

Decision-Making Process

Career Exploration Series

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 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 requirement
- Admission requirements
- Application deadline
- Other application materials (list them)
- Graduate Assistantships available
- Thesis requirement
- Comprehensive exams requirement
- # 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