guidedinsights
breakthrough conversations for bottom-line results

MAY CONSULTING
CLEAR PERSPECTIVES FOR PROGRESS

Evaluating the decision after it's made

Now that your team has arrived at a well thought out decision, what now? Preparing for what comes next can be as important as making the decision itself. After all, a decision means nothing unless people act on it. Here are some questions to ask yourself to help you evaluate the decision at critical steps along the way.

- ✓ **What do early indicators reveal?** Identify what measures or actions will give you the earliest indications that your decision was the right one. Capturing and sharing these early results can help build a momentum of support for your decision, even among early non-supporters. For example, if you've decided to drive higher volume from existing customers through assignment of dedicated account managers, early indicators might include positive customer reaction to account manager announcements, increased contact points within the customer organization, or more deal prospects in sales pipeline versus previous quarters.. Tracking early indicators helps avoid surprises and gives early warning if things are not playing out as expected.
- ✓ **What's the matter?** If your early indicators aren't promising, find out what's standing in the way of success. Does everyone know what the decision is, and what it means for them? Have people reneged on commitments to take certain actions as a result? Are some people resisting the needed to make needed changes? Before you conclude that the decision was flawed, assess the quality of implementation.
- ✓ **How will you know it's worked?** What are the ultimate success measures for determining whether your decision was the right one? At what point can you declare success (or failure)? Can you declare victory once you've achieved a certain measurable goal (e.g. increasing sales by 20%, reducing the number of falls by 50%, increase customer satisfaction to 99%)? Or maybe your metric is more time-based (e.g. by the end of this quarter, in the next six months, over the next two years)?
- ✓ **How will we track progress and who will do it**? What methods will we use to tell us how we're doing over time? Who's in charge of monitoring outcomes? Is it one person, or several? If more than one, how do they tie together their results? How do they report on progress, and to whom?
- ✓ **What's the worst that can happen?** Borrow an idea from quality engineering, and consider a failure mode and effects analysis (FMEA). For each major aspect of the decision, consider all possible scenarios of what could go wrong, why it would go wrong, and how you could minimize or avoid the negative consequences, if they materialized. Such consequences won't necessarily mean your decision was a bad one, but this kind of analysis can help mitigate the risks associated with even the most sound decision.
- ✓ **Do you need to hit reset?** What circumstances or measures would trigger a revisit of the original decision by the team? What are our "tripwires" that tell us if we need to revisit the decision (e.g. customer satisfaction falls below 95%, sales growth is stalled at 15%)? Consider market forces, internal factors, or other disruptive game changers that may warrant another look at the your decision.