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a MESSAGE from SYLVIA

HOW TO MAKE SMART DECISIONS

How do you make decisions at work? From your head, your heart, your gut? The way your parents did? The way your colleagues do? The way your boss tells you to? The way you've always done it? This question requires some honest probing and reflection.

In my business I hear about dozens of decisions on clients' plates: Whether or not to confront a disruptive colleague, cut certain expenses, expand the Board, enter a joint venture, add a paid position, tighten the benefits package, shift employee roles, fire a staffer, use a long distance supplier, develop a new service or product, revise organizational bylaws—even find another job. The list goes on and on. Whatever the decision people wrestle with, the process of choosing what is in the best interest of all



concerned never seems to be easy.

Over the years I've become aware of people agonizing and procrastinating over decisions. I've known them to be hasty and irrational. I've seen them hide and dodge. The truth is that, as a leader or manager, your job is to recognize and face the decisions that must be made—and then do what you need to do to make them.

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FEATURE ARTICLE

7 Essential Decision Making Strategies

The task of decision making at work should not be taken lightly. Using several sensible strategies can keep you focused. The following seven strategies can help to ensure that, ultimately, you make smart, wise decisions that serve the greatest and highest good. Take a look:

- Examine the pros and cons. Thinking about terminating an employee? List team and company advantages and disadvantages to keeping her and letting her go. Get clear about what *you* gain and lose, too, in both scenarios.
- Be conscious of organizational values and priorities. As a leader/manager, your job is to make all decisions in close alignment with what matters most to your employer. So if the staffer (despite several coaching confrontations) continually misses deadlines that prevent colleagues from moving forward with their work, that's a problem which cannot be ignored.
- Consider the views of others. Get a sense of how other people feel about this person and the situation. Observe. Listen. Ask.
- Identify information gaps. What else do you need to know before you can make an intelligent, wise decision? How can you obtain that input? Firing an employee is a serious move; make sure you aren't missing something.
- Calculate the cost of sitting on the fence. In the example cited in this article, allowing the employee to disregard deadlines without consequence has a price tag attached to it: Work flow is interrupted; productivity slows down; staff morale suffers.
- Predict the impact and prepare for it. What can happen if you retain the

deficient employee, and what is likely to happen if you fire him? How do you intend to deal with the fallout as it relates to people and processes?

- Listen to your intuition. Many folks discount what their gut is telling them, and that's a mistake. Connect with what *feels* right deep inside of you.

Recently I watched a webinar during which the presenter said: "Life is a series of decisions." How true. Minute by minute, hour by hour, you are making them—even when you think you aren't. I suggest you do it consciously.

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What Clients Say

Three years ago I hired Sylvia to help me make some very critical business decisions. I'm almost embarrassed to say that I had no idea how to approach the process in order to get the results that I and my company desperately needed at the time. Just a few months ago I contacted Sylvia again—this time to help me decide whether or not I should give up my business entirely and return to the traditional work world. All of this was very emotional for me. I wanted a neutral third party to support me and guide me through the steps necessary to reach the right decision. I am pleased to say that Sylvia gave me exactly what I hoped for. I made my career choice and have found peace.

--Deborah W., Small Business Owner, Philadelphia

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Offers and Opportunities

First FREE Teleseminar of 2016

On February 16, 2016 at noon EST Sylvia will conduct a free one hour teleseminar entitled: Managing Up: 8 Ways to Influence Your Boss. If you need or want to make a bigger impact on the job and don't know how, this audio event is for YOU. Keep in mind that your perceived value at work depends upon your ability to influence the person who signs off on your paychecks. For more information [click here](#).

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RESOURCES

A “Different” Read

If you want some fresh, powerful guidance around decision making, check out researcher Gary Klein’s winner entitled: *The Power of Intuition: How to Use Your Gut Feelings to Make Better Decisions at Work*. Based upon real life interviews with various senior executives, emergency management workers, and military personnel, this 2004 paperback book demystifies the role of intuition in decision making by providing the tools you need to build your intuitive skills. Available on Amazon.com for \$15.

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TIP

Did you know that everybody has a default decision making style? Review the following four styles and their brief descriptions below. Then identify **your current preference**. This is an important exercise, because the style you use most often may or may not be the most effective in every situation.

- Majority rules: A democratic vote makes the decision.
- Ownership and control: You take complete personal responsibility for the decision you make.
- Group involvement: You ask others for their perceptions, knowledge, ideas, and opinions before you make a decision.
- Consensus: You invite the whole team/group to agree and buy into a decision, and you alone are not responsible for it.

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Where in the World is SYLVIA?

On January 14, 2016 Sylvia presented a highly engaging ninety minute workshop entitled “Overloaded and Overwhelmed? 10 Strategies for Gaining Control” to 115 employees (including medical directors and nurse practitioners) of Optum Care’s PennDel Region in Elizabethtown, PA. Company senior leadership DECIDED to offer this training packed with universal appeal to their

staff in the beginning of the new calendar year.

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About This Ezine

The purpose of this Ezine is to: 1) Provide readers with valuable FREE content which contributes to personal and professional growth as well as overall career development; and 2) Invite readers to take next steps toward working directly with Sylvia.

Back issues are [available here](#). Send an email by [clicking here](#) to manage your free subscription. Sharing content with attribution is encouraged as is forwarding the Ezine email. Include launchinglives.biz in your list of safe senders or friends, depending upon your email software, to be sure you receive the monthly emailed issues.

Launching Lives Ezine is dedicated to “building people ... building businesses.” ©2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014

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About SYLVIA

Sylvia Hepler, Owner and President of Launching Lives, LLC, specializes in career development for both corporate and nonprofit executives and managers. Based in South Central PA, she specifically supports clients as they upgrade their current job performance, seek a promotion, or plan/navigate a career transition. What makes her services unique is that Sylvia helps people to cope with change, loss, and grief as they work on developing their careers. Her professional background includes: nonprofit executive management/leadership, nonprofit community health program start-up, program evaluation, public speaking, business and freelance writing, teaching, and retail sales.

A certified executive coach through The Rescue Institute in Golden, Colorado and Quantum Endeavors in Chicago, Illinois (plus a participant in extensive continuing education opportunities with several coaches of national

notoriety), Sylvia offers individual and group coaching, assessments, teleseminars, workshops, keynote speeches, and retreats. She also has created tangible and downloadable products that augment her coaching and speaking services.

For more information and to connect with Sylvia try:

[Launching Lives Website](#)

[Click to contact Sylvia by Email](#)

Reach Sylvia by phone at **717-761-5457**

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Launching Lives SERVICES

Launching Lives, LLC is a full service career development company for managers and executives located in South Central PA. Utilizing a holistic approach to service provision, Launching Lives focuses on supporting clients as they create the platinum level career they desire by upgrading their job performance, seeking a promotion, or planning/navigating a career transition

Often people don't really know HOW they might benefit from coaching. Quite simply, ask yourself these questions: "What can't I seem to resolve on my own? What is keeping me awake at night? What am I missing when I look at a certain situation? How can I get to the next professional level? How can I learn certain skills quickly? How can I narrow my professional gaps? How can I motivate my staff? How can I communicate more effectively so I serve myself and others better? How can I reduce my work-related frustration? How can I develop a viable plan of action for myself and/or my organization? How can I obtain greater job satisfaction? Coaching may be the SOLUTION to any of these issues.

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