

# 500 words Making Effective Decisions

1. Take responsibility for making effective and fair decisions, in a timely manner.
2. Analyse and research further information to support decisions.
3. Talk to relevant people to get advice and information when unsure how to proceed.
4. Explain how decisions have been reached in a clear and concise way, both verbally and in writing.
5. Demonstrate the consideration of all options, costs, risks and wider implications, including the diverse needs of end users and any accessibility requirements.

When I worked as a Team Leader at Data Centre, I encountered a high velocity situation that required effective decision-making. It was a day like any other until the sound of a fire alarm stopped all activities. Every Data Centre is subject to regulations and standards. At the time our Fire Suppression System was out of order. To my surprise, I realized that I had only two options (1). I could call the Fire Brigade, costing the company more than £1000 for what might be a false alarm, or I could silence the fire panel, risking the chance of a real fire. I looked for solutions.

Taking responsibility for deciding, I reached out to colleagues in other departments to gather more information (3). Understanding that the best solutions often emerge from collaboration and open communication, I asked advice from maintenance and operations teams (2, 3). Their insights were invaluable and helped me form a well-rounded perspective.

Simultaneously, I checked the Business Service Monitoring system for any signs of a real fire (2). BSM gives a real time monitoring, business-at-a-glance view, where I can see the health of all our end-to-end services in one place on the computer screen. The absence of any alarming data provided some reassurance, but the decision still weighed heavily on my mind (1). I made a series of calls, engaging in fast but thorough discussions with various team members (3). This collaborative approach ensured that no critical detail was overlooked.

After careful consideration and collaborative consultation, it was safe to assume that the alarm was false, and the fire panel could be silenced without the Fire Brigade. This decision, while seemingly against company policy, was based on the data and collective insights gathered in those critical moments. Sure enough, I learned that my decision was correct. I documented the incident and completed a detailed Incident Report, outlining my decision-making process and the rationale behind it (4, 5). This report included all the data from the monitoring systems and input from my colleagues (1, 4).

Initially, my Line Manager did not approve of my decision. He was concerned about the potential risks and the deviation from standard procedures. However, I was prepared to defend my actions. I highlighted a gap in our current policy that needed addressing (5).

During a follow-up meeting, I presented my findings and the detailed report (4). I explained how the collaborative approach and real-time data analysis led to a well-informed decision (4). I stressed the importance of updating our policy to allow for flexibility in similar situations, where immediate context and data could guide a more effective response. My Line Manager listened attentively, and I could see his perspective shifting.

Ultimately, I was able to change my Line Manager's perspective. He acknowledged the validity of my points and recognized the importance of updating our policies. This not only validated my decision but also contributed to a more efficient policy framework in the future.

By considering all options, costs, risks, and wider implications involved and by making my decision effectively, I drove positive change within the organization.