

Decision making

This tool creates a clear picture about how people make decisions, the range of decisions they make, and what support they may need. It helps to understand how much power, choice and control the person has over decisions in their life, and will lead to actions to increase the range and significance of the decisions the person makes. This person-centred thinking tool has two parts – the decision-making profile, which shares the person's preferences in the way they want to be supported in decision-making, and the decision-making agreement, which specifies the important decisions and how the person wants to be supported with them.

Benefits for the person

- A way to understand the support that the person wants in decision making – When? How? Who?
- A clear description of the decisions that the person currently makes – so that the person is not over-supported or under-supported.
- A shared understanding of when others need to support decision making and clarity over how the final decision is made.
- Actions to increase the range and depth of decisions made – to increase the amount of choice and control that the person has in their life.

Benefits for employees and the organisation

- Clarify the decisions that a team can make – what is within their control?
- For the decisions that the team makes, clarify how each decision is made, for example, is it by consensus, by majority vote or does the manager decide?

Using it with an individual

Start with a decision-making profile, and talk with the person, and those who know the person well to answer the following questions, and record them in the decision-making profile:

- How do you like information presented to you? Written down, in an audio format (video, CD, DVD) or visually, through drawing, photographs, symbols, or using a graphic poster?
- What is the best way to present choices to you?
- How can others support you to understand this information?
- When are the best and worst times of the day/week to ask you to make decisions?

Then look together at the decisions that the person currently makes in their life. Their one page profile is helpful here - to look at what decisions the person makes in relation to what is important to them or what control the person has over their support.

- What are the important decisions in their life?
- How must they be involved? The 'decision making profile' informs this section.
- Who makes the final decision?

Finally, think together about what it would take for the person to make more decisions in their life, have more control over the decisions they make, and increase the significance of the areas they make decisions in their life. Develop actions based on this.

Using it with a team

- It may be helpful for team members to have their own individual decision-making profiles.
- List the decisions that the team is able to make themselves.
- Take this list, and for each decision, look at how the decision needs to be made.
- Decide which decisions have to be made by consensus, which decisions are made by a majority vote, which decisions the manager makes based on consultation with the team, and which decisions the manager makes on their own.
- Add this to the person-centred team plan.
- Regularly review what is working and not working about how the team makes decisions.