



**STUDENT
EXPERIENCE
NETWORK**

A COMMITTEE'S GUIDE TO INFORMED DECISION MAKING

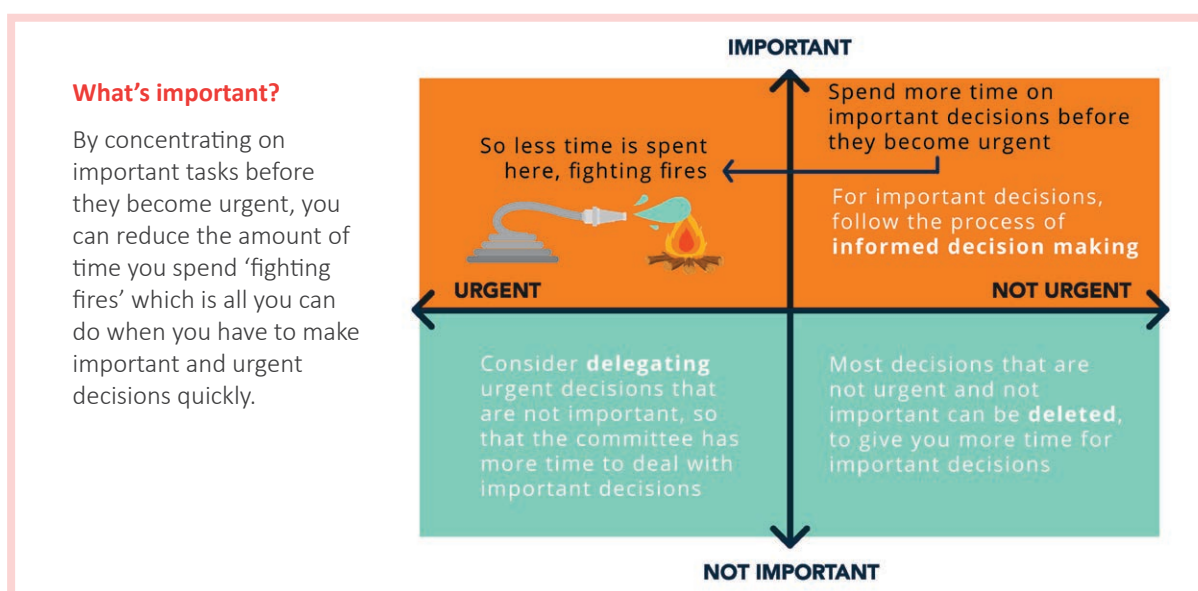
The purpose of committee meetings is to make decisions, not just to have discussions. Making well-informed decisions efficiently allows you to move quickly from 'decision' to 'action', leading to great outcomes for your members.

Step 1: Prepare

Consider the nature, importance and urgency of the required decision.

If the decision will have a significant impact or benefit to the club a thorough process of information gathering is needed before you make the decision.

If a task is **urgent and important** it's often critical to act quickly. Rather than waiting for a scheduled meeting you can share information and make decisions by email. To help a quick decision ensure everyone is aware of the urgency.



Step 2: Set parameters

If the decision is important, follow the process of informed decision making by setting parameters for a good decision.

- What information is required?
- Who will conduct the research?
- Should a subcommittee be formed to gather the information?

It's all about the club

Remember to focus on club interests and not the interests of individuals. Your decisions should link to the objects in your constitution.

Step 3: Gather information

When a committee needs to make an important decision, it should be included on the agenda for the next meeting as a 'motion'. Before the meeting, gather all of the relevant information.

Information gathering can consist of:

- Seeking out members' views (e.g. through a survey and interviews)
- Conducting online research
- Gathering expert and/or external opinions

The wording of the motion (i.e. the decision that the committee intends to make) should be clear and unambiguous on the agenda, allowing committee members to prepare for the decision.

Step 4: Consider the consequences

Every decision has consequences, some good and some bad. Before making an important decision consider the consequences either way.

The Best and Worst Matrix is a helpful tool when considering the consequences of your decisions.

	DO	DON'T	
BEST	What's the best that could happen if we DO ?	What's the best that could happen if we DON'T ?	
	What's the worst that could happen if we DO ?	What's the worst that could happen if we DON'T ?	WORST

The danger of delay

Not making a decision is a decision in itself. Deciding to delay an important decision can have unintended consequences, like delaying the benefits that the club could enjoy by making the right decision.

Step 5: Make the decision

At the scheduled meeting, consider the information gathered and confidently make the decision.

Create actions for implementation and get to work!

Begin the process again from Step 2 if more information is required before an informed decision can be made.

A fair decision

Support all committee member input and follow meeting procedures when debating and voting on the motion to ensure a fair decision.

Step 6: Review

Once you've implemented your decision, monitor the impact of the consequences on your club.

Did you predict the consequences accurately?

Was everyone on board when you implemented the decision?

Did the decision lead to the benefits you expected?

A chance to learn

Making a decision that later turns out to be wrong is better than not making the decision at all. This is a chance to learn what not to do next time and it informs your future decision making.