

How to make decisions in tough times

In tough times, decision making and how we process information becomes an even more important skill. Effective decision makers are not those who process the most information or spend the most time deliberating, but rather they are the librarians who concentrate on the crucial factors and disregarding the overwhelming number of useless variables.



Successful decision makers can, in times of stress, see past the extraneous details to concentrate on the two or three variables that will dictate the success of a decision. **It's cutting through the noise to concentrate on the melody.** If you can focus on the few bits of crucial data, you can improve your ability to make tough, time-effective decisions. To make tough decisions, quickly you need to:

1. Keep it simple. Most critical decisions are based on the library's mission, vision and values, not on a mountain of extraneous data.
2. Often, we over-process or over think a decision. On reality, we only need several crucial bits of information to move forward.
3. Procrastinating does not make for a better decision, and in times of crisis may actually aggravate the situation. When you truly don't know the answer, you need the courage to wait, the answer will come!
4. Listening is fundamental to good decision making.
5. Tough decision making requires your undivided attention.
6. Often, simply the fact that a decision has been made is as important as the decision itself!
7. There is no perfect answer; consequently, there is no perfect decision.
8. You can't make good decisions when you are tired. Rest is fundamental to good decision making, especially when you are stressed.
9. Listen to your inner voice, your onboard computer; it's usually the most accurate.

Tapping into your inner courage will empower you to make good, timely decisions and encourage us all to better lead the library community. **It's all about cutting through the noise to concentrate on the melody.**