

# Making good decisions: A 9-question personality quiz

One of the primary duties of a manager is to make important decisions. But since managers are human, it's easy for their decisions to become influenced by their various personality traits or habits.

The goal in making any key decision is to approach it from an independent, uncluttered perspective, free from past biases or preconceived notions.

Use the following quiz to help you

assess your own biases in decision-making. If you check "yes" on a personality trait, use the corresponding "balancing strategy" to help you make better decisions in the future.

Personality Trait	Self-assessment	Balancing Strategy
<b>1. Unbridled optimism</b> Seeing only benefits and overlooking risks	<i>I tend to have a very optimistic temperament and expect everything to work out.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat	Ask someone to be the "devil's advocate" and try to see the flaws in your decisions. Gather data to explore possible problems.
<b>2. Short-term focus</b> Failing to see the long-term consequences	<i>I tend to be very aware of the need to solve immediate problems and seldom think too far ahead.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat	Before making important decisions, jot down all the possible consequences—both short-term and long-term. Partner with someone who is a more natural long-range thinker.
<b>3. Hot-button reactions</b> Acting on strong emotional biases	<i>I have strong feelings about certain things and may not be open to much disagreement or debate in those areas.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat	Ask others to point out your hot buttons. When you feel a "hot-button reaction" coming on, say nothing until you've heard from those with a different opinion.
<b>4. False consensus</b> Assuming that everyone agrees	<i>I express my views very strongly and will actively debate anyone who expresses a different viewpoint.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat	Get the opinions of others before expressing your own. Do not talk at length when presenting your views. Listen when others are speaking.
<b>5. Status quo bias</b> Fear of making the wrong decision	<i>I am uncomfortable taking risks and tend to worry about the possible negative consequences of making a change.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat	Thoroughly explore the potential benefits of a change. Recognize that staying with the status quo is also a risk. Learn to recognize and manage your feelings of anxiety.
<b>6. Herding instincts</b> Copying the actions of others	<i>I like to stay aware of current trends and adopt practices that are being used by others.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat	Do not adopt new approaches until you have independently evaluated their benefits and risks. Assess them in light of <i>your</i> goals.
<b>7. Sunk-cost effect</b> Sticking with a bad decision for too long	<i>I am reluctant to abandon a project or strategy if it means wasting time or money that I have already invested in it.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat	Use pilot projects to avoid making large initial investments. Evaluate existing projects, policies, or programs based on future risks, costs and benefits—not past investments.
<b>8. Too much gut</b> Failing to look at all the facts	<i>I trust my intuition and will often follow my "gut instincts" when making decisions.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat	Always collect facts and data to evaluate a situation. Appoint a "devil's advocate" to look for valid arguments against your decision. Put a minimum time limit on key decisions.
<b>9. Lone Ranger tendencies</b> Failing to gather important input	<i>I have a great deal of faith in my decision-making ability and am very comfortable making decisions independently.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat	Identify those who may have useful knowledge to contribute or who will be greatly affected by your decision. Discuss the decision with them and get their input.

Source: Marie McIntyre, Ph.D., author of *Your Office Coach* e-letter, [www.theHRSpecialist.com/YOC](http://www.theHRSpecialist.com/YOC).