

Making Decisions

Let's imagine that we are marketing a product, and we need to decide which social media platform to market the product on. There are many options here, such as Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, so we need to **weigh up** the pros and cons of all of these options. In order to do that, there may be many **factors** which we need to take into consideration, such as the price, the audience for each platform, the reach of each platform etc. We



might need to **carry out** some **comprehensive research**

into each platform, so that we can discuss these factors in more detail with the team. If we look at Facebook, the pros could be that the price of advertising is very low, and the cons could be that the audience of Facebook is too old for our product. We should also **factor in** the location of where we want to advertise the product, and whether that specific social media platform is popular in that area. After we have finished weighing up the pros and cons, we might find that there are more pros

than cons, for which we can say that the pros **outweigh** the cons, which would mean that this option is a good idea. By weighing up all of our options, and factoring in everything which is important, we can **pinpoint** the most effective option moving forward. It may be more tempting just to make a quick decision, but following this much longer process is certainly worth it. It will certainly **pay off** in the long run.



A) Match the phrases to the definitions

Based on the context of the article, can you match the words in the box to the definitions listed below? Then add the word into the example sentence. You may need to change the form of the word to fit the meaning of the sentence.

to weigh up	to carry out	to outweigh	to pinpoint
to pay off	factor	comprehensive research	to factor in something

1. A fact or a thing which contributes to a result: _____

"There are many _____ that we need to consider in order to make the right decision."

2. To find something very precisely: _____

"We have managed to _____ the root cause of the problem."

3. To do something or perform a process: _____

"We have _____ a detailed assessment into all of the potential risks."

4. To evaluate something very carefully, including all of the positives and negatives, risks and benefits: _____

"I think that we need to _____ a few more options before rushing into a decision."

5. To include something when you are weighing up your options: _____

"If we _____ last years results."

6. To be more significant than something else in the outcome of a decision:

"You will need to dress smartly in order to _____ a professional image."

7. Research which is very detailed:

"We need to approach this project with a really positive _____."

8. To give a good result after a difficult process:

"I really want to _____ my English skills."

B) Key Words in a New Context

Below you can find a paragraph. Can you fill in the gaps in the paragraph with the words from the box below? One of the words in the box is used twice. You may need to change the form of some of the verbs in order for them to fit into the sentence.

Take something into consideration	to weigh up	to carry out
To dig deep into	to pinpoint	to pay off
		to outweigh

How to avoid making rash decisions in an emergency

We all know the feeling. Stress is running high, deadlines are fast approaching and suddenly an unwanted problem comes up out of nowhere. You need to make a decision on how to solve it, and fast. The temptation is to make a quick decision without _____ any of the pros and cons and just hope for the best. This kind of approach almost never _____, as the decision will likely not bring the desired solution that you are looking for.

So how should you make a decision in a crisis? Well, the first step is to take a deep

breath, take a step back and think for a second about what exactly is happening. You then need to take some time to collect all the information that can help you to solve the problem. One major error in making decisions quickly is that you might miss some of the most important factors that you need to _____ in order to make the right decision. Read articles on the subject and _____ as much research as possible into the problem. This may take some time, but if you _____ into the problem then you are more likely to _____ the most effective solution. Don't try to solve the problem all by yourself. Call a meeting with your team, an emergency meeting if necessary, and bounce a few ideas around. Do the positives _____ the negatives? Do the benefits _____ the risks?

After you have followed all of these steps, the key now is to be confident enough to make the decision and implement it, safe in the knowledge that this is now a measured decision taken through implementing the correct steps.

You can find a similar article in the link below:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/biancamillercole/2020/04/14/follow-these-7-steps-for-good-decision-making-in-a-crisis/>

C) Comprehension Questions

1. In the first paragraph, the author says that ‘an unwanted problem comes up out of nowhere’. What do you think the author means with the phrase ‘come up’ in this sentence?

2. What 3 pieces of advice does the author give for making a good decision in a crisis?

3. What do you think the author means by ‘bounce ideas around’ in the second paragraph?

4. What is a ‘rash’ decision and what is a ‘measured decision’?

5. To what extent do you agree with the author’s advice about making a decision in a crisis?

E) More Uses of Selected Key Words**To weigh up**

'weigh up' is very flexible and can be used with a range of phrases:

to weigh up our options

"We need to weigh up all of our options before deciding on a suitable venue for the event"

to weigh up between.. and ..

"The HR department is currently weighing up between Spain and France for the next team- building trip"

to weigh up the pros and cons of something

"We need to weigh up the pros and cons of each strategy before coming to a decision"

to weigh up whether to do something

"I am currently weighing up whether to change career direction"

to weigh up + (question word: which / how / what / who)

"The HR department are weighing up who has been the most promising candidate throughout the interview process"

To carry out

Here are some great collocations with 'carry out':

carry out research / carry out an analysis / carry out an assessment / carry out tests / carry out an experiment/ carry out a survey / carry out a task / carry out a role / carry out a project

To pinpoint

This is a great phrase, because nearly every meeting has the goal of pinpointing the solution to a problem or pinpointing the best strategy moving forward. The three best uses of pinpoint are:

To pinpoint the root cause of a problem

To pinpoint the solution to the problem

To pinpoint the most effective strategy

To pay off

With the use of 'pay off' that we have been looking at, we cannot 'pay off something'. Basically, 'we did something and it paid off (because..)':

"I prepared really well for the interview, and it paid off because I got the job"

We can also use this with a simple noun, but it is a bit more restrictive in this use:

“Hard work always pays off”

“My determination really paid off because I achieved my goal in the end.”

To outweigh

The phrase outweigh is extremely useful, especially as it doesn't really have a synonym. However, it is mainly restricted to the following phrases:

The pros outweigh the cons

The advantages outweigh the disadvantages

The benefits outweigh the risks

The benefits outweigh the costs