

# Making educated decisions

COMMUNICATION

LEVEL  
Upper-intermediate

NUMBER  
EN\_BE\_3406X

LANGUAGE  
English

lingoda

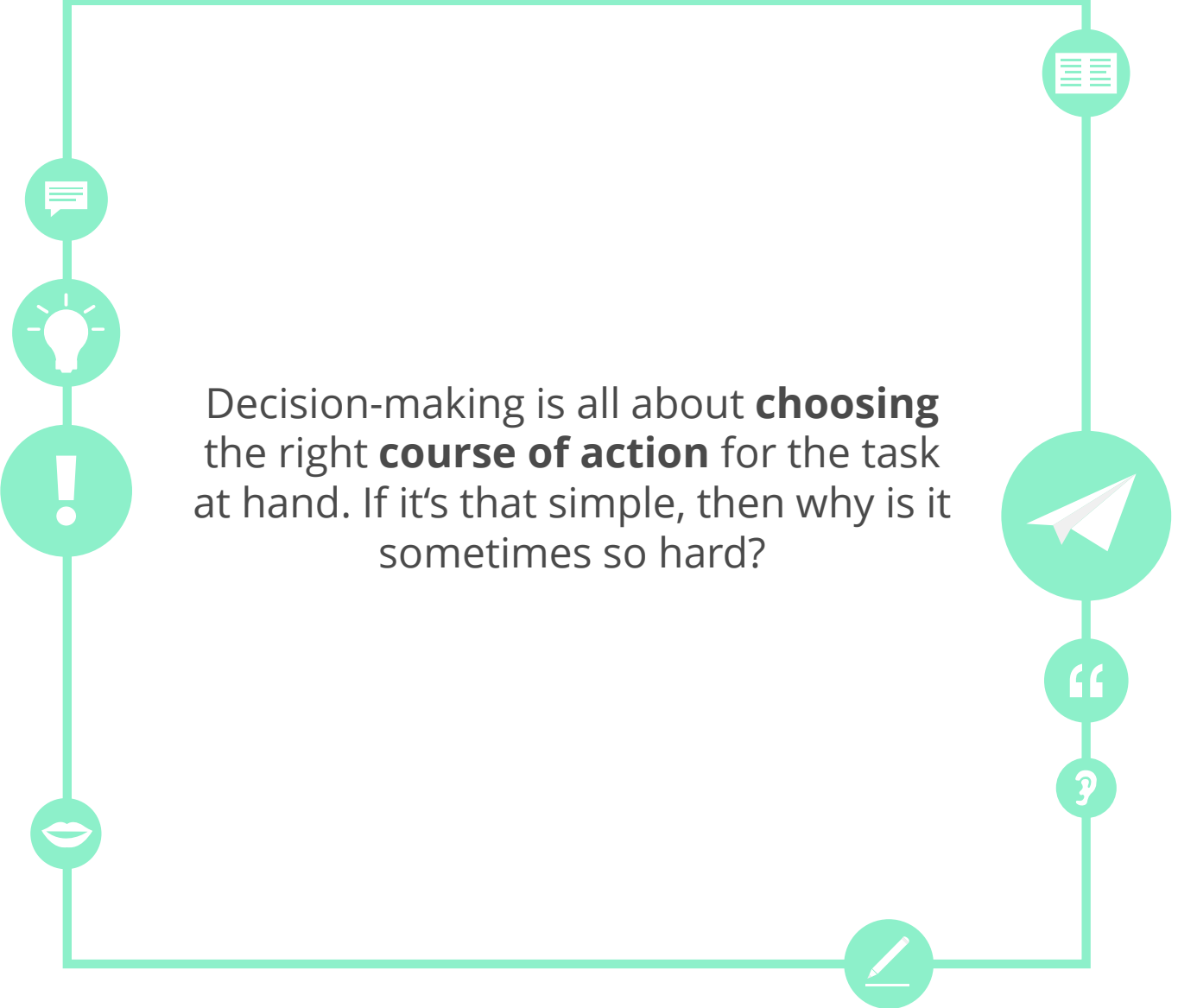




## Goals

- Can understand typical phrases related to decision-making
- Can use new phrases and understanding to signal an open attitude towards new ideas





Decision-making is all about **choosing** the right **course of action** for the task at hand. If it's that simple, then why is it sometimes so hard?



## Decision-making

**In your own words,  
what is effective  
decision-making?**

intuition

reason

Two ways people make decisions are with **intuition** and with **reason**. What are the **pros** and **cons** of each of these methods?



Never trust your **intuition** when you have **reason** on your side – or is it the other way around?



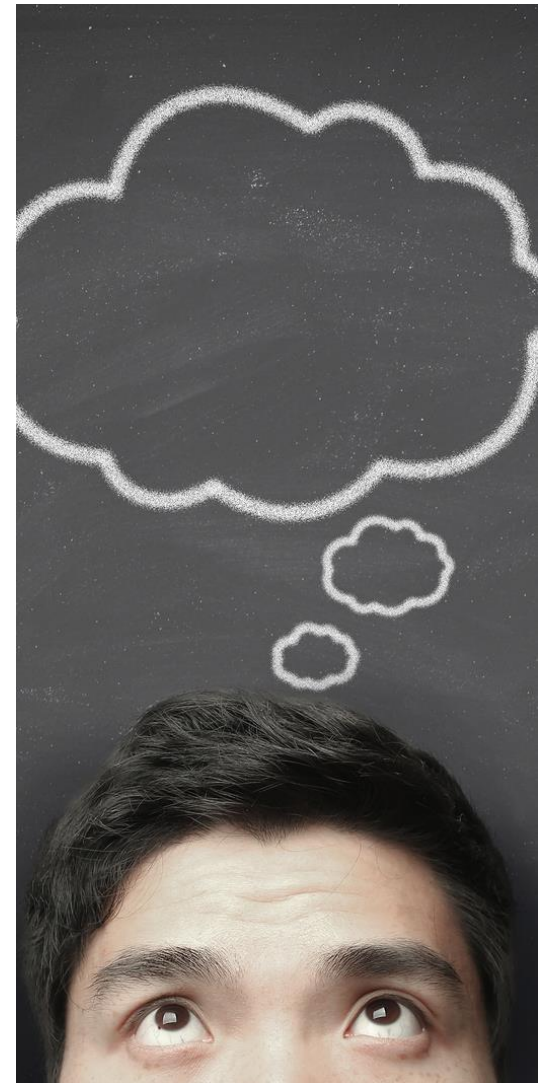
## What kind of decision-maker are you?

	YES	NO
1. I prefer to make decisions based on <b>hard facts</b> .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When it comes down to it, I usually make decisions based on <b>my gut feeling</b> .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. At work, I sometimes <b>get lost in the details</b> , which can be a challenge when it comes to making decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When making a decision, I prefer to <b>keep the bigger picture in mind</b> .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Making decisions is sometimes hard for me. It's hard to <b>rule out</b> one option over another.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Making decisions is a <b>piece of cake</b> . I always make them quickly, although sometimes maybe too quickly!	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



## What kind of decision-maker are you?

1. If you answered yes to number one, you might be a **rational** decision-maker who is led more by **reason** and **logic**.
2. If you answered yes to number two, you might be an intuitive decision-maker who is led more by a **gut feeling** or a **hunch** than hard facts.
3. If you answered yes to number three, you might get **overwhelmed** with situations when there is too much information and too many details.
4. If you answered yes to number four, you might be more of an **intuitive** decision-maker who is less concerned with every minor detail.
5. If you answered yes to number five, you may sometimes tend to be **indecisive**.
6. If you answered yes to number six, you are probably a **decisive** person.





Over to you

**What did your quiz results say about you?**

**Do you identify with any of the descriptions on the previous slide?**





## Vocabulary in context

**Fill in the gaps using the vocabulary below. If you get confused, read back over the quiz questions and results to see each word in context.**

1. Virginia is a very \_\_\_\_\_ person. She never needs very long to make a decision.
2. I don't know the answer, so I guess I'll just go with my \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Tom never makes decisions unless he has the \_\_\_\_\_.
4. If you can't decide, sometimes it's a good idea to \_\_\_\_\_ what you know you don't want, to make the process easier.
5. My husband is often \_\_\_\_\_. He can never make up his mind!
6. I had a \_\_\_\_\_ our team would come in first, and I was right.
7. When making decisions, it's important to \_\_\_\_\_ so you don't \_\_\_\_\_!
8. The presentation was a \_\_\_\_\_. I don't know why I was so worried about it.
9. When presented with too much information, many people feel \_\_\_\_\_.

**hard facts**

**gut feeling**

**get lost in the details**

**overwhelmed**

**rule out**

**piece of cake**

**indecisive**

**decisive**

**hunch**

**keep the big picture in mind**



## Over to you

**In what ways is decision-making important in the business world? Think of as many examples as possible.**



## Listening activity



Now listen to your teacher reading a text on decision-making in the work place.  
Get ready to **summarise the text** in your own words once they've finished.



## Reflect on the text

**Now summarise the text.  
Do you agree with the point it  
makes?**

**What other aspects are  
important when making  
decisions in the workplace?  
Use the prompts below if you  
need inspiration.**

other people

too much or too  
little  
information

**vested**  
interests

business goals



## Decision-making in a meeting

Tim, Carol, and Richard are making decisions on the company's new marketing strategy. Read their conversation and pay close attention to the words and phrases in bold.



The way I see it, **the issue at hand** is how aggressive we would like our marketing strategy to be. I know our team leader is **in favour of** a less aggressive approach. Carol, Richard – **any thoughts on this?**



To be honest, **I'm in two minds** about this. On the one hand, I agree with you that a softer approach is more appealing. However, in the end I think we should also **consider** a more aggressive approach as well, since it better matches our competitors.



**I'm with Carol on that**, Tim. As much as I'd personally prefer a gentler approach, I **don't** feel as if we **have any other option**. Our team is **unanimous** on the decision.



I **hear what you're both saying**, and you have some good points. I'll **be back you up** when I meet with the team leader tomorrow morning.



## Vocabulary for decision-making situations

the issue at hand

to be in favour of

Any thoughts on  
this?

to be in two minds

to consider

I'm with... on that

to not have any  
other option

I hear what you're  
both saying

to back someone  
up



## Reword the sentences below using the words and phrases from the previous slide

1. Our team said yes to the decision.



Our team **is in favour of** the decision.

2. I have two different opinions on the direction our company is heading in.



\_\_\_\_\_

3. An important topic to discuss is company bonuses.



\_\_\_\_\_

4. We should think about his point of view.



\_\_\_\_\_

5. I'm listening to both of you.



\_\_\_\_\_

6. I agree with Sally on this issue.



\_\_\_\_\_

7. Do you have any ideas about the topic?



\_\_\_\_\_

8. There is no other decision we can make.



\_\_\_\_\_



## What about you?

**Think about the decision-making process and discuss each of the following questions.**



1

How does the decision-making process generally go in your job?





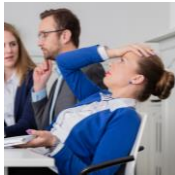
## What about you?

**Think about the decision-making process and discuss each of the following questions.**



1

How does the decision-making process generally go in your job?



2

Have you ever been in a situation where it was very challenging to make the right decision? What happened?



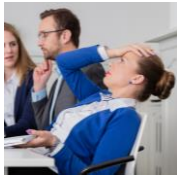
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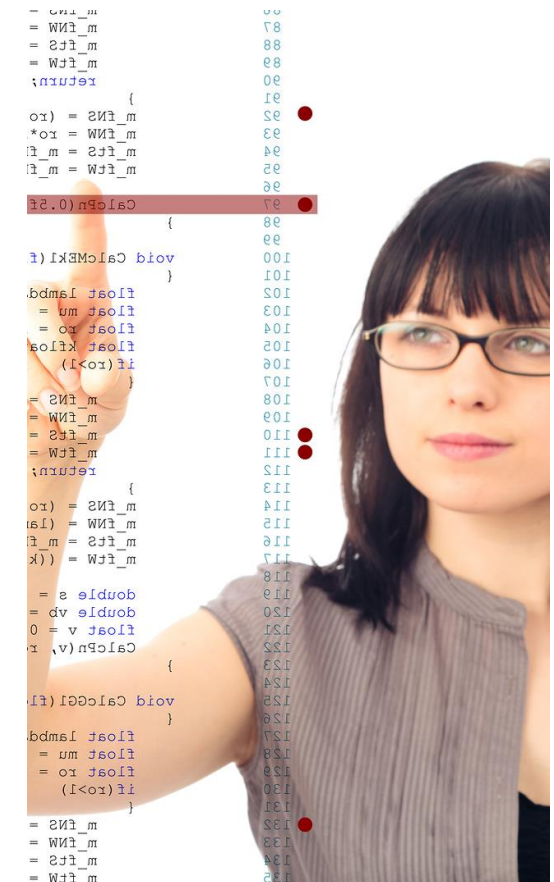


3

Have you ever been in strong disagreement with a decision one of your colleagues wanted to make?



Tim said that we were going to start on the new project ahead of schedule. He asked whether you and Sonja were planning on getting involved. He thought that you might be too busy, but I told him otherwise. I advised him to hold off until the two of you can discuss it in person.





## Reporting information

Now look at the text again.

Tim **said that** we were going to start on the new project ahead of schedule. He **asked whether** you and Sonja were planning on getting involved. He **thought that** you might be too busy, but I told him otherwise. I **advised him to wait** until the two of you can talk.



What grammar function is Carol using in the sections placed in bold? Do you know anything about it?



## Reported speech

The sentences are examples of **reported speech**. Reported speech is used when you tell someone what another person said, thus **reporting back** what they have said.

What they said	Reported speech
I want to know if you have time.	Tom <b>said he wanted</b> to know if you have time.
I advise you to wait.	The security guard <b>advised us to</b> wait.
We're having a great quarter.	The CEO <b>remarked that</b> we are having a great quarter.



## Reported speech

Reported speech follows **three** different patterns:

- **Reporting verb** followed by **if** or **whether**: He **asked if** we had arrived on time.
- **Reporting verb** followed by **that**: He **assumed that** we had. This is the most **common** form of reported speech.
- **Reporting verb** followed by **to-infinitive**: She **instructed us to wait**.

Below is a list of **reporting verbs** that follow these patterns. Please note that these are just some examples, and not the entire list.

Followed by if or whether	Followed by that	Followed by to-infinitive
to say	to agree	to advise
to ask	to believe	to ask
to know	to consider	to instruct
to see	to deny	to teach
	to state	to warn



## Reported speech



Please note a **tense shift** happens in reported speech. This means the **tense** of the **subordinate clause** may need to be **adapted** if we are reporting a sentence which was **said in the past**.

**Example:** "She said: 'I will finish tomorrow'" → "She said that she **would** finish tomorrow."

Tense shift happens in the following way if the sentence reported was said in the past:

Tense of statement	→	Reported speech
Present simple	→	Past simple
Present continuous	→	Past continuous
Present perfect	→	Past perfect
Future	→	Present conditional (would)



## Your turn

Transform the following quotes from each person into reported speech.



**Deepak:** Can you please call me tomorrow?



**Rachel:** I believe we've covered everything in the meeting that was on the agenda.



**Simon:** I agree with Michael on this point.



**Vivian:** Jim warned him of the consequences.





## Reported speech

Go back to the dialogue on slide 19. Read back over it again and then use reported speech to explain what happened to a colleague who missed the meeting.





## Using reported speech to make an argument

**Read over the opinions below given by experts in concentration psychology. Use these opinions to argue against your colleague, who wants to bring in new office rules restricting employee breaks, which you don't agree with.**



Different approaches work for different people. While one employee might be happy taking only ten minutes out of their day and will still concentrate, other individuals need to and should give their minds as many breaks as they need.



In an extensive study carried out last year, it was proven that in order to work efficiently, an individual should ideally take a short break every forty minutes.



Every individual works differently and this is a fact that managers fail to respect across the board. To force an employee to sit in a certain way or eat at specific times will only interfere with his or her enthusiasm, and by extension their productivity.



## Reflect on the lesson

Take a moment to review any new **vocabulary, phrases, language structures** or **grammar points** you have come across for the first time in this lesson.

Review them with your teacher one more time to make sure you don't forget!





## Answer key (1/2)

### Exercise p. 9

1. decisive

2. gut feeling

3. hard facts

4. rule out

5. indecisive

6. hunch

7. keep the big picture in mind, get lost in the details

8. piece of cake

9. overwhelmed

### Exercise p. 15

2. **I'm in two minds** about the direction our company is heading in.

3. **The issue at hand** is company bonuses.

4. We should **consider** his point of view.

5. **I hear what you're both saying.**

6. **I'm with** Sally on this issue.

7. **Any thoughts on this?**

8. We don't have any other options.



## Answer key (2/2)

### Exercise p. 24

Deepak asked if I could call him tomorrow.

Rachel said that she believed they had covered everything in the meeting that was on the agenda.

Simon said that he agreed with Michael on that point.

Vivian said that Jim had warned him of the consequences.



## Transcription

### Exercise p. 11

Making the right decisions in business is very important since they build foundations for further work in the future. In this sense, good decision-making is a very important tool for achieving better communication as it serves to fix elements that help a team collaborate and coordinate their work. This is why decisions should always be clearly formulated and include careful thought and consideration. An ideal decision is strong, comprehensive and does not need revision down the line. Finally, a decision needs to be binding: the person or team that makes a decision must always assume responsibility for it. This is why clarity in the wording of the decision is also very important, especially if problems arise. To ensure a clear course of action, a decision should be "educated"; that is, it considers the point of view of experts who know about the topic at hand. In order to make an educated decision, you need to do your research, and perhaps even consult people who are well-informed in the area of focus.





## Reflect on the lesson

**Tense shifts in reported speech can sometimes be challenging for students. Go back over the lesson and think about what you found easier and more difficult.**

A vertical sheet of white paper with a spiral binding on the left side and horizontal lines for writing.





## Reported speech practice

**Write an e-mail to a colleague using reported speech to tell them what everyone decided at the last meeting. Write 5 to 6 sentences.**

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To:

Subject:

Dear Louise,



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