



CASE STUDY

Making Important Life Decisions

Session Overview and Objectives

STUDENTS WILL:

- Apply a decision tree as part of the decision-making process for a major life decision.
- Analyze information in order to make data-driven decisions.

Standards

NBEA

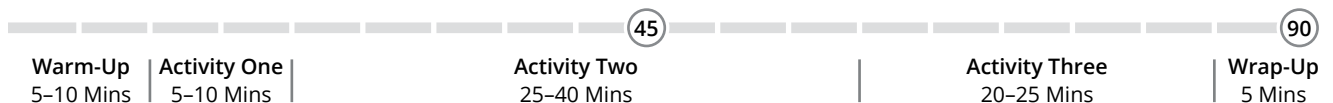
- Career Development I. Self-Awareness: Assess personal skills, abilities, and aptitudes and personal strengths and weaknesses as they relate to career exploration and development.
- Marketing VI: Implement data-drive strategies.

CTCC

- Explore, develop and apply strategies for ensuring a successful business career.
- General Management: BM-MGT 7

Activity Time Estimate

Time estimates for the activities in this session are shown to help you plan for your class. The total time for the activities can range from 60 to 90 minutes. You could also use the activities in two, 45-minute sessions.



Preparation and Materials

Before the session, do the following:

- ☐ Review the session and all materials.
- ☐ Ensure students have access to the following materials:
 - Primer: Making Important Life Decisions (Hand out before the class session. Students must read on their own.)
 - Case Study Part 1: Animal Careers
 - Case Study Part 2: Animal Careers
- ☐ Ensure that students have access to these additional resources:
 - Paper
 - Pens or pencils
 - Internet access
 - Onscreen Presentation (available in the online course or at the following link <https://data.ja.org/s/oQYAAA>)

Please use this space to record any supplemental resources you might include:

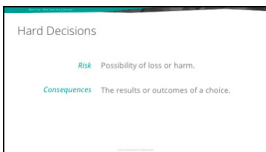
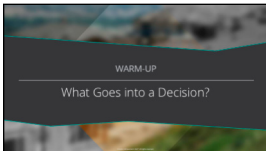
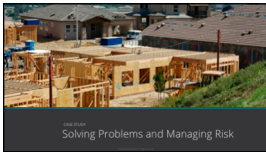
Insert your ideas here.

Teacher Guide

The following are talking points and instructions to help you facilitate the session and student discussions. Headings correspond to the onscreen headings in the onscreen presentation.

WARM-UP: WHAT GOES INTO A DECISION?

5-10 MIN.



Making Decisions

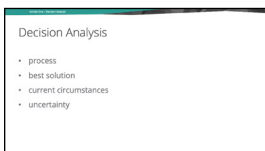
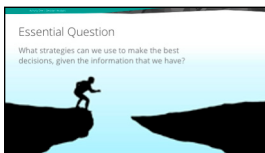
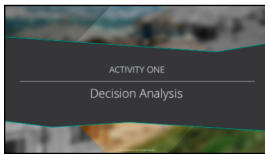
1. Welcome students to the class.
2. Ask the students to share a decision that they made today.
 - To prompt participation, you might inquire:
 - What did you have for breakfast?
 - How did you know what you were going to wear today?

Hard Decisions

1. Ask students if any of the decisions (they shared) were difficult to make.
 - As appropriate, emphasize that these were not difficult decisions because the consequences were minimal.
 - Explain that decisions can be difficult when the consequences are significant.
 - If there were significant consequences to any of the decisions shared, use the consequence as an opportunity to discuss the need to make decisions carefully.
2. Ask for volunteers to share their answers to the questions in the primer.
 - ? Think about an important decision that you made. How did you go about making that decision? Did you use a certain process or tool?
 - ? What key factors did you consider in making the decision? How did you determine which factors were most important?
 - ? When considering a decision, where can you find data you trust to help guide your decision.
3. Remind students that they will be discussing making important decisions using tools in this session.

ACTIVITY ONE: DECISION ANALYSIS

5-10 MIN.



Essential Question

1. Remind students that the focus of today's study is the essential question: "What strategies can we use to make the best decisions, given the information that we have?"

- Emphasize "given the information we have"

... We might not have all the information. Oftentimes making decisions involves uncertainty.

Decision Analysis

1. Making decisions based on the information you have is a process called decision analysis.
2. Decision analysis allows you to discover the best solution under the circumstances.
 - The best solution under the circumstances doesn't mean a perfect solution
 - If circumstances change, the best solution could change
 - There may be uncertainty or things that you can't foresee
 - One can't necessarily predict the change in circumstances

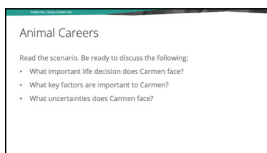
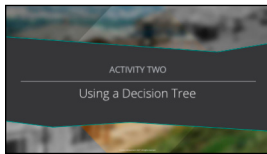
Process for Making Decisions

1. Discuss the three-step process for making decisions.
 - Define the problem and key factors.
 - Collect information.
 - Evaluate the alternatives and choose the best option.
2. Explain that decision analysis can use complicated tools like probability forecasting, mathematical models, etc.

... We're going to examine a rather simple tool, the decision tree, as we explore a case study.

ACTIVITY TWO: USING A DECISION TREE

25-40 MIN.



Making Important Life Decisions

1. Tell students that you are going to share a case study with them.
 - Ensure students have access to Case Study: Animal Careers
 - Ask students to read each part of the case study individually.
 - Tell them that you are going to discuss the reading as a group.
2. When students have finished reading, ask for volunteers to answer the following questions.

? What decision does Carmen face?

Carmen must decide what she wants to do after graduating from high school.

? What key factors are important to Carmen?

Carmen loves working with animals. She does not want to incur student loan debt. Carmen likes learning in hands-on settings.

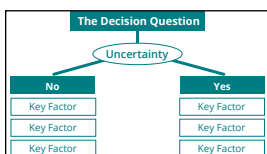
? What uncertainties does Carmen face?

Carmen does not yet know what career she would most enjoy. She doesn't know how much education is required of different careers nor how much time or expense is involved in preparing for a career.



Decision Tree

1. Introduce the concept of a decision tree to students. Note that people and businesses can use decision trees for making decisions.
2. Explain that the decision tree requires identifying the following and point out their areas on the blank tree.
 - decision to be made
 - possible uncertainty
 - the alternatives, options, choices
 - key factors



What is a Decision Tree?

1. Share with students that this decision tree is a simple example because it only branches for two possible choices. There could be more branches, uncertainty, etc.
2. Tell students that they need to complete a decision tree for each of Carmen's three alternative career routes.

- You may wish to have the students complete this task individually, in groups, or as a class.
- Tell students that they should use the information contained in Scenario 1 of the case study to inform their thought processes.

ACTIVITY THREE: ANIMAL CAREERS

20-25 MIN.

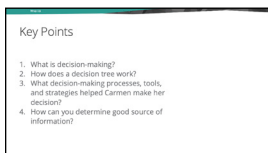
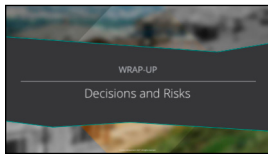


Carmen's Results

- What decision-making processes, tools, information, and strategies helped Carmen make her decision?
- What key factors are important to you in making your own career decisions?
- What lessons will you take away from this experience?

Carmen's Results

- Reconvene the class as needed and share results of the decision tree analysis.
 - You may wish to ask groups or individuals to share their analyses before sharing the relevant image.
- Review the completed decision trees with students. Ask students to specify the decision to be made (which career path), the uncertainties (cost or time required for education or training), and the key factors (avoiding student loans and engaging in hands-on learning).
 - As needed, discuss any differences between student completed decision trees.
- Have students or each group share their solutions to Carmen's decision.
- Conduct a class vote. Ask for a show of hands (or other method as you choose) to determine who believes Carmen should become a Veterinarian or a Veterinary Technician or a Military Working Animal Handler.
- Ask a few students to share their rationale for the decision making.

WRAP-UP: MAKING DECISIONS**5-10 MIN.****Key Points**

1. Emphasize the key points from today's session:
 - What is decision making?
 - How does a decision tree work?
 - What decision-making processes, tools, and strategies helped Carmen make her decision?
 - How can you determine good source of information?
2. Remind students that decisions are not to be taken lightly. Decisions often involve uncertainty and have consequences.
3. Distribute the Making Important Life Decisions Quiz.

Glossary

employee benefits also known as perks or fringe benefits, benefits provided to employees over and above salaries and wages; employee benefit packages may include paid overtime, medical insurance, vacation time, profit-sharing, and retirement benefits

opportunity cost the highest value alternative given up when a choice is made

savings money that is set aside in a savings account or other safe and secure place to be used for emergencies, unexpected expenses, or to pay for larger purchases

