



The Decision-Making Process

414.288.7423 ■ career.services@marquette.edu ■ www.marquette.edu/csc ■ Holthusen Hall, 1st floor

When making a decision, it is important to keep your values and interests in the forefront. Write down those factors that are essential to you, whether it be for a graduate program, your first professional position, or any new opportunity.

Studies show the most effective process for making decisions is:

- 1) Collecting facts and data
- 2) Generating ideas and stepping back to look at the big picture
- 3) Analyzing ideas and possible action
- 4) Seeing how the decision might affect others, making sure the decision maintains harmony

This worksheet is designed as a place to keep the facts and data you collect regarding a potential opportunity. First, think about those qualities and characteristics that are important to you. Some *examples* are listed. After you have your **CRITERIA**, research the opportunities thoroughly and write down your **DATA**. Those choices which most closely match your criteria may be your best bet. If you need additional assistance, talk your choices over with friends, family, or a career professional.

Examples:

General qualities

- The top 5 things you need in a job/graduate program for it to be satisfying
- Cultural opportunities
- Distance from family/friends
- Size of city
- Type of location (urban, suburban, rural)
- Any other location-type qualities

Employment qualities

- Salary (base pay, commission)
- Benefits (health insurance, vacation, sick days, retirement plan)
- Opportunity for advancement
- Training program
- Fit with co-workers
- Fit with direct supervisor
- Promotional opportunities
- Office environment (casual, business)
- Relocation possibilities

Graduate/Professional School qualities

- Size of institution/program
- Ranking (if available)
- GPA requirements
- Personal statement required
- Admission requirements
- Application deadline
- Other application materials (list them)
- Graduate Assistantships available
- Thesis required
- Comprehensive exams required
- # of hours required to complete degree
- # of semesters required to complete degree
- # of faculty who are full-time
- Faculty research topics
- Faculty/student ratio
- Accredited program
- Multicultural makeup of student body
- Library holdings related to your field of study
- Student/computer ratio
- Lab facilities
- Tuition and fees
- Residency requirement

Name of school or organization	Quality #1	Quality #2	Quality #3	Quality #4	Quality #5	Quality #6	Quality #7
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