SFJPA5.1
Take effective decisions

Overview

This unit is about taking sound decisions based upon a valid analysis of the best available information. Managers at all levels need to take decisions within their area of responsibility and authority. This unit provides a structure for taking decisions that meet defined objectives and are consistent with a broader framework of values, policies and guidelines.

The unit is recommended for managers at all levels.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

P1 identify those who may be affected by the decision and their interests

P2 involve, where possible, those who are able to contribute to the decision-making process or will be affected by the decision

P3 establish the objectives of the decision to be taken – clarify what you are really trying to achieve by taking the decision and uncover any hidden agendas

P4 identify the information you need to take the decision and the sources of this information

P5 obtain sufficient relevant information to allow you to take the decision and verify its accuracy and reliability

P6 take timely action to remedy inadequate, unreliable, contradictory or ambiguous information

P7 analyse the information to identify facts, patterns and trends that may impact on your decision

P8 identify and evaluate the range of options open to you

P9 draw conclusions supported by reasoned arguments and reliable information, clearly stating any assumptions you have made and risks that may be involved

P10 take decisions *f*

    P10.1 in line with your objectives *f*

    P10.2 within the scope of your authority *f*

    P10.3 consistent with values, policies and guidelines *f*

    P10.4 in time for necessary action to be taken

P11 obtain help and advice

    P11.1 if you do not have adequate information

    P11.2 if the decision is outside your area of responsibility or scope of authority

    P11.3 if your decisions are likely to conflict with values, policies and guidelines

P12 communicate your decision clearly to those who are affected

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

General knowledge and understanding

K1   the importance of involving those who are able to contribute or may be affected in the decision-making process, and how to do so

K2   the importance of setting objectives for the decision, and how to make it clear what the decision must achieve and what is outside the scope of the decision

K3   how to identify the information you need to take the decision

K4   how to judge whether you have sufficient, accurate, reliable and relevant information to allow you to take the decision

K5   how to identify if information is inadequate, unreliable, contradictory or ambiguous, and how to remedy this in a timely way

K6   how to analyse information to identify relevant facts, patterns and trends

K7   the range of options open to you and how to evaluate the options

K8   how to justify your conclusions

K9   the importance of ensuring your decisions are in line with your organisation's values, policies and guidelines

K10   the importance of showing any assumptions you have made and risks that may be involved, and how to do so

K11   the importance of taking decisions in time for necessary action to be taken

K12   how to communicate your decision clearly and concisely

K13   industry/sector specific knowledge and understanding

K14   industry/sector requirements for using information to take decisions

K15   context specific knowledge and understanding

K16   people who are able to contribute to the decision-making process or will be affected by the decision

K17   facts, patterns and trends that may impact on your decision

K18   your organisation's policies, values and guidelines

K19   the scope of your authority for taking decisions and when you need to refer to someone else

K20   whom to go to for advice if you do not have adequate information, the decision is outside your area of responsibility, or your decisions conflict with policies, values and guidelines

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Additional Information

Behaviours

1. You act within the limits of your authority
2. You show integrity, fairness and consistency in decision-making
3. You check the validity and reliability of information
4. You push for concrete information in an ambiguous situation
5. You identify patterns or meaning from events and data that are not obviously related
6. You build a total and valid picture from restricted or incomplete data
7. You articulate the assumptions made and risks involved in understanding a situation
8. You take timely decisions that are realistic for the situation
9. You take decisions in uncertain situations or based on incomplete information when necessary
10. You take and implement difficult and/or unpopular decisions, if necessary

Skills

Acting assertively
Analysing
Assessing
Communicating
Decision-making
Evaluating
Information management
Involving others
Prioiritising
Problem-solving
Researching
Setting objectives
Time management

Links to other NOS

This unit is linked to all other units in the overall suite of National Occupational Standards for Management and Leadership where it is necessary to take effective decisions.

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