

7 Steps to Decision-Making

Choosing a potential career path can be overwhelming. This exercise shows that a seven-step decision-making process works for an everyday decision, like deciding what to wear, as well as for bigger decisions, like choosing a career.

Create a Plan & Set Goals

Audience: In Depth

Length: 30 minutes

The 7 STEPS

- 1** Identify the decision to be made (*What shall I wear to work today?*)
- 2** Gather the information (*What's the weather going to be like? Which clothes are clean?*)
- 3** Identify the alternatives (*Either my blue suit, my gray pants, or blue jeans and a t-shirt.*)
- 4** Weigh the evidence (*Blue suit is right for today's weather, but too dressy for my activities. I feel like wearing jeans and a t-shirt, but I have an appointment later and that would not be appropriate dress. My gray pants are a good compromise, but I must find a matching shirt.*)
- 5** Choose among the alternatives (*Gray pants and white shirt.*)
- 6** Take action (*Iron clothes and get dressed.*)
- 7** Review and evaluate the decision (*Look in the mirror, decide it looks good, but might need to change shoes.*)

Directions: The worksheet on the next page uses the seven steps to help you make an education or career decision. Fill in your information for each of the steps.

1 **Identify the decision to be made** (Examples: *Whether to go to a two- or four-year college; where I want to live; what major to choose; go into military, etc.*)

2 **Gather the Information** (*Gather facts about myself — interests, abilities, values; gather facts about career options — salary, work setting, education or training required; sources to get more information?*)

3 **Identify the alternatives** (*What college, training program or career options suit me best?*)

4 **Weigh the evidence** (*Consider the pros and cons; what are the short-term and long-term outcomes; recognize obstacles; what resources are available to meet my goals?*)

5 **Choose among the alternatives** (*From Step 4, generate a list of possible career or college choices.*)

6 **Take action** (*Make a definite plan — visit a work environment, visit schools or talk to college representatives.*)

7 **Review and evaluate the decision** (*Did I consider all the important factors? Are there new alternatives I need to consider?*)
