

## **Reflective Essay: Self-Assessment on the Concepts of Decision Making**

### *Reflective essay on concepts and theories learned*

The following reflective essay is a reflection on my understanding of the concepts and theories based on decision making. This essay reflects how decision making an impact on my current job role and what could be the prospects. During my learning period, I came across different topics covered between weeks 1 to 8 from where I have selected four important topics that have influenced my decision-making process. In week 5, I came across the topic of Critical thinking, which is the ability to think clearly and rationally, understanding the links between ideas. According to Cottrell (2017), Critical thinking allows a person to use their ability to reason and become an active learner. Critical thinkers to identify, analyze, and solve problems systematically rather than making assumptions. This week I learned that critical thinking leads to good decision making and increases our level of consciousness. The concept of critical thinking is important to me because it allowed me to be aware of my strengths, weaknesses, behavior, and basic patterns of thought. Since decision making requires intellectual capability, it can have continual implications for the quality of life for many people. As opined by Hagmayer & Witteman (2017), the ability to reason complex matters can make almost all decisions we make and implement successfully.

As suggested by Rios, et.al. (2020), a successful corporate career requires a person to think critically and possess certain managerial skills. During my learning journey, I came across the topic of Managerial decision-making in week 2. Managerial decision making is an important skill for managers and leaders in an organization. A typical decision-making process involves defining the problem, identifying alternatives, and using a particular alternative to procure the best results. Generally, a manger is identified as someone who can make sound decisions, and therefore being impulsive can jeopardize the decision-making process (Chan, Wang& Ybarra, 2018). I understood that it is important to prove the facts, analyze the decisions, and take necessary opinions from people of knowledge on the matter. I also learned that there are two decision-making strategies namely cost-benefit methods and Plus-Minus-Interesting. However, it is important to note that a manager must possess conceptual skills that allow us to analyze and diagnose a situation and develop creative solutions.

As opined by Bratianu & Vtmnescu (2016) with regards to the case scenario of reflective essay, our decision-making capabilities are backed up by conceptual skills we learn which can be improved with experience. It is a common notion that best decisions are made with logic and reason. However, these decisions can be influenced by emotions, and being self-aware can allow taking the right decisions. Özek & Ferraris(2018) identify Self-awareness is knowing your emotions, personality, hidden talent, and understanding how these factors influence the decision-making process. This topic is important to me because self-awareness will help me to achieve greater balance in managing my emotions and establish more reasoned decisions. Evidence-based management is one topic that helped me to gain an overall understanding of the use of critical thinking. According to Barends & Rousseau (2018), it is a systematic approach to organizational decision-making that incorporates the use of scientific and organizational facts combined with experience and ethical judgment. I learned that this approach allows managers to critically evaluate the evidence and identify the best available practice while taking management decisions.

During my learning period, I came across the abovementioned topics and identify them as most important for my personal and professional growth. Firstly, I assume that critical thinking is one of

the basic decision-making and problem-solving technique. As a working professional critical thinking has allowed me to gather the facts, analyze the available options, and methodically evaluate them. However, it also required me to learn that the right critical is backed by the right arguments and reasoning. The power to reason allows one to distinguish biases from facts and assumptions from potential solutions (Jelihovschi, Cardoso & Linhares, 2018). Secondly, the concept of managerial decision-making has helped me gain a balance between quantifiable and unquantifiable aspects of management. This means that even when my decisions are supported by facts, there can be a lack of balance. A manager's role is to rely on their judgment and have a clear vision before taking any decision. I linked decision making and self-awareness to understand that emotional awareness helps form more reasoned decisions. If I am aware of my inherent qualities and emotions, it will reflect on my decisions. It helped me to identify gaps in my management skills and develop the skill of intuitive decision-making where I can deal with situations regardless of its complexities. Lastly, I feel that personal experience and judgment are not reliable sources of evidence that may result in negative decision making. Therefore, a manager must reason and evaluate the evidence gathered with a critical mindset as the evidence does not tell us what to decide, but it does help to make informed decisions (Živkovi, 2016). These concepts hold immense importance in shaping my interpersonal relationships and will help in my future career.

The concepts identified are crucial for my personal development and managing my interpersonal relationships. As Proctor (2018) identifies, Decision making is an important skill that allows a person to analyze the situation and critically evaluate its outcomes to achieve the best results. In my knowledge developing decision-making skills requires selecting the best decision-making process or analyze past decisions. During my professional experience, I had to take a lot of decisions either in the personal or organizational front. In a day, if I had to accomplish 10 tasks, I would like to systematically make decisions one at a time rather than being impulsive and take a wrong decision. This can be explained through a decision-making style questionnaire which helped identify my decision style. I secured an 11 score in the A-category which tells that I have a systematic style of decision-making. I understood that a systematic decision-making style will help to maintain the objectivity of the analyzed facts. This will help me to question the evidence-based on my experience and intuitions. The reflective essay examines the readings of Eurich (2018) states every professional requires to be self-aware of their emotions that help in understanding one's relationship with themselves and others. Johari Window model can be useful to improve my interpersonal and communication skills. This model helped me to acquire the trust of others by revealing myself to them and by learning about myself through feedback from others. The model has been presented in the Appendix section where the vertical direction represents information known and unknown to others and the horizontal direction represents the information known and unknown to the self. I categorize myself in the second quadrant which represents certain information about my personality that is known to others but still unknown to me. For instance, my senior manager identifies good communication as my strength, however I feel for efficient communication, this area can be reduced.

Decision making plays an important role in the life of every individual as it acknowledges the difference between right and wrong choices. It promotes self-determination on how to make good decisions either in personal or professional life. As per my personal experience and performing the activities, I gained those decisions can be made with the combination of reasoned processes and intuitions. While working I ensured that my decisions are capable of being implemented, whether at the personal or professional level. At times, I evaluated my ideas by taking opinions and feedback from others to ensure the viability of my ideas. I learned that it is important to gather enough information rather than gathering too much data. It is also important to understand your worth, trust in your skills, and intuitions backed by necessary facts. It is stated herein reflective

essay that the topics studied helped me to be self-aware and determined to be goal-oriented. Through the activities, I learned that a manager must be able to utilize resources in a better way, face complex situations, deal with business growth, innovate new ideas, achieve desired objectives, and increase overall efficiency. Since decision making is an important life skill, it should be exercised at each stage of life as it takes years to master. Considering situations where an organization is growing rapidly, its sales are high but operating costs are also rising needs fast decision making. However, it is important to consider the available options, discuss with seniors, evaluate the ideas, and finally take the right decision.

I possess good communication and interpersonal skill. In the due course, I am trying to get a better understanding of decision-making skills that will allow me to improve the quality of my decisions and to accomplish consistent good results. While improving my decision-making skills, I also identified some important skills such as technical skills, conceptual skills, planning skills, and problem-solving skills. All these skills are interrelated and help to make better-informed decisions in an organization. While different roles require different skill sets, these skills help a professional to stand out and excel at their work. Since it is the responsibility of every employee to inculcate these skills, they can become better managers and leaders in the future (Etheridge & Boursicot, 2017). I feel the need to improve my management skills that include planning and problem-solving skills. To improve these skills alongside decision-making in the future, I would first narrow down my options and select the most potent option. Then I would rate the importance of my decision and accordingly prioritize the time to be invested. The more complex is the situation, the more time, and facts it will require. The next step would be to gather all relevant information before making an informed decision. This will help to select only those facts that are useful while taking the decisions. Liebherr, et.al. (2017) state that although self-awareness is important but making decisions based on emotions can lead to impulsive and poor choices. Every decision has a positive and a negative side which needs skills to understand them and distinguish between the two.

The entire reflective essay can be summarized under the topic of decision making. This paper highlights the necessity of making informed decisions and being self-aware of one's self. Generally, the decision-making process is accomplished by higher authorities in an organization who are required to make strategic decisions. However, decision making is required by every individual that enables them to act promptly in any given situation and improve their overall efficiency. The concepts learned will help to improve the managerial skills imperative of all life situations. According to my learning experience, the power to the right decision-making techniques can save valuable time. Managers supervise the workload and have responsibilities to handle. Therefore, excellent decision making can save time. It allows them to prioritize the decisions either based on their instinct or research. This can help to improve the associated managerial skills important for personal and professional development. It will not only allow an individual to think critically but analyze each fact to eliminate the unnecessary ones. In the professional front, employees require a well-informed manager that can steer decisions in the right direction. To self-discovery of career exploration, one must identify their values and learn how they influence the goals and relationships with others. It helps to drive successful meaning to life and allows an individual to become successful. Since decisions are unique and can have major implications on personal or professional life, they must be given a thoughtful consideration. A good career requires an individual to value their qualities, believe in them, and utilize their skills as and when necessary. This will increase the effectiveness in decision-making to maximize effectiveness at the workplace. It is also important to identify the gaps in managerial skills and improve them with experience and practice.

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