Values Based Decision Making

Making Good Decisions that Last

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What is ethics in Public Health?
One's philosophy is not best expressed in words; it is expressed in the choices one makes. In the long run, we shape our lives and we shape ourselves. The process never ends until we die. And the choices we make are ultimately our responsibility.

Eleanor Roosevelt
The Meaning of Integrity

- People with integrity have “character”
- Character is a set of qualities such as:
  - Honesty
  - Fidelity to promises, principles
  - Courage to face difficult issues
- Decisions have integrity when they are:
  - Comprehensive
  - Coherent
  - Transparent
What will we learn?

By the end of this session, you will be able to:

• Describe the steps in the values based decision making process
• Conduct dialogue with stakeholders to identify important values for making a decision
• Identify the potential unintended consequences of a decision
• Make values based decisions
• Identify potential negative consequences of a decision
• Communicate decisions using a decision summary form
Key Definitions

• **Value** – a standard or principle that is meaningful to an individual, group, or organization... *things that matter*

• **Ethical** – right, good, and honorable in conduct and character
  – also requires the ability to give sufficient reasons for a moral value judgment
Assumptions

• Values drive all choices
• Ethical is more than legal
• Tough decisions require choosing one principle or value over another
• Every tough decision has a downside
The Road to a Good Decision

1. Clarify
2. Comprehend
3. Commit
4. Choose
5. Communicate

Need

Credible
Durable
Effective
We see the world not the way it is. We see the world the way we are.

Talmud
The Road to a Good Decision

1. Clarify
2. Comprehend
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Credible
Durable
Effective
Clarify…

…the point of view you and others bring to this issue.

Activity: Framing (brief sharing of your perspective, listening to others’ perspectives)

Trigger Questions:
“What is my first ‘take’ on this?”
“How point-of-view do I have in this situation?”
An ounce of dialogue is worth a pound of monologue.
The Road to a Good Decision

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Credible
Durable
Effective
Comprehend…

…the range of what matters to you and to others involved in the issue or impacted by it.

**Activity:** Dialogue (naming values and reflecting back what you understand others are saying)

**Trigger Questions:**

“What is important to me in this issue?”

“What matters to others?”
Not everything that counts can be counted. Not everything that can be counted counts.

Sign in Albert Einstein’s Office
The Road to a Good Decision

1. Clarify
2. Comprehend
3. Commit
4. Choose
5. Communicate

Need

Credible
Durable
Effective
Commit…

…to the values that matter most.

**Activities:** Weighing (Advocate for the most important values)

**Trigger Questions:**

“Among the range of identified values, what is MOST important that should guide the decision?”

“Why should it be given priority?”
You don’t have to be an ichthyologist to know when a fish stinks.

Daniel Ellsberg, U.S.
The Road to a Good Decision

1. Clarify
2. Comprehend
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Need

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Durable
Effective
Choose…

…the option that follows most closely from the guiding value(s).

**Activities:** develop/consider options; assess values ‘fit’ and downside for each option

**Trigger Questions:**

“Which one of the possible options aligns best with my top value(s)?”

“What will the undesirable impacts be?” “Who will bear the burden of this decision?”
If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.

African proverb
The Road to a Good Decision

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2. Comprehend
3. Commit
4. Choose
5. Communicate

Need

Credible
Durable
Effective
Communicate...

...the decision to those who have a need/right to know.

**Activities:** develop clear, transparent summary of decision; determine audience, timing, and method of communication

**Trigger Questions:**

“How can we transparently communicate the decision including the reasons and the likely downside?”

“How should hear about this, when, and from whom?”
A Decision With Integrity Is...

Comprehensive
Inclusive..Stakeholders considered

Courage
Fidelity
Honesty
The Road to a Good Decision

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2. Comprehend
3. Commit
4. Choose
5. Communicate

- Credible
- Durable
- Effective