**Personal Influence - Decision Making**

**What to know:**

The most effective decision making is values driven, based on data and with input from the people who know the subject or work best. Use the County’s True North and Values to guide decision making. To support the county’s continuous improvement practice, use Lean decision making tools, and use tools from Office of Equity and Social Justice to support our commitment to equity and racial justice.

**Mythbusters**

It can be tempting to think that better decision making should be top down. Things like not enough information, too much information, too many people, vested interests, biases and not enough time to understand the issues are things that can impact decision making.

**Questions to Ask:**

* What does it mean to you to have input into decisions? What does it look like? Of those things, what do we do well? What do we not do well?
* In regard to our work priorities, what types of decisions do you want to have input into? What are the implications of not having input?
* Is it clear who should be involved in which decisions related to this priority? Why or why not?
* Think of a time when we did a good job getting the right input into a decision. What made that a positive situation? Why were we successful?
* How do we balance involving the right people in decisions, with not involving everyone in everything?
* What can we do to make sure we always consider the impact of the customer in our decision-making?
* What could the organization do to leverage the knowledge of employees to make better decisions? How would that support help the organization meet its strategic goals?

**Best Practices:**

* Review decisions that are made on a regular basis. Who makes those decisions? Is there an opportunity to shift the decision-making as close as possible to where the work happens?
* Identify who needs to be involved in what kind of decisions and then give as much autonomy to employees for all other topics.
* Create a framework as a guide for decision making that includes your values, key stakeholders and priorities. Teach employees to use this framework when making decisions.
* Begin building decision making skills by presenting scenarios to employees and ask them how they would respond. What factors would the employee consider? Use the dialog as an opportunity to provide coaching.
* When making key decisions, it is important to include employees with a variety of perspectives, backgrounds, and skills if possible. Ensure input comes from diverse viewpoints.

**What Mangers can do:**

Get the right people and the most relevant information together to facilitate decision making. Cultivate a problem solving mindset and consult the people who do the work for the best insights. Ask coaching questions to help get at the best solutions.

**What employees can do:**

Bring forward the most relevant information and present it in a way can be understood by people not as familiar with the work. Be aware of your own biases and how they may impact your decision making. Be transparent about risks that come with proposed solutions.

**What leaders can do:**

Clearly articulate the goal and the vison so it’s clear what the team is driving toward. Ask coaching questions to get at the best solutions.

**Watch:**

* [Simon Sinek - Start With Why - TED Talk Short Edited](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPYeCltXpxw&t=7s)

**Read:**

* [QUICK, QUALITY DECISION-MAKING USING SIX SIGMA TOOLS](https://www.isixsigma.com/methodology/voc-customer-focus/quick-quality-decision-making-using-six-sigma-tools/)
* [Avoiding Psychological Bias](https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/avoiding-psychological-bias.htm)