

# **Tough Calls**

**Making the right decisions in challenging times**

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**In losing firms, people were not wilfully blind. They were arrogant, complacent and simply too embedded in the problem to see it.**

**This situation explains why companies in a crisis so often need an outsider to put them right. The outsider may not be wiser, but he/she is sufficiently objective to identify the problems relatively easily and carries no baggage.**

**When you're dealing with a major problem, the first challenge is to boil it down to a few executable solutions. Make too many decisions and chaos will ensure.**

**All great failures were once a great success. Getting back to the 'system of success' or 'back to the future-with modernity' is often all that is required to restore success over time.**

**You must always make a decision  
even if you are not 100 pc sure.  
Procrastination is damaging.**

**If you get distracted by all the noise that goes on in an organisation you will never get anything done.**



**Making a decision –  
particularly a major one  
requires both focus and  
resolve.**

**When people ask me what makes a good CEO , I say relentlessness. The job is relentless.It comes at you relentlessly and you have to be relentless in your decision making.You have to be prepared for that.**

**Follow your instincts, keep your head and don't panic, even if others around you don't want to go in the same direction.**

**Hire exceptional  
people, light the flame  
and let them get on  
with it.**

**A right decision , doesn't  
become a wrong decision  
because it is not popular in all  
quarters.**

**The big mistake many modern executives make is to believe that they can win a popularity contest if they avoid difficult decisions.**

**Culture is a major aspect of a company's competitive edge. You can copy most things-products, systems, but you can't copy culture because you can't see it.**

**For a leader, culture is a  
third of what you inherit, a  
third of what you put in  
and a third is pot luck.**



**The first thing is that there is no room for dithering when times get tough. One of the most demotivating things for everyone is when a leader can't make up his/her mind.**

**If you are in a sinking ship, you don't want the captain to say 'let's see what happens.'**

**Indecision is unsettling, constant indecision will undermine the authority of the person at the top.**

**Create a culture where everyone is prepared to tell the truth. Without total transparency you will never have the right data on which to base your decisions.**

**The data wont make the decision for you.You can analyse it in a million ways,but in the end you still have to make the decision.**

**Listen to the commentary and criticism from outside, but never forget that you know more about the business than they do.**

**One of the hardest decisions is knowing how far you can push the business. The CEO always has to push the business farther than it wants to go itself!!!**

**Good leaders and decision makers are often slightly paranoid. They are always looking ahead, trying to predict what might go wrong.**

**Leading a company and making all the decisions that go with it is not a job – it is fun. There is no such thing as stress. stress just means that you are not enjoying yourself.**



**When great things happen,  
they happen because of really  
good people, good  
teamwork, fantastic amounts of  
hard work and a giant dose of  
luck**

**Never grab an opportunity to simply get you out of trouble. Always think overall strategy when considering a move.**

**Short termism reduces  
your ability to make tough  
decisions in an intelligent  
way.**

**It is good to trust others to help you with your decisions but you need to do your own homework to understand whether the advice you are getting is well founded.**

**The real leaders are the ones who  
can get everyone energized  
behind a decision in a way that is  
fun and challenging.**

**Decisions about people are always the toughest. You should take it very personally and worry about getting them right. If you don't feel like that, you should get out.**

**While tasks can be  
delegated,  
responsibility never  
can**

**Devote at least 25 % of your time communicating your decisions to every one. Make sure your managers do that too.**



**Always have the difficult  
conversations, if you  
don't the problem won't  
go away.**

**It is useful to take the contrary view to other people's decisions- it forces them to justify and understand why they made that choice.**

**If your integrity is high, you can have a high degree of confidence that, even if other people may not agree with you, they can't really criticise you.**

**Being a boss is not as sexy as people think. It means making yourself unpopular, cutting costs, sacking people, changing things. People hate change, but if you don't change things, things don't move forward.**

**That is why  
leadership is lonely  
and it is tough.**

# Every decision requires...

- **Step in**
- **Collect and digest the best information available at the time**
- **Make the decision**
- **Communicate the decision**
- **Make sure it happens**
- **Move on.**

**Good decision makers are never complacent when things don't go well, they don't panic when things go wrong and they do not shy away from making tough calls or having difficult conversations.**

**Good decision makers know that they will rarely get any decision 100 pc right and they will get some wrong.They know they have to make a decision and hedging bets never works.**