



people  
make the  
difference

## People Make The Difference whitepaper

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### **What I've learnt: making hard decisions.**

Organisations and teams, no matter how big or small, will always come up against difficult decisions that need to be made. Sometimes the most difficult decisions are the ones that, when your team can't come to a natural decision on their own and are split 40% to 60% in opinion. So, what can leaders do when they have the final call?

I've come up against plenty of difficult decisions in my time, from customer service issues where the team has been divided on the best solution, to internal issues where the team is unclear on task responsibilities or debating the direction of the business. It can be difficult to keep everyone satisfied, but I approach all the difficult decisions in the same way to avoid treading on toes as much as possible.

#### **Keep your ear to the ground**

Since you spend so much time with your team and have got to know them well, it's natural that you'll have a general idea of how your team will respond to certain decisions. It can be worth your while to call an initial meeting to canvas the general feeling amongst your team and get them thinking about the decision. Sometimes, the choice will be clear at the end of the initial meeting and the decision will be made while other times it will be a little more difficult and further thought and discussion will be required.

#### **Continue moving forward**

Don't let the decision hang in the balance for too long. A stalled decision doesn't resolve the situation or keep your team moving forward. Make the decision within the meeting - your role as a leader is to get the team to a decision, even if it requires you making it. Leaving the

decision open for too long can lead to second-guessing which is not helpful for the team. When there is a majority decision, even if it is as close as 40% to 60%, go with the majority.

Of course, not every decision you make will be the right one and sometimes, only time will tell.

### **How can you get the minority on board with the majority decision?**

Always take time to speak 1:1 with your team members, specifically those who did not support the majority decision. This discussion can help to quell their fears that this it was the wrong choice. A trial of the decision for a certain period, with a report back of the outcomes can also help to get team members on board if they're not completely on board with the final decision and feel strongly about it.

### **Communicating with confidence**

After the decision has been made, ensure that everyone involved in the final decision is on-board and ready to communicate the decision to others with 100% confidence. Your leadership team must present a united front, so getting agreement from everyone in the team within the meeting is important. When the leadership team is united in the decision, it reduces the chance of second-guessing, gossiping and chaos amongst the wider team - all things that destroy teams, rather than building them up.

*Making difficult decisions can be daunting but People Make The Difference can help you with training workshops, one-on-one coaching and Coach On Call services. To find out more, call us on 0412 333 415 or visit [peplemakethedifference.com.au](http://peplemakethedifference.com.au)*