

Too Much Input Can Stall Decision Making

by Donna Rawady

Strong leaders make tough and effective decisions promptly. For others, the fear and risk of making the wrong decisions may slow their ability to decide and chip away at their confidence to offer direction, often when decisions and directions are needed most. Soliciting feedback from colleagues and advisors, or employees who may be significantly affected by a decision, can be a good and strong practice. However, the practice of soliciting an overabundance of perspectives before making a decision can stall progress and sabotage successful outcomes.

Here are a few key points that may help move the decision-making process along and strike the crucial balance between asking and telling:

- Note the areas within your decision where you are confident in your direction. If you can isolate the area(s) of indecision, you're less likely to be crowding your thinking or decision-making process with needless information.
- Where you are less confident, ask yourself these questions. If you answer yes to all of them, chances are you've done your due diligence, and it's time to step up and make your decision.
- Have you carefully reviewed the related data and/or feedback that you've already solicited?
- Will the decision you're leaning toward generate a strong business impact if successful? If so, are you prepared to explain the value?
- Are you prepared to manage the outcome if it's less than successful?
- Are you prepared to build in target dates for evaluating interim outcomes in the event there may be a need for a shift in direction?

The balance between soliciting the opinions or perspectives of others, and arriving at a timely decision based on your business experience, confidence, and leadership, is crucial to you, your organization and the people you lead.

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