Further readings and templates

# Chapter 14: Problem solving and creativity

## Stage 4 - Make a balanced choice

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| BOX: FOR YOU TO DO  In implementing solutions, managers often need to make some important decisions – in fact, the authority to make decisions is one issue that separates managers from others working in the organisation. These might be decisions about people, about the use of resources, about personal issues in life or about your career, and there are certain decisions which are hard for most people. Think about the following questions and identify the implications for any decisions you might wish to implement later on.  1. To what extent do you actively avoid making decisions that will hurt other people?  2. If you are chairing a discussion, are you more likely to give your views first and then allow others to disagree with you, or to ask for others’ views and then build on those?  3. Would you prefer to delegate a difficult decision to someone else, or to make it yourself?  4. Would you be likely to blame the need for a particular decision on others if you know that others might disagree with you?  5. If you have two ideas which seem equally good, how easy do you find it to decide which option to take?  6. To what extent are others’ probably reactions likely to influence the decisions that you make?  7. Under what circumstances are you likely to be able to admit that you made a wrong decision?  8. Which do you find more difficult – admitting that a decision was wrong or admitting that it was implemented poorly?  9. If you are presented with information that contradicts your experience, are you likely to question the information, or question the general validity of your experience?  10. If a decision needs to be made quickly but the relevant information takes a long time to collect, what are you likely to do?  11. Would you prefer to make decisions on your own, or with others’ advice?  12. To what extent would you be able to delegate a simple decision to someone else to make?  The answers that you give to questions such as these – and the reasons you give those particular answers – will have an impact on the kind of leader you become. Some leaders can seem hard and emotionless, but making tough decisions which affect others is a key part of being an adept leader – and in reality, whilst many make such decisions as a part of daily life, few actually get a sense of happiness from doing so.  The ability to delegate and involve others is important, especially if they are going to be involved in implementing the decisions. It is not always possible, however (e.g. where an important decision is likely to directly impact on those same people, or where there are a number of political or selfish motives), and so a leader needs to understand when to involve others, and when that involvement is unwise. |

Depending on the scale and nature of the problem(s), the leader may need to simply introduce a new process, or to engage a part or all of the organisation in some kind of change management process – perhaps even suggesting that some structural or cultural elements of the organisation might need to change.