# Making Effective Decisions: King’s Speech

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| * understand your own level of responsibility and empower others to make decisions where appropriate * analyse and use a range of relevant, credible information from internal and external sources to support decisions * invite challenge and where appropriate involve others in decision making * display confidence when making difficult decisions, even if they prove to be unpopular * consult with others to ensure the potential impacts on end users have been considered * present strong recommendations in a timely manner outlining the consideration of other options, costs, benefits and risks | Example: setting up King’s speech document to include everyone and distribute responsibility.  Situation: New King’s Speech was being presented as Labour had just won the election. I suggested to my team that we should document the speech with the new upcoming bills which pertained to our current policy research areas, given that we wanted to generate visibility around the work we did. We should explain what future implications are, as we are the Horizon Scanning Team  Task: Because I was researching Data Regulation, Privacy and Ethics, I tasked myself with writing an explainer for the Cyber Security and Resilience Bill and what was is now the Data Use and Access Bill.  Action:  Created the central document for the team to contribute ideas to prior to handing out and then brought up the issue at one of our group meetings.  Although I had already been researching what was likely in the two bills for my main research project, this gave me a chance to flesh out my ideas and put them in a more user-friendly format. In particular, I noted how important the new Smart Data regulation would be for future Fraud, Error and Debt. One big new application of Smart Data is accessing consumer records to ban them from gambling sites – this would hopefully help people from worsening their situation. The better FCA coordination with Smart Data regulators also helps to keep people on benefits from entering scammy payment relations.  Result: The result was that, once everyone had finalised and finished their contributions to the main King’s Speech explainer, I presented it to the DWP department at a weekly meeting and circulated the document around. The team received strong praise from our directing senior civil servant, communicated to us from our Grade 6, as well as the rest of the directorate. |

# Seeing the Big Picture: PESTLE and Research

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| * understand the strategic drivers for your area of work * align activities to contribute to wider organisational priorities * remain alert to emerging issues and trends which might impact your work area * seek out and share experiences to develop knowledge of the team’s business area * understand how the strategies and activities of the team create value and meet the diverse needs of all stakeholders | Example: using the PESTLE framework to break down my research task into chunks so that I could synthesise everything.  Situation: I had just joined the team. I was going to have to research Data Regulation, Privacy and Ethics and how it related to Fraud, Error and Debt at DWP.    Task: I had to adapt to the flow and style of an existing team product, the Trend Deck, which collected our core predictions about various different policy areas. This involved doing my own research, but also getting involved in other colleague’s research, for example, getting involved in my colleague who was researching Housing futures, or Geopolitics futures and giving them my own expertise, gained from my interest in Comparative Politics and Housing Economics.  Action: The best tool that I used was the PESTLE framework, which broke my research down into the Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Ethical components. By breaking down my research like this, it allowed me to capture the entire scope of my policy area. It also sped up my progress and also made the end result easier to convey to the team and eventually it made it easier to add to the trend deck.  At the same time, I was also helping team members by contributing to their research with my expertise: in my spare time I’d written notes on Housing Policy, specifically on brownfield regeneration.  Result: My policy research document took into account recent trends and was not over focused on one specific area, taking broad account of each moving part of new policy implementation. It fit in with the team’s Trend Deck and I didn’t have to do much updating when submitting it. |

# Delivering at Pace: Explainers and Research

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| * show a positive approach to keeping the whole team’s efforts focused on the top priorities * promote a culture of following the appropriate procedures to ensure results are achieved on time whilst still enabling innovation * ensure the most appropriate resources are available for colleagues to use to do their job effectively * regularly monitor your own and team’s work against milestones ensuring individual needs are considered when setting tasks * act promptly to reassess workloads and priorities when there are conflicting demands to maintain performance * allow individuals the space and authority to meet objectives, providing additional support where necessary, whilst keeping overall responsibility | Example: Working with my research project while at the same time completing explainers for new policy for the whole department which needed to be delivered quickly.  Situation: When I first joined my internship the election was going to take place in three days.  Task: Up to and following the election, I was tasked with writing explainers for important new policy announcements – most important were the King’s Speech and the Chancellor’s maiden speech, although there were also many think tank papers being published that week.  Action: I talked with my manager about the new workload and we worked out a new timeline to tackle it. Regardless, I’m quite fast at writing and evaluating papers so the new task could be managed quite easily.  Result: Department was very happy with my explainers – me and my manager circulated them and I received good comments from the people who had specifically requested those think-tank articles, e.g., to be evaluated. |

# Communicating and Influencing: Workshops and Simplification

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| * communicate in a straightforward, honest and engaging manner - choosing appropriate styles to maximise understanding and impact * encourage the use of different communication methods, including digital resources and highlight the benefits, including ensuring cost effectiveness * ensure communication has a clear purpose and takes into account people’s individual needs * share information as appropriate and check understanding * show positivity and enthusiasm towards work, encouraging others to do the same * ensure that important messages are communicated with colleagues and stakeholders respectfully, taking into consideration the diversity of interests | Example: Workshops held to introduce the team to my research.  Situation: As part of my research project, I was going to have to present my final research to my team in a series of workshops.  Task: I was going to conduct two workshops to explain my ideas to everyone. I knew that I was going to have to deliver my technical research, on legal precedent and on the development of Smart Data, to a non-technical audience.  Action: I prepared how I was going to break down complex topics into more manageable chunks which could be understood better by everyone. One strong example is talking about how Open Banking, for example, forces large banks to host an API for licensed FinTech companies to utilise. Once you know what all the parts mean, it’s not too hard to understand. But I broke down what an API was, what the data that the FinTech companies wanted to access was, and how it all worked with government licensing.  Result: I was very proud of my explanatory skills. Thinking back to my explanations of technical knowledge, a lot of the older generation that I wanted to include in my presentation who I worried wouldn’t understand anything all told me that they felt they could follow along very well. Their valuable feedback from their time at DWP allowed me to update some research notes and synthesise a broader perspective. One of the most important things they talked about was connecting public-private pensions using Smart Data.  On my feedback, my manager also complemented me on my ability to break down complex topics – she was one of the people who I was trying hard to take along on the more technical side. |

# Extra Questions

Difficult decision

* Deciding whether my research was important enough to raise directly with people working on the new DWP bill to be presented to parliament. My manager assured me that she’d talked to the departmental legal team but I thought that some of the research I’d done indicated a possible oversight by the DWP with regards to what is known colloquially as the “Snooping Bill” so raised it when I had the chance. They thanked me for my proactivity and told me that no one had mentioned this before.

Why are you interested

* Last year invigorated my interest in leading evidence-based discussions and doing research into new topics. I think I’m good at it and the focus on Data Regulation, Privacy and Ethics was particularly interesting which is why I think Smart Data is a good route.
* DBT works across businesses to help grow and flourish – I think it’s important to provide strong foundations, particularly in Smart Data since so much of the value added in the UK is from technological improvements – FinTech has been an industry the UK has a comparative advantage in for a long time, it’s often at the forefront, and I want to help continue that.

Consider the end user

* King’s speech documentation for the entire department,
* Trend deck for the entire department.
  + Situation: trend deck
  + Task: contribute to the deck in a coherent way as it will be distributed to the whole department
  + Action: tested my ideas and presentation in various workshops
  + Result: workshops were successful and my colleagues told me I had a way of breaking down complex ideas. [**LOOK AT COMMUNICATING AND INFLUENCING]**