

Module: Goal Setting and Decision Making

Topic: Informed Decision Making

Competency: Students will identify and demonstrate use of steps to make career decisions.

Length: 2 class periods

Objective: The student will recognize the importance of seeking information before making a decision.

Materials:

- Red, white and blue poker chips
- Clear plastic bag
- Decision Making Scenarios
- Chart paper and markers
- Optional – Video on decision-making
- Decision Making Points to Remember

Description of Activity:

A. Poker Chip Activity

- Show student a clear plastic bag filled with red, blue, and white poker chips.
- Ask for two volunteers to participate in the demonstration.
- Explain the rules.
- Participant may use only one hand. (Bag will be held open for student.)
- In 60 seconds the student will take out as many poker chips as possible.
- After the first participant completes his/her turn, change the information slightly.
- "I forgot to mention that the white chips are worth \$10; the red \$50; and blue \$100."
- After participant number two completes his/her turn, sort and add chips. Record on board.
- Have students multiply their total in dollars.
- Participant number two will have the largest amount in dollars, however not necessarily the largest number of chips. Discuss how a little knowledge about a decision can alter how one approaches a situation and how it can improve the outcome. Relate to career goals.

B. Steps to Decision Making

1. Seven Steps to Decision Making

1. Define your problem.
2. Gather information and resources.
3. List options.
4. Weigh, compare options.
5. Make a decision.
6. Make a plan of action.
7. Evaluate the decision.

2. Discuss the types of decisions and the seven- step process to decision making. Decision making starts with vision. In order to set career and personal goals, take some time to think about the knowledge you have of yourself and visualize what you want your life to look like.

3. Think about where you would like to live. Would moving to another city or even a state be an option? Do you want a family? What kind of work would you like? What would you do for leisure? What kind of lifestyle would you want? The process of answering these questions can help you to develop your own personal vision. Once you have that vision, you have the raw materials than can be turned into short-term and long-term goals. The steps to making a decision can help you with many types of career-related decisions. You can use the steps to determine:

- Which occupation field/cluster to enter
- Which training/educational program to take
- Whether you would like to own your own business
- Deciding on a part time job while in high school
- Whether or not you want to go directly to work or college immediately after high school
- Which high school courses to take
- Whether to change jobs

Knowing what you want from life will help you to set:

- Career objectives
- Personal objectives
- Community objectives
- Lifelong learning objectives
- Goals

Start with the “big picture” and then consider how your objectives will help you reach your vision. You can then makes decisions and plan short and long-term goals.

4. Group students into four teams. Give each team one of the decision-making scenarios. Each team uses the seven-step decision-making process to work through the decision-making scenarios.
5. Each group will illustrate their decision and it's outcome on a sheet of chart paper.
6. Each group will present their decision and results to the class.
7. Brainstorm as a class and record on the board:
 - Kinds of information needed to make a decision about educational choices
 - Kinds of information needed to make a decision about career choices
8. Each student will identify a problem and work through the seven-step decision-making process.

Evaluation: Students will use the seven steps of decision making to make a decision

DECISION MAKING POINTS TO REMEMBER

1. You can always change your mind about a decision you've made.
2. There is probably no **one** right choice; and few decisions are totally wrong.
3. Deciding is a **process**, not a static, one-time event. We are constantly re-evaluating in light of new information. A decision may not have had the consequences you expected so you can start the process over again.
4. When it comes to a career decision, remember you are not choosing for a lifetime; in all probability, you will have several jobs during your working life. Choose for now and don't worry whether you'll enjoy it 20 years from now. The workplace is constantly changing and you will need to change with it.
5. There's a big difference between **decision and outcome**. You can make a good decision based on the information at hand and still have a bad outcome. The decision is within your control, but the outcome is not. All decisions have the element of chance, risk.
6. Think of the worst outcome. Could you live with that? If you could live with the worst, then anything else does not seem that bad.
7. Indecision is a decision not to decide. There are probably risks involved in not deciding, in not taking action.
8. Try to avoid either/or thinking; usually there are more than two options. Be imaginative and creative.
9. You may want to consult others for information but eventually you must make up your own mind. Sometimes it may be a good idea to consult more than one source so that your information is not biased.
10. Listen to your inner voice; trust your intuition. What **feels** right? If you are making a decision that can have long time consequences, take your time. Don't rush and make an impulsive decision.

Decision Making Scenario

Scenario 1

Football season starts this weekend and Steve is excited about his school's first game. He has already purchased his ticket and has made plans to meet his friends there. His school team is playing their long-time rival and it should be the best game of the season. On the night before the game, Steve's parents receive a phone call from friends visiting in a city 30 miles away. Steve's parents have not seen these friends in years because they live in a distant state. Friday night is the only time Steve's parents can drive to see their friends. Steve's parents have asked him to stay home from the game to baby-sit his six-year-old brother. They realize Steve has made plans to go to the game but feel that he will have an opportunity to attend many more games this year. Steve's parents will let him make the final decision. What should he do?

Scenario 2

Marie is in the eighth grade at East Middle School. She earns above average grades in all of her school courses except science. Her favorite after-school activity is playing basketball. She would like to play basketball in high school next year. However, the high school says that athletes must pass all their classes in order to participate in a sport. This summer Marie can participate in a special summer science school that will help her in science. She also has been given the chance to go to basketball camp. The basketball camp takes place the exact time as the science school. Marie has two weeks before she either has to sign up for basketball camp or summer science school. What should she do?

Scenario 3

A not so popular student has invited you to a sleep over at a birthday party on Friday night. You have accepted the invitation and are planning to attend. On Wednesday, you are invited to a boy-girl party for the same Friday night by one of the most popular students in your school, someone you have hoped to become friends with. After talking with your friends, you realize most of them will attend the boy-girl party. Your parents have told you it is your decision, but that you should attend the party you responded to first. You really want to be a part of the popular crowd. What do you do?

Scenario 4

You are an eighth grade student. Since the seventh grade you have been on the Junior Varsity Cheerleading Squad. You recently tried out for the Varsity team next year. You were notified that you made the team. The cheerleading sponsor informs you that you can no longer be in band if you are cheering on Varsity football nights, since the band marches during half time at the football games. You have been in band since fifth grade and have really enjoyed being in the band and going on band trips. Next year the band is going to Disney World. What do you do?