

Decision-Making for Equity and Inclusion Activity

As leaders in the workplace, each choice you make is an opportunity to lean further into your values to increase diversity, equity, inclusion, AND belonging at our organizations. Being power and systems aware supports a more inclusive and psychologically safe work environment which ultimately supports a greater perception of fairness or equity by your staff. To be an Equity-Minded Leader means to keep inclusion at the forefront and recognize the power of diverse backgrounds and experiences. When staff aren't allowed opportunities to provide input or their input is ignored or dismissed, it can send the message that they aren't valued as an individual outside of their productivity and conformity to organizational norms. How can those differences be affirmed and leveraged in your decision-making?

As organizations take time to establish DEI values and commitments, the commitments must be put into action in ways that will be both effective and align with those values. Embracing equity-minded leadership is one crucial way to drive genuine, deep cultural change at your organization. This resource will help leaders think about how to embed equity into their decision-making and practice tools to set expectations, mitigate biases, and identify opportunities to increase inclusion and belonging.

What is this resource?

This resource includes two sequential exercises to learn about equity-minded leadership and how to embed it into your decision-making. It is meant for individuals who are key decision-makers within their organization such as an executive director or program manager. It can be adjusted for a group by choosing one decision to use as an example throughout the exercises.

Who is it for?

Executive Directors

Supervisors

Key decision-makers (i.e. Project leads)

What will you gain through this resource?

Understanding of Equity-Minded Leadership Principles and Practices.

Practice using decision-making tools.

Equity Impact Assessment

Exercise 1: Decision-Making for Equity and Inclusion

Activity Time: 45-60 minutes

Instructions:

1. Watch the TREC [Decisiveness and Decision-Making Tutorial](#) - 16:11 min
2. Read the TREC resource [Decision-Making for Equity and Inclusion](#).
3. Brainstorm one key decision you are responsible for. What is a **question, problem, or decision** you're wrestling with? *Consider something that is tied to overall organizational goals (e.g. Hire a new staff member, draft an employee policy, identify a new program partner, etc.)*
4. Review the [DARCI decision-making model](#).
5. Complete the DARCI template below using the key decision identified in step 3.

This exercise can be adjusted for a full group by choosing one decision to work on collectively.

PROJECT	D Decision-Maker	A Accountable	R Responsible	C Consultant	I Informed

Exercise 2: Decision-Making Equity Assessment

Activity Time: 60-90 minutes

Instructions:

Individually respond to the following questions for the key decision identified in the Pre-Work exercise. If your team chooses to work through one decision together, the worksheet can be filled out as a group.

Equity Assessment Questions

- 1. What is the main question, problem, or decision you need to make?**
- 2. What decision-making method will you use?**
 - Which mode reflects how I will make this decision?
 - *I decide (independent), we decide (consult/equal), you decide (delegate)*
 - Why is this the best method to use?
 - How could this method empower and engage the rest of the team?
 - How will you develop a shared understanding of this decision-making mode with your team?
- 3. What criteria (values, guiding principles) will be used to make the decision?**
- 4. What type of input do you need?**
 - Who will be impacted by this decision? Are there patterns along the lines of race, gender, or other identities I need to be mindful of?
 - Who has experience and expertise with the problem you're trying to solve?
 - Where can I build in more authentic collaboration or seek out new perspectives that are frequently left out?
 - Who could likely anticipate risks and problems that you might miss?
 - Who has desires or considerations that might be in the minority or be different from yours?
 - Who has personal identities, experiences, or roles that may be on the margins of your team?
 - Who has been historically left out of similar decision-making processes?
- 5. How will the input be used to inform the decision?**
- 6. What is your overall timeline of the decision-making process?**
 - When will you solicit input?
 - When will you announce the decision once it has been made and inform the necessary stakeholders?
- 7. How will you debrief and evaluate the decision-making process?**
 - If you chose a collaborative process, how would you get feedback on what worked and didn't work to have a more inclusive and participatory process in the future?
 - How will you evaluate the outcomes of your decision?
 - Is there evidence of negative unintended consequences for marginalized staff members? For stakeholders from marginalized communities?

Adapted from Toolkit for Equity-Minded Decisions & Policies, Equity in Decision-Making, and The Management Center.

Sources

- [Using Fair Process to Make Better Decisions](#) – The Management Center
- [Toolkit for Equity-Minded Decisions and Policies](#) - University of Virginia
- [Equity in Decision-Making](#) - California State University
- [How DE&I Enhances Decision-Making and Team Morale](#) - Advancing Security Worldwide
- [Decision Making for Equity: Applying the VIBE Framework for More Equitable Outcomes](#) - Faculty Focus
- [Your Decision Making Methods Can Improve DEI and Drive Culture Change](#) - August
- [Leaking Talent Report](#) - Green 2.0