a choice from alternative course of action.
2. Decision is the end process preceded by deliberation and reasoning.
3. Decision-making is a focal point at which plans, policies, and objectives are translated into concrete actions.
4. Rationality is another characteristic of decision-making. The human brain with its ability to learn to remember and to relate many complex factors makes this rationality possible.

. Decision-making involves commitment. The management is committed to decision for two reasons. Firstly it leads to the stability of the concern and secondly, every decision taken becomes part of the expectations of the people involved in the organization.

6. The purpose of decision-making is to select the best alternative, which can significantly contribute towards organizational aims.

### ***Process of Decision Making:***

A manager should follow the series of systematically related steps while making decision. These steps are shown in the figure.

The decision-making process.

#### **a. Investigate The Situation:**

A detailed investigation is made on three aspects: define problem identification of objectives and diagnosis.

The first step in the decision process is determining the precise problem to be solved. At this stage, time and effort should be expended only in gathering data and information that is relevant to an identification of the real problem. Defining the problem in terms of the organizational objectives that are being blocked helps to avoid confusing symptoms and problems.

Once the problem has been defined, the next step is to decide what would constitute an effective solution. As part of this process, managers should begin to determine which parts of the problem they must solve and which they should solve. Most problems consist of several elements and a manager is unlikely to find one solution that will work for all of them.

When managers have found a satisfactory solution, they must determine the actions that will achieve it. But first, they must obtain a solid understanding of all the sources of the problem so they can formulate hypotheses about the causes.

#### **b. Develop Alternatives:**

The search for alternatives forces the manager to see things from many viewpoints, to study cases from their proper perspectives and to unearth the troubled spots of the problem. To be more meaningful, only viable and realistic alternatives should be included in the listing.

Brainstorming may be effective at this stage. This is a group approach to developing creating potential solutions to management problems several persons with a similar

interest sit down at one place and give concentrated thought to what might be done. The objective is to generate as many ideas as possible.

Criticism must be prohibited. The leader must keep the discussion moving by asking questions and making statements, which refocus attention on the problem at hand without proper guidance, discussion can degenerate into an aimless bull session.

### **c. Evaluate Alternatives and Select the Best One:**

The third step in decision making is that of analyzing and evaluating each alternative in terms of its possible consequences and since managers can never be sure of the actual outcome of each alternative, uncertainty always exists, consequently, this step is a real challenge requiring managers to call on present knowledge, past experience, foresight and scientific acumen.

### **WEIGHING POSITIVE & NEGATIVES:**

Many of us experience "analysis paralysis" when we're faced with a difficult decision. Often, we're afraid of making the "wrong" choice, so we spend a huge amount of time analyzing every possibility, and struggling to reach a conclusion.

At other times, however, we are convinced that we already know what the best solution is, so we make decisions quickly and don't consider all the alternatives.

You can avoid both of these situations by weighing up the pros and cons of a decision – a simple but effective decision-making strategy that allows you to look at the situation from different angles, consider appropriate solutions, and make a confident choice.

In this article, we'll explore how you can analyze the pros and cons of a decision quantitatively, so that you can make considered and well-informed choices.

### **About the Tool**

Weighing up pros and cons can speed up the decision-making process, improve your understanding of the situation, and help you avoid **decision-making paralysis** . Using a simple "pros" and "cons" list encourages you to approach your decision objectively, without letting your "gut feeling" impact your choice. This method is particularly useful in group decision making, when team members favor a certain idea, point of view, or plan. It encourages each person to consider other perspectives, and it can help your team reach a balanced, informed decision.

### ***Note:***

Evaluating pros and cons is useful for making quick, non-critical, **go/no-go decisions** . However, when you have to compare many different options, or explore some choices in greater depth, **decision-making tools** such as **Decision Matrix Analysis** or **Decision Tree Analysis** may be more appropriate.



## How to Use the Tool

Weighing up the pros and cons of a decision is a quick and easy process.

First, write the decision you have to make at the top of a sheet of paper. Next, divide it in half vertically, and label one side "Pros" and the other "Cons." Then, list all of the possible positive consequences of the decision in the pros column, and all the negative effects in the cons column.

It may already be obvious whether you should implement the decision at this stage. If not, consider the points you've written down, and assign a positive or negative value to each one. For example, a score of +5 may be strongly favorable, while -1 may be mildly unfavorable. Try to score as objectively as possible!

Once you've finished, add up the scores in each column, and subtract the total cons from the total pros. A positive overall score indicates that you should go ahead with the decision, while a negative one suggests you should scrap it.

Remember, always use your common sense. If you suspect that the solution isn't appropriate, take some time to identify any factors you may have missed.