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Prof Paterson's Decision System

Prof Thomas Paterson developed a simple classification system which will enable you to:

- look at the level of decisions you make.
- look at the type of work you are involved in

How can you do this?

Decision levels:

Start by examining the decisions you make e.g. you are a senior manager who should be working at level 2. You examine the types of decisions you make and you find that you are spending more of your time on level 3 or even 4 decisions.

Type of work

The type of work you do can fit well with the classification system e.g. you start to look at the work you do day to day (including project management). You ask yourself a quick question;

- o what level should I be working at?

and then

- o what level am I working at?

Activity:

Take a look at where you should be operating against the various levels on page 2. Now, identify where you actually work.

Is there a difference? No = no action. Yes = what are you going to do about it?

Good luck!!

The decision level method classification system

Level 1: Policy Making Decisions

This group determines the scope, the direction, and overall goals of the entire organisation. They take into consideration all the major departments, divisions, the limits of funds available to each, and the scope of their programs. The only limits are those imposed by law and/or economic conditions. These decision makers are typically made at the board or top level executive

Level 2: Programming Decisions

Band 2 decisions deal with the means of achieving the goals established by the policy making band. These decisions are concerned with the developing or adjusting strategic direction for major departments or divisions of an organisation and allocating resources amongst these groups. Programme decision makers are generally made at the senior management level

Level 3: Interpretive Decisions

This group requires the incumbent to interpret and carry out the programs or objectives developed by level 2. These decisions specify what is required in the lower bands, and how the resources are to be organised.

Level 4: – Process Decisions

Level 4 decisions involve determining the means or process of achieving the objectives, standards or guidelines established by higher Bands. They are subject to limits such as; available technology and resources and to the constraints set by level 3.

Level 5 – Operational Decisions

Level 5 focus on how to carry out the process indicated by higher levels. This group is required to complete the tasks within the limits set by the specified process but they do have a choice as to how and when the operations are carried out.

Level 6 – Defined Decisions

Level 6 decisions have to do with the manner and speed of performing the elements of the operation. There is no choice as to what the elements of the process are, but there is a choice as to how the elements are performed.

Developed by Professor Thomas T. Paterson