

Decision Making — Workbook

This workbook turns the course frameworks into hands-on practice. You will document real decisions you face, stress-test your reasoning with structured exercises, and build a personal decision system you can use immediately. Work through each section alongside its matching course module for maximum impact.

How Decisions Actually Work

Practice sizing decisions correctly and start your decision journal before biases and outcomes blur your memory.

Exercise: Decision Type Sorter

List 10 decisions you made in the last 30 days — across work, finances, relationships, and health. For each, classify it by stakes (low/medium/high) and reversibility (easy/hard). Then answer the reflection prompts below.

- Which decisions did you spend too much time on given their stakes and reversibility? What would you have done differently?

- Which decisions did you make too quickly given their stakes and difficulty of reversal? What should you have slowed down for?

- Did you apply any deliberate framework to any of these decisions at the time, or were all of them purely intuitive? What was the outcome?

- Pick one upcoming decision and classify it using the stakes/reversibility grid. What level of effort does it deserve?

Worksheet: First Decision Journal Entry

Before you see the outcome of a current real decision, fill in this entry completely. Return and complete the Outcome section after the result is known.

Date of decision

Decision statement (one sentence, what are you choosing?)

Options I considered (list all, including do-nothing)

Option I chose

Key reasons for choosing it (3-5 bullet points)

My confidence level (0-100%)

What I am most uncertain about

Expected outcome in 3 months

— Return here after outcome —

Actual outcome

Process quality score (1-10) and why

Outcome quality score (1-10) and why

What I would do differently next time

Checklist: Decision Sizing Habits

- I classify every significant decision as Type 1 (hard to reverse) or Type 2 (easy to reverse) before investing time in it
- I decide Type 2 decisions within 24 hours without building elaborate analysis
- I apply at least one structured framework to every Type 1 decision
- I have a decision log set up (notebook, spreadsheet, or Notion database) and have made my first entry
- I review my log at least once per month to score process vs outcome quality
- I have shared the decision journal habit with at least one colleague or accountability partner

Cognitive Biases That Derail Choices

Test your own susceptibility to the six key biases and practice the debiasing technique for each one using a real or hypothetical decision.

Exercise: Bias Audit on a Recent Decision

Choose a significant decision from the past 6 months — one where you are not fully satisfied with how you reasoned it through. Work through each bias below and honestly assess whether it was present.

- Confirmation bias: Did you stop researching when you found the first piece of supporting evidence? List two pieces of contradicting evidence you ignored or dismissed.

- Anchoring: Was there a first number, option, or frame that dominated the analysis? How much did your final choice differ from that anchor? If it did not differ much, what would a deanchored estimate look like?

- Sunk cost: Was any part of the reasoning driven by money, time, or reputation already invested? If you were starting fresh today with no prior investment, would you make the same choice?

- Overconfidence: What probability did you assign (explicitly or implicitly) to the outcome occurring? Has that probability proven accurate? Are your uncertainty ranges typically too narrow?

Worksheet: Pre-Mortem for an Upcoming Decision

Choose a decision you are currently facing or one you will face in the next 30 days. Complete this pre-mortem template before committing to a choice.

The decision I am facing

The option I am currently leaning toward

Assume it is 12 months from now and this decision was a complete failure. Describe the failure scenario in 2-3 sentences.

Reason for failure #1 (most likely cause)

Reason for failure #2

Reason for failure #3

Reason for failure #4

Which of these failures can I address now by changing my decision or adding a safeguard?

What would need to be true for this decision to succeed despite these risks?

Has the pre-mortem changed my preferred option? If so, how?

Checklist: Personal Bias Checklist — Use Before Every Important Decision

- I have listed at least three genuinely different options, not three versions of the same option
- I have actively sought out at least two pieces of evidence that argue against my preferred option
- I have identified the first number or frame I encountered and checked whether my estimate has moved away from it
- I have asked myself: what would I do if I had invested nothing in this so far?
- I have expressed my confidence as a percentage and compared it to my historical calibration
- I have run a 2-minute pre-mortem and identified the top failure mode
- If this is a group decision: dissenting views were solicited before the group heard the leader's preference
- I have asked: what would I tell a trusted friend to do in this exact situation?

Structured Decision Frameworks

Build and score a real Decision Matrix, run the WRAP process on a live decision, and practice probability estimation with expected value.

Exercise: Build Your Own Decision Matrix

Identify a real decision you are currently facing with at least 3 options and 3 criteria. Complete the matrix steps in order — set criteria and weights BEFORE scoring any options.

- List all realistic options, including the do-nothing option. How many options did you find once you pushed past the obvious two?

- List 4-6 criteria that actually matter for this decision. Assign weights summing to 100. Did the weighting process reveal any disagreement about what matters most?

- Score each option 1-5 on each criterion independently, without looking at other scores. Then calculate weighted totals. Did the winning option match your gut expectation?

- If gut and matrix diverged: what criterion is missing, or which weight needs adjustment to reflect your true

values? Or is your gut wrong — and why?

Worksheet: WRAP Decision Worksheet

Apply the four WRAP steps to a current real decision. Work through each step in order and do not skip to W-A-P without completing R thoroughly.

The decision

W — Widen: List every option including the vanishing option (what if your top choice disappeared?)

W — Bright spot: who has solved a similar problem well? What did they do?

R — Reality-test: What assumption is most likely to be wrong? How could you test it cheaply?

R — Outside view: What is the base rate of success for decisions like this one?

A — Attain distance: What would I feel about this choice in 10 minutes / 10 months / 10 years?

A — Friend test: What advice would I give a trusted friend in this exact situation?

P — Tripwire: What specific, observable condition will trigger a re-evaluation of this decision?

P — Review date: When exactly will I check whether the tripwire has been hit?

Final recommendation after completing WRAP

Checklist: Framework Selection Guide — Which Tool for Which Decision

- Multiple options + conflicting criteria + some criteria matter more = use a Decision Matrix
- Feeling rushed or emotionally attached = use the WRAP process, especially the Attain Distance step
- Group decision with potential for groupthink = use pre-mortem + leader speaks last + anonymous pre-vote
- Uncertain outcomes with quantifiable values = build a simple expected value calculation or decision tree
- Time pressure = use the 60-second checklist (state decision, name 3 criteria, list options, check top bias, decide, set tripwire)
- Need to communicate to stakeholders = write a one-page Decision Brief before the conversation, not after
- Post-decision review = score process quality and outcome quality separately; update decision log

Exercise: Expected Value Estimation Practice

Choose a decision with uncertain financial or quantifiable outcomes. Estimate probabilities and values to calculate expected value for at least two options.

- List the two to three most likely outcomes for your top option. Assign probabilities to each (they must sum to 100%). Are you confident in those probabilities, or are they guesses?
- Assign a dollar (or time/satisfaction score) value to each outcome. Calculate the expected value: sum of (probability × value) for each outcome.
- Do the same for your second-best option. Which has higher expected value? Does this match your gut

preference?

- What is your downside scenario? Even if EV is positive, is the worst case survivable? If not, what risk mitigation changes the calculus?

Deciding Well in Practice

Write a real decision brief, practice the fast-decision checklist, and design your personal decision system for sustained improvement.

Worksheet: One-Page Decision Brief

Write a formal decision brief for one current or recent significant decision. Use every field. Keep each section to 2-4 sentences maximum — the constraint forces clarity.

Decision statement (one sentence)

Context and trigger: why now?

Option 1: name and brief description

Option 2: name and brief description

Option 3 (or do-nothing): name and brief description

Criteria used (list with weights)

How each option scored on the criteria

Recommendation and primary reason

Key risk #1 and mitigation

Key risk #2 and mitigation

Review date and tripwire condition

Decision maker name and date

Stakeholders notified (Accountable / Consulted / Informed)

Exercise: Fast-Decision Simulation

Set a timer for 60 seconds. Using only the five-step fast-decision checklist, make a call on the following scenario: your team needs to choose between two conference venues for an event in 6 weeks. Venue A is cheaper but farther from transit. Venue B is near transit but 30% over budget. You have 60 seconds.

- Write down the five-step checklist from memory without looking at notes. What step did you skip or struggle to recall?

- Apply the checklist to the scenario above with the timer running. What decision did you reach in 60 seconds?

- Now apply it to a real time-pressured decision you actually face this week. What did you decide?

- What made the fast checklist easier or harder to use than a full framework? Under what conditions would you rely on it?

Checklist: Personal Decision System Setup — 30-Day Activation Plan

- Week 1: Set up a decision log (spreadsheet template in this workbook) and record three decisions with full rationale and confidence percentage
- Week 1: Write out your personal bias checklist (6-8 questions) in your own words and save it somewhere accessible before every major decision
- Week 2: Run a pre-mortem on one current project or pending choice; share findings with at least one colleague
- Week 2: Apply the Decision Matrix to one real decision and document it in the Decision Matrix Template
- Week 3: Write one formal Decision Brief and share it with a stakeholder instead of presenting verbally
- Week 3: Record five probability estimates on verifiable near-term outcomes and calendar a date to score them
- Week 4: Review all log entries from the month; score process quality (1-10) and outcome quality (1-10) for each
- Week 4: Identify your most frequent bias from the month's decisions and name one structural change you will make to counter it
- Schedule a recurring 60-minute quarterly review of your decision log to track calibration trends over time
- Share one insight from this system with a colleague, manager, or report to reinforce the habit through teaching

Your Action Plan

1. Set up your decision log today — a spreadsheet, Notion database, or notebook — and make your first entry on a current decision before the outcome is known
2. Classify your next 10 decisions as Type 1 or Type 2 and apply strict effort proportionality (fast for Type 2, structured for Type 1)
3. Memorize and laminate your personal bias checklist so it is visible before important decisions, not just during a course
4. Run a pre-mortem on every project or initiative you launch for the next 90 days, without exception
5. Apply the Decision Matrix to the next vendor, hire, or strategic choice your team faces — share the matrix with stakeholders before sharing your recommendation
6. Express your next five major estimates as explicit percentages and track whether they are calibrated
7. Write at least one one-page Decision Brief per month and review it against outcome six months later
8. Establish a group decision protocol for your team: leader speaks last, anonymous pre-vote, and a dedicated devil's advocate role
9. Run a 60-minute quarterly review of your decision log, scoring process and outcome quality separately each time
10. Teach one framework from this course to a colleague or report within 30 days — teaching accelerates your own retention and calibration

