

ACADEMY SCHOLARS LIFE SKILLS 6: DECISIONS AND CHOICES

1. Introduction:

Life is full of decisions to take, choices to make.

Some are insignificant and are simple to deal with.

Others are vitally important for us now or in the future.

THINKING TIME !

- *Can you think of examples of insignificant, unimportant decisions?*
- *Can you think of examples of very important, vital decisions?*

Be prepared to share your answer, and to explain your choice !!

SOMETHING ELSE TO DO !

Look at the list of decisions /choices, on side 2, and mark each as either:

S..... Clearly Significant

I.....Clearly Insignificant

P.....Possibly significant or possibly insignificant

N.....Neither significant nor insignificant

After 2/3 minutes, we'll discuss your choices, and the reasons for them

List of Decisions and Choices

- Which shirt / top to wear when getting dressed
- What to eat for breakfast
- Whether to buy a new pair of trainers
- Whether to buy a new or used car
- Which car to buy
- How much to spend on the car
- What to do after training is finished
- Whether to go out clubbing on Saturday and Sunday nights
- Whether to smoke or not
- Whether to drink or not
- Whether to say no if offered drugs
- What medication to take if feeling ill with flu or a heavy cold
- Whether to save money regularly or to spend what you have
- What to do if given a weekend off
- What to do if a coach hints that you don't seem 100% fit
- How to react if a coach drops you from a team
- How to react to someone who wants to become your agent
- Which club to join if your current club releases you
- Whether to study for more educational qualifications
- Whether to buy a new jumper
- Which DVD to hire
- Whether to go out with the lads on Saturday night
- Whether to stay up to late watching TV
- Whether to talk to someone about a personal worry or problem
- Which colour jumper to buy
- Whether to give a Christmas or Easter gift to your land-lady
- Whether to keep in touch with your family regularly
- Whether to change your mobile phone soon
- Whether to go serious with your girlfried
- Whether to plan to set up home and live with with your girlfriend
- Whether to get married
- Whether to plan to have children
- Whether to separate or to divorce
- Whether to plan to buy a flat or a house
- Whether to live a green lifestyle

- If to stay friends with old schoolmates
- FINALLY, BEFORE WE MOVE ON....**
- Can you pick out, in your opinion, the least important decision and the most important decision of those above. Explain your choices !

2. AN IMAGINARY SITUATION :

“Sammy is a 16-year old who is a talented footballer. He lives with his mum and his 10-year old sister in Bury. Dad left home two years after she was born, and mum has since always worked hard to keep the three of them fed, clothed, and reasonably well looked after. Sammy is about to leave school, and has been offered a place at the Bury Football Club football academy. He has also trained with Carlisle, Crewe, Preston and Sheffield Wednesday over the past few years, and all have expressed a willingness to sign him.”

QUESTIONS :

WHAT might he decide to do ? What would you do ?

HOW might he make his decisions ?

If you were in his situation, HOW would you come to your conclusions ?

What factors would you consider, who would you talk to, or would you just make a “gut decision”?

Generally, when we come to make any sort of decision, what can help us to get it as right as possible?

FINALLY, BEFORE WE MOVE ON....

Relating to what went before, truly insignificant decisions probably don’t need too much detailed consideration. Whether I wear a blue shirt with a blue tie, or a white shirt with a red tie today is probably not a major decision. I don’t need to consult too widely about that !

But, in our story, whether, Sammy chooses to go to Bury FC, or to Preston, Sheffield Wednesday, Carlisle or Crewe could, for various reasons, be quite a big decision. Bigger decisions need more than an instant response!

3. HOW WE MAKE DECISIONS .

PERHAPS HOW YOU DECIDE ON SOMETHING, DEPENDS ON THE SORT OF DECISION YOU HAVE TO MAKE.

Different ways to decide.

- “ I go along with what most of the others choose to do”
- “ I do what feels right at the time”
- “ I just get on and do something, and hope it all works out whatever I decide”
- “ I think it all through, work out the consequences of doing this or that, then decide”
- “ I think you just know. You feel right about something, or not. You know what you must do, don’t you ? ”
- “ I don’t like to make decisions at all. I think it’s better just to wait and see what comes along.”

ANY COMMENTS ON THE ABOVE ??

Does the importance of the decision control how we decide ??

For example, if we are with a mate deciding which of 3 DVDs to watch together one night....

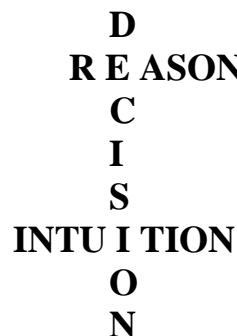
Or if we are considering which of 3 football clubs we might move to next season.....

we might use different ways of deciding!!

When we consider ways of deciding, broadly there are two major factors, our head and our heart, what we think and what we feel !

**When do we use head, or heart or both in decision making ?
Can you think of any examples ? Can you share these ??**

4. TWO MAIN WAYS OF DECIDING:



Head and heart, reason and intuition, are often closely linked in the decision-making process.

- **How do we use our head, our reasoning powers to make decisions?**

Consider how important the decision is.

Consider all the options open to you.

Be open to all other ways to make decisions, too !

Seek out all the relevant information.

How do your own personal values affect your view of the issue?

Consider the risks involved with all options.

Consider the consequences of all options.

Consider if some personal circumstance should influence the decision.

Consider if you know [and trust] others who might advise you.

We weigh up the all the “pros and cons”, and KNOW THAT YOU MUST DECIDE, and then we make a decision !!

5. OUR FICTIONAL STORY REVISITED :

Sammy is now 23. He joined Crewe Alex. from school, completed his academy scholarship with CAFC, and at the age of 19 was offered a 2 year contract with the club, and after 18 months was offered a new, better 4 year deal.

Life seems to be going well. He has established himself as a regular in the first team, has just married his girl-friend of 3 years, a local girl who works in the administration department at Crewe Town Hall. They now live in a growing village just outside the town, in a smart new detached home and both feel very happy and settled.

Sammy is told that Crystal Palace has put a bid in for him. He has 2 years left on his Crewe contract, and they have told him that they wish to negotiate a new 4 year deal once the present deal ends, but also, that if the Palace offer is a big one, they would be prepared to allow Sammy to leave. The question is, should he go or should he seek the next new 4-year deal at Crewe which would take him to the age of 29?

QUESTIONS !

And the key question is, *how* does he decide ?

What matters should Sammy consider in his decision making ?

If you were in that position, how would you decide ? What would you see as the things to think through deeply ?

- **THINK about this, and be prepared to contribute in a discussion !**

- **Your comments on *how* he might make his choice ?**

6. CONCLUSIONS :

I suggest to you:

- Know the difference between “ordinary decisions” and “important decisions”.
- Deal wisely and thoroughly with the important decisions which face you .
- Learn from all the big decisions you make, and how you make them !
- Know the importance of “evaluation” and “reflection” : some decisions can be revisited, so do evaluate the “how and what” of the big matters which you decided upon.

FINAL QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

In fictional stories one and two, how could Sammy evaluate his decision making process?

In those stories, which were Sammy’s biggest decisions ?