



IO1/A3. TRANSVERSAL SKILLS ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY AND SUPPORTING ACTIONS



SEE FIRST

SEE FIRST

Problem solving: Decision Making

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TITLE OF THE DELIVERABLE

PROJECT INFORMATION

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PROJECT TITLE: SEEKING FIRST JOB EQUIPPED WITH PROPER SOFT SKILLS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents

1. Guidelines	3
1. Skill category (Problem Solving)	4
1.1 Skill subcategory (Decision Making).....	4



1. GUIDELINES

GUIDELINES

- Prepare 6 goal cards per skill subcategory. For example, 6 goal cards for Active listening and 6 for Negotiation.
- Fill in all the fields and maintain the formatting and structure
- Each proposed activity should be in a separate card – don't combine 2 activities in one card and don't divide 1 activity into 2 cards.
- To add a new goal card, copy and paste one of the existing goal cards
- At the end of each skill subcategory, prepare 6-8 assessment questions.



1. Skill category (Problem Solving)

1.1 Skill subcategory (Decision Making)

1.1.1 INTRODUCTION

This will be shown to all the users when they click on one of the skill subcategories. It will appear on the right side of the wheel.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SKILL

Decision-making involves the selection between two or more possible alternatives in order to solve a given problem. Many soft skills can be essential in the process of decision-making. Some of them are: problem-solving, leadership, reasoning, emotional intelligence, creativity, time management, organization.

For someone to make decisions effectively, there are some steps that need to follow:

1. Define the problem
2. Gather relevant information
3. Identify alternatives
4. Weigh the options
5. Choose the best possible option
6. Plan and execute
7. Review and take follow up action

1.1.2. GOAL CARDS

Classification of problems

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

Good problem solving and the ability to make rational and effective decisions are essential in all job positions. The first step for being an effective problem solver is identifying and classifying the type of problems you are facing.



Problems can be classified into four types. They are: "Question-based problems", "Situation-based problems", "Convincing-based problems" and "Solving-based problems". In each of these types you need to follow a specific approach to overcome them.

Question-based problems

These types of problems involve a question that needs an answer. Sometimes it is difficult to find the answer as you may not have access to all the relevant data and facts. If you are facing this type of problem, you should get as many facts and data as possible that will help you make the right decision.

Situation-based problems

These types of problems are based on a situation that is causing you a dilemma. For instance, your boss asked you to go on a business trip in two weeks, but if you accept you will miss your daughter's birthday.

Convincing based problems

In these types of problem, you might have information that others don't and as such you need to convince the others of your perspective.

Solving based problems

This category includes solving based problems which basically means that you have a problem that needs a solution. The solution can either have a short term, midterm, or long-term effect. So, you have to choose the most suitable solution for the specific situation.

Problems can be also categorised in terms of their difficulty. Ford introduced four categories with different level difficulty for mathematics and science problems, but this categorization can be also used in several types of problems:

Easy: problems that can be solved immediately with very little thought.

Medium: problems that:

- a. Can be solved after some thought.
- b. May require more steps in comparison with easy problems.
- c. Can probably be solved without too much difficulty, but some practice is necessary.

Ugly: problems that will take a while to be solved, as they:

- a. Involve a lot of thought.



- b. Involve many steps.
- c. May require the use of several different concepts.

Hard: problems usually involve dealing with one or more unknown facts. Solving them:

- a. Involves a lot of thought.
- b. Requires some research.
- c. May also require starting the decision process from the beginning.

Now that you are aware of the different types of problems you can take part in the following game.

This game consists of five rounds, and each of them lasts 10 minutes.

To start with, sit down in a circle and select a topic area (e.g., miscommunication with colleagues). Then come up with a real or fictional problem in that area. Take a piece of paper and write down the problem. When you all complete the description of the problem pass the piece of paper to the player on the left. In this round, the players should categorise the problem. Once the time is up, give the paper again to the player on your left. Now, you have to come up with a solution to this problem, based on the data and categorisation. At the end of the time limit, each player has to rotate the paper to the next player as you did in the previous rounds. In this round, you have to criticize the solution. Write down the negative aspects that you spotted. When this round ends, pass the paper to the next player. This time you have to come up with an improved solution.

When you complete the final round, discuss the problems, the categorisation, and the solutions. Do you all agree? What would you have done differently?

TYPE OF THE ACTIVITY

Simple activity that can be implemented immediately without requiring the completion of another activity.

CONNECTED ACTIVITIES

-

TOOLS & RESOURCES NEEDED

Piece of paper, pen/pencil



TIME REQUIRED

50-60 min

Number of learners

1-14

RELEVANT SECTORS

Include one or more sectors to which this skill is relevant. Please choose from the sectors below:

- **Aesthetics**
- **Agriculture**
- **Arts**
- **Culinary arts**
- **Economics**
- **Education**
- **Engineering**
- **Informatics**
- **Law**
- **Management**
- **Medical and Health Care (including veterinary)**
- **Military**
- **Natural sciences**
- **Office Administration**
- **Public administration**
- **Social sciences**
- **Sports**
- **Tourism**

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

4 types of problems: <https://www.leanuk.org/four-types-of-problems/>

Webinar-4 types of problems: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6lWBtolwDrs>

REFERENCES

SessionLab. (2020, December 18). Workshop Planning Made Simple with. <https://www.sessionlab.com>



Theyagu, D., & Theyagu, D. (n.d.). 4 Types of Problem Classification and How to Solve Them. EzineArticles. Retrieved March 5, 2021, from <https://ezinearticles.com/?4-Types-of-Problem-Classification-and-How-to-Solve-Them&id=3551323#:~:text=Problems%20can%20be%20classified%20into,approach%20to%20tackle%20and%20overcome>

Kasser, J., & Zhao, Y.-Y. (2017). The myths and the reality of problem-solving. INCOSE International Symposium, 27(1), 1114–1124. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2334-5837.2017.00416.x>

IMAGE

<https://pixabay.com/el/illustrations/%CE%B5%CF%80%CE%B9%CE%BB%CF%8D%CF%83%CE%B5%CE%B9-%CF%80%CE%B1%CE%B6%CE%BB-%CF%80%CF%81%CF%8C%CE%B2%CE%BB%CE%B7%CE%BC%CE%B1-%CE%AD%CE%BD%CE%BD%CE%BF%CE%B9%CE%B1-2636254/>

INTRODUCTION

In this activity you will learn the different types of problems and how to categorize them in these types. This activity also contains a team game that will assist you in identifying the different forms of problems.

Steps involved in decision-making

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

Decision-making involves many steps, from choosing a solution to monitoring it. The next time you need to make a decision, use a notebook and a pencil/pen to complete the following steps.

Step 1: Define the problem and the decision to be made.

Write down the problem or the decision you want to take. An example can be "I want to learn Chinese".

Step 2: Consider all the possible solutions and alternatives. At this stage, you need to brainstorm several solutions. So, write down the first thing that comes to your mind, without judging.

Some of the possible solutions could include:

"I will start private lessons".



"I will download a free app".

"I will ask my friend to teach me".

Step 3. Write down all the positive and the negative perspectives for making or not making this choice.

e.g., "I will start private lessons".

Positives: The learning process will be of high quality.

I will meet new people

Negatives: It can cost a lot of money

It will require me to dedicate a lot of time.

Step 4. Weight the positives and negatives for each of the different alternatives.

Give a score out of 10 to each alternative. A score of 1/10 would mean that this aspect is unimportant, while a score 10/10 it would mean that this is very important for making a decision.

e.g., "I will meet new people" may get a score 5/10. That means that is not very important to you. "It can cost a lot of money" may get a score 9/10 because you can't afford the lessons right now.

Step 5. Select the best alternative

Consider all the alternatives and choose the best one. You may choose the option of learning Chinese with the help of your friend who already knows. This way you will have fun and it will not cost you anything.

Step 6. Implement the solution

Now that you have chosen the solution, you have to create a plan on how to implement it. We will follow the previous option of taking lessons with your friend. Answer the following questions to define your plan.

-When will you begin your lessons?

-How long will the lessons last?

-What will happen if you cannot find a common time slot with your friend?

Step 7. Monitor progress

Set a date when you will review the progress and the way you managed the solution.

Step 8. Review



Did your decision bring the envisaged results? If your decision eventually didn't work out, you can go back and start the decision-making process again.

TYPE OF THE ACTIVITY

Simple activity that can be implemented immediately without requiring the completion of another activity.

CONNECTED ACTIVITIES

-

TOOLS & RESOURCES NEEDED

Notebook, pencil/pen

TIME REQUIRED

60-70 min

Number of learners

1

RELEVANT SECTORS

Include one or more sectors to which this skill is relevant. Please choose from the sectors below:

- **Aesthetics**
- **Agriculture**
- **Arts**
- **Culinary arts**
- **Economics**
- **Education**
- **Engineering**
- **Informatics**
- **Law**
- **Management**
- **Medical and Health Care (including veterinary)**
- **Military**
- **Natural sciences**
- **Office Administration**



- **Public administration**
- **Social sciences**
- **Sports**
- **Tourism**

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

7 Steps of the Decision-Making Process: <https://www.lucidchart.com/blog/decision-making-process-steps>

What is Decision Making? <https://www.managementstudyguide.com/what-is-decision-making.htm>

What is problem solving? <https://asq.org/quality-resources/problem-solving>

REFERENCES

Climate Schools. (n.d.). Decision-making and Problem-solving: Class Activity. Positive Choices. Retrieved March 2, 2021, from <https://positivechoices.org.au/documents/huw8sv6VzK/worksheet-decisionmakingproblemsolving/>

IMAGE

<https://pixabay.com/el/photos/%CF%80%CF%81%CF%8C%CE%B2%CE%BB%CE%B7%CE%BC%CE%B1-%CE%BB%CF%8D%CF%83%CE%B7-%CE%B2%CE%BF%CE%AE%CE%B8%CE%B5%CE%B9%CE%B1-%CF%85%CF%80%CE%BF%CF%83%CF%84%CE%AE%CF%81%CE%B9%CE%BE%CE%B7-2731501/>

INTRODUCTION

After completing this activity you will learn the stages of the decision-making process and the steps you need to follow to solve problems by assessing the situation, creating alternatives, weighing your options, and monitoring their progress.

SWOT Analysis

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

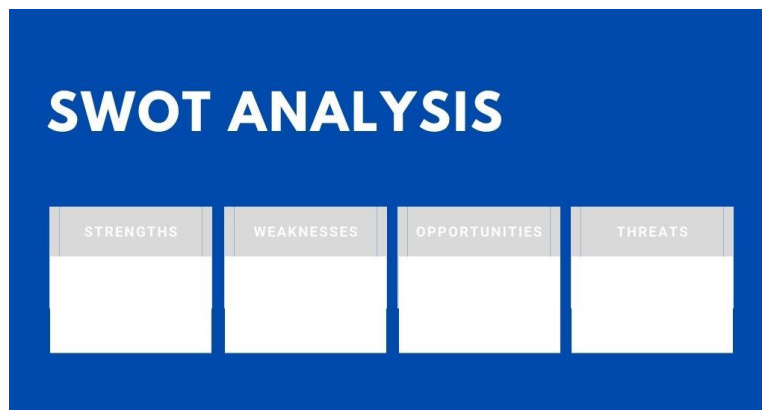


SWOT analysis is a tool used for strategic planning and strategic management in organisations. It is useful for building organisational strategy and competitive strategy. The acronym SWOT stands for 'strengths', 'weakness', 'opportunities' and 'threats'. The SWOT Analysis, also referred to as 'SWOT Matrix', can also be formulated as 'TOWS Analysis' or 'TOWS Matrix'. SWOT Analysis has two dimensions: Internal and external. The internal dimension includes organisational factors, and it can be measured through strengths and weaknesses, while external dimension includes environmental factors, which can be measured through opportunities and threats.

In fact, SWOT analysis can be used in many aspects of our lives to help us make the right decision. So, you can use a SWOT analysis to determine your career path.

More than one learner can implement the next activity. If you are more than 2 people can use a whiteboard or cardboard and sticky notes. In case you want to do this activity online, you can use an online collaborative whiteboard platform such as miro (<https://miro.com/>) or jamboard (<https://jamboard.google.com/>).

To create a standard SWOT analysis, draw a box and separate it into four squares. Each square will contain one following topics: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. See the image below:



Step 1: Identify your strengths

If you are a team, you can decide which of you will start first. Define the person and then all of you create sticky notes with the strengths of this person. Collaborative work is essential in this part, as other people can help us identify skills and abilities that we aren't aware of. Listing your strengths can help you create a resume and cover letter that showcase your strongest qualifications.

Step 2: Detect your weaknesses

In the second step, all of you can create notes about someone's weaknesses. Reviewing your weaknesses will help you understand which of your skills need improvement.



Step 3: List all the available opportunities

Opportunities can be external factors relevant to your situation, such as available courses for improving your skills and knowledge, current job opportunities, market trends, etc.

Step 4: Understand any potential threats

In this stage you should consider all the external factors that put you at a disadvantage, such as small job market, potential competitors, high unemployment rates. Understanding potential threats can help you identify the possible risks, turn them into an opportunity, or create an alternative strategy.

When you complete the brainstorming, discuss all the aspects of the SWOT analysis you have identified. Now it's the time for the final step.

Step 5. Make a decision

Review your list and determine if the strengths and opportunities outweigh the weaknesses and threats. If there are more negative aspects, consider how you can improve your situation and actions you should take to improve your career path.

TYPE OF THE ACTIVITY

Simple activity that can be implemented immediately without requiring the completion of another activity.

CONNECTED ACTIVITIES

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TOOLS & RESOURCES NEEDED

-Pens/pencils

-Sticky notes

-Whiteboard/ Cardboard

OR

Online collaborative whiteboard platform, such as:

<https://jamboard.google.com/>

<https://miro.com/>



TIME REQUIRED
40-50 min
Number of learners
1-6
RELEVANT SECTORS
Include one or more sectors to which this skill is relevant. Please choose from the sectors below: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aesthetics• Agriculture• Arts• Culinary arts• Economics• Education• Engineering• Informatics• Law• Management• Medical and Health Care (including veterinary)• Military• Natural sciences• Office Administration• Public administration• Social sciences• Sports• Tourism
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
SWOT Analysis game: https://gamestorming.com/swot-analysis/ Self SWOT analysis: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=enWsl5u55gg SWOT Analysis PDF: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Pze4z8Xk4AXZucy0WnMLnyt9iAzdqvw0/view?usp=sharing
REFERENCES



Creating a Personal SWOT Analysis for Your Career. (n.d.). Indeed Career Guide. Retrieved March 4, 2021, from <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/create-a-personal-swot-analysis>

GÜREL, E. (2017). SWOT ANALYSIS: A THEORETICAL REVIEW. Journal of International Social Research, 10(51), 994–1006. <https://doi.org/10.17719/jisr.2017.1832>

IMAGE

<https://pixabay.com/el/illustrations/%CE%B5%CF%80%CE%B9%CF%87%CE%B5%CE%B9%CF%81%CE%AE%CF%83%CE%B5%CF%89%CE%BD-%CE%B9%CE%B4%CE%AD%CE%B1-%CE%B1%CE%BD%CE%AC%CF%80%CF%84%CF%85%CE%BE%CE%B7-3189797/>

INTRODUCTION

This action card will help you learn what is SWOT Analysis and how it can be used in your career development.

Pros and Cons Analysis

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

The **Pros and Cons analysis** can be considered a simple but effective tool to facilitate the decision-making process. This analysis consists of listing the **good and bad aspects** of a specific choice. Weighing up pros and cons can speed up the decision-making process and improve your understanding of the situation. This analysis is also useful in encouraging you to approach your decision objectively, without letting your "gut feeling" impact your choice.

You can use it in group decision making as well, when team members favor a certain idea, point of view, or plan. It encourages each person to consider other perspectives, and it can help your team reach a balanced, informed decision.

In the Pros and Cons analysis, the Pros represent all the **advantages** while the Cons can be considered as the **disadvantages**. If the decision we're taking is very important and maybe listing pros and cons might be not enough, we might consider adding some scores to our list. This might make the analysis more critical and helpful.

To create a Pros and Cons list, create a table with two columns, Pros and Cons, and then add as many rows as you need (see image below).



Pros	Cons
Total	Total

In the table write as many pros and cons as you can think of, placing each in the relevant column. As mentioned before in the activity description, you might add some scores to your Pros and Cons, in order to make your decision choice more critical. If you want to proceed with this process, simply add a weighting to each item in your rows (for example a score of 5 for something which you think it's of more importance and 1 for minor weight options). Once you're done with your table, consider how many Pros and Cons you have and take your decision. Or, if you implemented your table with some scores, compare the score between the two columns and there you go!

TYPE OF THE ACTIVITY

Simple activity that can be completed without the implementation of any other activity.

CONNECTED ACTIVITIES

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TOOLS & RESOURCES NEEDED

-Pens/pencils

-Paper

OR

Laptop



TIME REQUIRED
40-50 min
Number of learners
1-6
RELEVANT SECTORS
Include one or more sectors to which this skill is relevant. Please choose from the sectors below: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aesthetics• Agriculture• Arts• Culinary arts• Economics• Education• Engineering• Informatics• Law• Management• Medical and Health Care (including veterinary)• Natural sciences• Office Administration• Public administration• Social sciences• Sports• Tourism
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
.
REFERENCES
Quantitative Pros and Cons: Weigh up Decisions With a Simple Approach: https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTED_05.htm
Pros-and-Cons: An approach for decision-making: https://thinkinsights.net/strategy/pros-and-cons-decision-making/



Three Simple Decision-Making Tools: <https://idea-sandbox.com/blog/three-simple-decision-making-tools/>

IMAGE

<https://pixabay.com/photos/pros-and-cons-compare-choice-5201376/>

INTRODUCTION

This action card will help you learn what is a Pros and Cons Analysis and how it can be used in your career development.

Brainstorming

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

Brainstorming is part of the design thinking and decision-making process. It's an effective tool that teams, but not only, use to produce ideas in order to crack some design problems.

In a free-thinking environment, teams approach a problem and produce a vast assortment of ideas and then create associations between them to find potential solutions.

When you have to take a decision, it's important to **consider all the different scenarios and possibilities**. This is why brainstorming, which allows you to expand your decision option considerations in all directions, might be a very effective tool to use.

For an efficient brainstorming there is a number of steps to follow:

Firstly, you need to set a **time limit**, which can change depending on the complexity of the problem faced or the decision you have to make.

Secondly, consider all the **problems and risks** you might encounter during your decision process.

Also, don't forget to consider a target, an objective, which in this case can be choosing the best option for your decision.

An essential thing to consider during brainstorming, is that there are **no wrong opinions**, ideas or considerations! Every single consideration might help you to achieve your goal, and so help you take the final decision. In this particular case, remember that quantity might be more important than quality. It's better to have 10 ideas (whether good and bad), instead of just one!



Finally, give your ideas **some good support!** Start building on your own ideas. A process of association between ideas, creating new interesting insights, can trigger other new and good ideas.

Try to hold a brainstorming session with other persons based on whether a fictional or a real-life scenario (the latter is recommended) in which you will apply the above principles.

TYPE OF THE ACTIVITY

Simple activity that can be completed without the implementation of any other activity.

CONNECTED ACTIVITIES

.

TOOLS & RESOURCES NEEDED

-Pens/pencils

-Paper

-Sticky notes

-Blackboard

OR

Laptop

TIME REQUIRED

40-50 min

Number of learners

1-10

RELEVANT SECTORS

Include one or more sectors to which this skill is relevant. Please choose from the sectors below:

- **Aesthetics**
- **Agriculture**



- Arts
- Culinary arts
- Economics
- Education
- Engineering
- Informatics
- Law
- Management
- Medical and Health Care (including veterinary)
- Natural sciences
- Office Administration
- Public administration
- Social sciences
- Sports
- Tourism

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Collaboration tool: <https://jamboard.google.com/>

Collaboration tool: <https://miro.com/>

REFERENCES

Brainstorming: <https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/topics/brainstorming>

IMAGE

<https://pixabay.com/photos/post-it-brainstorming-teamwork-idea-4129907/>

INTRODUCTION

This action card will help you learn what brainstorming is and how it can be used in your career development.

Risk evaluation

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY



Risk surrounds everything in life. This is why individuals should learn how to cope with risk in everyday situations. Types of risks in a personal decision context can include **safety risks, health risks, weather risks, career risks, property risks or force majeure**.

More specifically, **risk management or risk evaluation** is a very important step to consider in the decision-making process. It consists in the process of identifying and measuring risk but also planning actions to manage the risks encountered. The process of risk evaluation also involves identifying the best alternatives or ranking the alternatives for a particular risk management goal.

This tool can be considered a fundamental business practice that can be applied to investments, strategies, commercial agreements, programs, projects and operations but also, as mentioned before, it can apply to personal matters and decision-making processes.

A general risk evaluation process includes the following steps:

- **Identify hazards**, i.e., the potential to cause harm.
- **Assess the risk**, i.e., the likelihood or possibility that people will come to harm.
- **Decide upon risk control measures**, i.e., the things you will put in place to ensure the safety of participants.
- **Supervise implementation**, i.e., check that control measures are being carried out.
- **Implement control measures**, i.e., reduce and if possible, eliminate the risk.
-

To learn how to carry out a risk evaluation process follow these steps!

Firstly, you need to identify the decision whose risks have to be considered. Afterwards, start by creating a **table with six columns**:

1. In the first column state the **activity type**. Generally, this refers to the name of the activity. Our example can be a social night out in Edinburgh.
2. In the second column identify the **hazards**. In the case of the social night out in Edinburgh, the different hazards can be drinking alcohol, overeating, getting lost from the group etc.
3. In the third column write the **potential consequences** of the hazards. For example, for drinking alcohol that would be intoxication.
4. In the fourth column start to write some **control measures** to lower the risk to an acceptable level. In the case of the example, it could be for the group leader to ask everyone to drink sensibly. It could also mean the group leader doesn't drink so that they can keep an eye on the other members.
5. In the fifth column add the **Risk Rating**, where the risks will be classed as **Low, Medium, or High**.
6. Finally, in the sixth and last column you should identify **what to do** if this hazard does occur. So, in this case a member of the group becomes overly intoxicated and is ill or has an accident. A sensible action here might be to take them to hospital if the situation was serious enough.

TYPE OF THE ACTIVITY



Simple activity that can be completed without the implementation of any other activity.

CONNECTED ACTIVITIES

.

TOOLS & RESOURCES NEEDED

-Pens/pencils

-Paper

OR

Laptop

TIME REQUIRED

50-60 min

Number of learners

1-10

RELEVANT SECTORS

Include one or more sectors to which this skill is relevant. Please choose from the sectors below:

- **Aesthetics**
- **Agriculture**
- **Arts**
- **Culinary arts**
- **Economics**
- **Education**
- **Engineering**
- **Informatics**
- **Law**
- **Management**
- **Medical and Health Care (including veterinary)**
- **Natural sciences**
- **Office Administration**
- **Public administration**
- **Social sciences**



- Sports
- Tourism

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Article on risk analysis: https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMC_07.htm

Video on how to manage risks: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MTdFkPTNsA>

REFERENCES

17 Examples of Personal Risk: <https://simplicable.com/en/personal-risk>

7 Steps for Risk Evaluation: <https://simplicable.com/new/risk-evaluation>

How to create a Risk Assessment: <https://studentsunionucl.org/how-to-guides/how-to-create-risk-assessment>

IMAGE

<https://pixabay.com/photos/risk-word-letters-boggle-game-1945683/>

INTRODUCTION

This action card will help you learn what an effective evaluations of risks is and how it can be used in your career development.

1.1.1. ASSESSEMENT QUESTIONS

ASSESSMENT

1. SWOT Analysis can be only used by organizations in their strategic management
 - a. True
 - b. False**
2. Which of the following is an essential step in personal SWOT analysis?
 - a. Find others' values
 - b. Define your goals
 - c. Identify your strengths**
 - d. Understand others' weaknesses
3. For making a decision you should:
 - a. Define the problem**
 - b. Learn how to communicate with others



- c. Identify your weaknesses
 - d. Being reliable
4. Situation-based problems are usually causing you a dilemma.
- a. **True**
 - b. False
5. While brainstorming quality is more important than quantity.
- a. True
 - b. **False**
6. Brainstorming helps you to:
- a. **Explore different solutions to a problem**
 - b. Evaluate the possible risks of a decision
 - c. Identify the strengths of a decision
7. Which of the following is not a step of the risk evaluation process?
- a. Identifying hazards
 - b. Implementing control measures
 - c. **Considering the pros and cons of a decision**
 - d. Assessing the risk
8. The risk evaluation process can be only applied in business settings
- a. True
 - b. **False**