



Mini-course in career decision-making for year 11-13 and post-16 college learners

Workbook 4 of 6

# Decisionmaking styles

## Decisionmaking has different dimensions

You might hear people describe how they make decisions with one word ("I'm a *procrastinator*", "I'm a *perfectionist*"). But there are lots of different aspects involved, which we call dimensions.

Two 'perfectionists' might be different when it comes to other dimensions of decision-making. For example, one might talk things through with other people, and the other might work alone. One might be super-speedy reaching a decision, and the other might take a long time.

It's thought that there are likely to be 11 dimensions involved in career decision-making<sup>2</sup>. Understanding your habits means looking at each of these aspects.

## Step 2: Spot how you have tended to make decisions in the past

- Each dimension is a scale from 1-5. There's a description at each end of each scale.
- Where do your habits sit?
- Tick one box on each scale to represent your usual decision-making habits.

### Gathering information

How much information do you like to have?

|                                  |   |   |   |                                  |
|----------------------------------|---|---|---|----------------------------------|
| 1 - I gather minimal information | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 - I gather as much as possible |
|                                  |   |   |   |                                  |

### Using information

How do you use the information you gather?

|                                      |   |   |   |                                       |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1 - I step back, consider it overall | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 - I think about each aspect in turn |
|                                      |   |   |   |                                       |

### Control

How much control over making decisions do you think you have?

|                                  |   |   |   |                             |
|----------------------------------|---|---|---|-----------------------------|
| 1 - I leave it to chance or luck | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 - I'm in complete control |
|                                  |   |   |   |                             |

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<sup>2</sup> Gati et al, (2010), Journal of Vocational Behavior, Volume 76, Issue 2, pp. 277-291

## Effort

How much effort do you tend to put into the process?

1 -  
Minimal effort

2

3

4

5 -  
Maximum effort

## Responsibility

Do you tend to take the responsibility for making your own decisions?

|   |   |   |   |                                 |
|---|---|---|---|---------------------------------|
| 1 - Often others make the choice for me | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 - Usually it's all down to me |
|   |   |   |   |                                 |

## Pleasing others

How important is it for you to make decisions that please other people?

|                                      |   |   |   |  |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|--|
| 1 - Other people aren't a big factor | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 - It's all about pleasing other people |
|                                      |   |   |   |  |

## Perfectionism

When you make decisions, how much is it about getting a perfect result?

|                             |   |   |   |  |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|--|
| 1 - I don't aim for perfect | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 - It's all about striving for perfection |
|                             |   |   |   |  |

## Compromise

After you've made a decision, how willing are you to compromise if you encounter difficulties?

1 - Once I've decided, I don't change at all                      2

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## Step 3 Reflect on your answers

1. Add in your own scores from Step 2
2. Read and reflect on the description for each dimension. Every dimension has potential positive and negative consequences across the scale that *might* be the case for you. Only you can decide if the suggestions are relevant for you.
3. Decide if this is a habit t



Procrastination If your score is nearer to 1 (you tend not to procrastinate)

1 you might find you miss the benefits of thinking things through while doing other stuff

|                 |   |  |  |  |
|-----------------|---|--|--|--|
| Pleasing others | <p>If your score is nearer to 1 (other people's feelings aren't usually a big factor in your decision making):</p> <p>→ you might overlook the impact of your decisions on others, although at least you'd be likely to choose something that relates to your interests, skills and values.</p> <p>If your score is nearer to 5 (you usually prioritise pleasing other people):</p> <p>→ you might end up doing something that you don't really want to do, although at least it could make those around you happy.</p> |  |  |  |
|-----------------|---|--|--|--|

Perfectionism If your score is nearer to 1 (you tend to not aim for perfect):

→ you might set your expectations lower than necessary and achieve less than you could, although you might find it less stressful.

If your score is nearer to 5