SuCo2 Research Group

GUIDELINES

DECISION RECOMMENDATION MATRIX

Problems, open questions and challenges arise in every research project, be it a term paper, a thesis or funded grant work. They usually require consultation with others. **How can we make best use of our time and ensure that meetings produce high-quality outcomes?**

The decision recommendation matrix is a helpful tool to achieve these goals. The main idea behind it is that a consultation **should not start with open questions** or a problem statement, but by presenting different possible answers and solutions to it. The matrix is a tool that allows to **think through in advance of a meeting** possible ways in which a problem could be addressed, to identify benefits and downsides of each possible approach, and to come to an informed proposal which solution you would recommend. The following flowchart visualizes the steps involved. You will find that when you prepare your next meeting using the matrix, the meeting will be much more focused, productive and efficient.

(1) **Define** problem / open question / challenge							

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(2) Identify and describe **possible solutions** to it							

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Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option *n*	
Description		Description		Description		Description	

⬇

(3) Identify and describe **benefits** and **downsides** for each option							

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Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option *n*	
Benefits	Downsides	Benefits	Downsides	Benefits	Downsides	Benefits	Downsides

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(4) **Compare** and **evaluate** different options							

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(5) **Give** informed decision **recommendation**							