

HOW GREAT DECISIONS GET MADE

10 Easy Steps for Reaching Agreement on Even the Toughest Issues

DON MARUSKA

DON MARUSKA has his own consulting firm specializing in helping people develop successful solutions to tough problems. He has served as CEO of three different Silicon Valley companies and as vice-president of marketing for the company that became E*Trade. Mr. Maruska has also gained experience working as a consultant to Fortune 500 companies, government agencies and various communities. He is the author of *Business Success*, a column which appears in more than 200 newspapers each week. Mr. Maruska is a graduate of Harvard University and Stanford University.

Mr. Maruska's personal Web site is at www.donmaruska.com.

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MAIN IDEA

Most decisions tend to get made in a climate of fear – where the rank-and-file are afraid to express an opinion that goes against what their bosses think. Fear creates a scarcity of good ideas, and a roadblock where tough issues get deferred rather than solved.

The opposite of fear is hope. In an environment of hope, intelligent teamwork becomes feasible as everyone focuses less on “What should we do?” and more on “How can we achieve what we really want to accomplish?” Hope also allows a group to collaborate together to make a sound decision rather than trying to second guess what the boss wants.

The key, therefore, to making great decisions is to create the kind of environment where teams of people can work together cohesively to generate outstanding results. Great decisions always bring out the best in people and galvanize them to reach for even more impressive results in the future. To create the kind of environment that will foster great decisions, bring more structure and transparency to the way decisions are made. Specifically, there is a ten-step process (detailed in section 1 below) for making great decisions which can and should be applied. These steps have been honed by Fortune 500 and high-growth companies over more than a decade of real world experience.

Once you have this ten-step process in place, you can then use the six strategies outlined in section 2 below to overcome any obstacles which may prevent your organization from making and then implementing great business decisions.

“If you’ve been bogged down in divisive and unproductive debates, just imagine what it would be like if your team member’s philosophy was ‘We can do this together’. Consider what would be accomplished if your group concluded, ‘Even if we don’t have the solution right now, we’ll find what works for us and serves everybody’s needs’. Think about what would happen if your coworkers or the members of your community had energy and resilience and were willing to listen to each other with patience and respect, if they were not only open to new ideas and opportunities, but also excited by them. Wouldn’t it be wonderful to be part of an organization or community that works that way? It is possible for teams to solve tough issues together and get great results. By using the ten-step process and the six strategies given, your team can do it, too.”

– Don Maruska

“The ten-step process can be compared to a well-designed aircraft that soars and safely transports its passengers to distant destinations. This process will help you and the people with whom you are working to resolve even the toughest issues in your organization and to get to where you want to go – and then go even further. I encourage you to be an agent of hope in a fearful world hungering for fresh solutions. Enjoy the flight!”

– Don Maruska

1. The Ten-Step Process For Making Great Decisions Pages 2 - 6

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| The
Ten-Step
Process For
Making
Great
Decisions | 1 Be inclusive and enlist everyone’s help in making a good decision |
| | 2 List your shared hopes and common aspirations |
| | 3 Uncover the real issues at hand, not just those that sound good |
| | 4 Identify all available options, not just those you like |
| | 5 Look at all options from the perspective of what each accomplishes |
| | 6 Get everything openly on the table, positive and negative |
| | 7 Let everyone express their initial impressions of the options |
| | 8 Try and improve upon the most attractive option so everyone buys in |
| | 9 Before implementing, develop a back-up plan and evaluation metrics |
| | 10 Celebrate your immediate results to stay motivated and unified |

2. The Six Strategies For Overcoming Obstacles To Great Decisions Pages 7 - 8

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| The
Six
Strategies
For
Overcoming
Obstacles
To Great
Decisions | 1 If you’re pressed for time, try a 1-hour problem-solving session |
| | 2 If you’re not in charge, try three techniques of persuasion |
| | 3 If nobody facilitates decision making, take the initiative yourself |
| | 4 If you have a very large group, split into smaller working groups |
| | 5 If you can’t get everyone together, use e-mail to make decisions |
| | 6 If you’re stuck, dissolve old differences and build trust |

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