

## How to make a choice between various options

It is easy to get lost between the possible choices you have when you are confronted with a situation where you have to choose. The little technique described here provides a way to help you think about all the right things while you consider these choices and arrive at a decision. We strongly recommend that you also subscribe to our [free email course on rational decision making](#) if you want to fully appreciate the strengths and weaknesses of this 8-step approach to decision making.

For simplicity the process of evaluation is given in step format. You may need to go through a few iterations should you realize half way through that you have not taken sufficient aspects into account initially.

### Step 1:

Write down all the possible choices you can reasonably make. Do not be over-pedantic to include EVERY possibility. Leave out those that you know intuitively would not be a good idea.

### Step 2:

For each possibility write down the positive possible outcomes that you can obtain from choosing that option. (Some other approaches champion a “pros and cons” list – you might want to also take that into account in a separate list).

### Step 3:

For each possibility write down the negative possible outcomes that can materialize should you choose that option.

### Step 4:

For each possibility revise your positive and negative outcomes. Give specific attention to the possible negative impacts. Are there things that would be so negative that you cannot take the risk of them happening regardless of whatever positive things might materialize? Remove the possibilities that have such unacceptable negative possible impacts from your list of possibilities.

### Step 5:

Now put your list of possibilities aside for a moment.

### Step 6:

Think about what you find valuable in the situation that you need to make the decision. Write down the values and principles that are important to you, and prioritize them as far as possible. Try not to think about specific possibilities when you do this activity (if you find that by now you are not able to put the possibilities aside, do this activity first next time). Call this list your “value system”. If you are uncertain how to compile a value system, [read about the ebook](#) we make available to assist you.

### Step 7:

Now evaluate your remaining possibilities against the value system. Use the value system to prioritize the list of possibilities from most desired to least desired.

### Step 8:

Now review your prioritized list of possible choices. Choose the one as close to the top as possible that will give you the best combination of positive impacts with the lowest risk of high-impact negative impacts.

[Participate in our Online Slideshow](#) about this 8-step process! It provides you with some further information and highlights the important aspects of each step (it is offered as an online quiz).

----- \*\*\*\*\* -----

- Van Thinking Offers a variety of services specifically in the field of human decision making (with a focus on organizational decision making). [Read more about these services.](#)
- We also attach the brochure of our [interactive, online Introduction to Organizational Decision Making Course](#) for your convenience.

*Thank you for making use of Van Thinking and what we offer. We appreciate your interest.*