MERCURY

Decision-Making for Leaders and Managers

26 – 30 April 2027
Amsterdam (Netherlands)



Dubai - UAE: +971 4 450 5697
Istanbul - Türkiye: +90 539 599 1206
Amman - Jordan: +962 79 712 3347

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Ref: 121438_1032605 **Date:** 26 – 30 April 2027 **Location:** Amsterdam (Netherlands) **Fees:** 5600 Euro

Introduction

Effective decision-making is a fundamental skill that distinguishes high-performing leaders and managers in dynamic organizational environments. This Decision-Making for Leaders and Managers course explores both the theory and practice of decision-making processes, enabling participants to understand how choices impact teams, projects, and long-term organizational success. Throughout the program, learners will examine frameworks for evaluating strategic alternatives, analyzing risks, and implementing sound judgments in complex situations. It emphasizes the development of critical thinking, problem-solving, and ethical reasoning to navigate uncertainty with confidence. The curriculum combines leadership perspectives, awareness of cognitive biases, and practical applications to ensure decisions lead to measurable outcomes. Participants will lead teams with clarity, influence, and purpose through effective decision strategies.

Targeted Groups

This Decision-Making for Leaders and Managers training targets professionals seeking knowledge and skills:

- Mid-level managers are responsible for team and project decisions.
- Senior leaders are guiding strategic organizational choices.
- Emerging leaders are preparing for greater managerial responsibility.
- Human resources or talent development professionals.
- Project leads aiming to strengthen risk assessment skills.
- Department heads are improving the quality of leadership decisions.

Course Objectives

Participants will achieve the following objectives by completing the Decision-Making for Leaders and Managers course:

- Recognize key principles and models of high-impact decision-making in leadership roles.
- Analyze organizational challenges using structured decision-making approaches.
- Apply tools for effective problem analysis, prioritization, and solution design.
- Identify common cognitive biases and barriers affecting managerial judgment.
- Practice ethical decision-making frameworks aligned with organizational values.
- Enhance confidence in strategic thinking and leadership influence.
- Improve abilities to evaluate risk, uncertainty, and alternative outcomes.
- Strengthen communication skills for explaining and defending decisions.
- Build capacity for collaborative decision processes in diverse teams.
- Create action plans to implement decisions within complex systems.

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Targeted Competencies

Participants will gain the following competencies during the Decision-Making for Leaders and Managers program:

- Competence in selecting appropriate decision-making frameworks for varied business contexts.
- Skill in identifying internal and external factors shaping critical decisions.
- Ability to assess evidence, interpret data trends, and draw valid conclusions.
- Confidence in balancing short-term actions with long-term strategic priorities.
- Competence in anticipating unintended consequences of managerial decisions.
- Skill in facilitating group decision sessions with clarity and focus.
- Ability to integrate risk assessment and contingency planning into decisions.
- Competence in evaluating outcome metrics to support continuous improvement.
- Skill in navigating ethical dilemmas and aligning decisions with core values.
- Ability to communicate reasoning and influence stakeholders effectively.

Studying Scenarios

In this Decision-Making for Leaders and Managers training, participants develop skills through the following scenarios:

- Analyzing a strategic shift when entering a new market with competing priorities.
- Resolving staffing-allocation dilemmas to balance productivity and team well-being.
- Prioritizing investment decisions amid a limited budget and conflicting demands.
- Making ethical choices when organizational values are under external pressure.
- Negotiating decisions in cross-functional teams with differing goals.
- Assessing risk trade-offs when launching a high-impact initiative.
- Interpreting performance data to guide corrective or course-adjustment decisions.

Course Content

Unit 1: Foundations of Decision-Making

- Definition of decision-making in leadership and managerial contexts.
- Understanding the role of decisions in organizational strategy execution.
- Differentiating strategic, operational, tactical, and emergency decisions.
- Overview of decision models: rational, intuitive, participative, and adaptive approaches.
- Key elements of decision processes: objectives, alternatives, criteria, and outcomes.
- The influence of organizational culture and structure on choices.
- Exploring leadership styles that support strong decision outcomes.
- Introduction to decision quality indicators and performance metrics.

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Unit 2: Analytical Tools and Frameworks for Effective Choices

- Applying SWOT analysis to structure informed decisions.
- Using decision trees and flow maps for complex scenarios.
- Introduction to cost-benefit and value-based evaluation methods.
- Scenario planning to anticipate future contingencies.
- Techniques for root cause analysis and problem definition.
- Prioritization tools: Pareto analysis and weighted scoring matrices.
- Introduction to performance dashboards and situational data interpretation.
- Linking analytical tools to goal-driven decision outputs.

Unit 3: Cognitive Biases, Emotional Intelligence, and Ethical Judgments

- Identifying common cognitive biases that degrade decision quality.
- The role of emotional intelligence in leadership decisions.
- Techniques to mitigate bias and enhance objectivity.
- Ethical decision frameworks and organizational value alignment.
- Exploring moral dilemmas and responsibility in managerial choices.
- Balancing head-based analysis with people-focused considerations.
- Integrating ethical standards into policy and process decisions.
- Case studies highlighting the impacts of bias and resolution strategies.

Unit 4: Collaborative and Inclusive Decision Processes

- Defining collaborative decision-making and shared leadership.
- Methods for engaging stakeholders in transparent choices.
- Building consensus without sacrificing accountability.
- Communication strategies for facilitation and conflict resolution.
- Balancing divergent views to achieve collective buy-in.
- Tools for group decision support: brainstorming and the nominal group technique.
- Managing team dynamics that affect decisions.
- Inclusive practices to ensure diverse perspectives.

Unit 5: Implementing Decisions and Measuring Impact

- Turning decisions into actionable plans with clear timelines.
- Identifying key performance indicators tied to decision success.
- Techniques for monitoring, feedback loops, and corrective adjustments.
- Risk management plans with the selected course of action.
- Communicating decisions effectively to internal and external stakeholders.
- Strategies to maintain agility in dynamic business environments.
- Embedding learning from outcomes into leadership practice.
- Reflection exercises to build personal decision roadmaps for future challenges.

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Final Insights & Key Takeaways

Leaders and managers will leave this program with a deeper understanding of how to make well-informed, ethical decisions that support organizational success and team engagement. Participants will also gain the confidence to apply analytical and collaborative decision strategies in real-world environments with measurable impact.