

Strategies for Professional Decision Making: The SMART Approach

STRATEGY	SAMPLE REFLECTION QUESTIONS
<u>SEEK</u> Help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where might I seek additional information or an unbiased, objective opinion? • Would it help to involve a mediator or consultant? • Do I welcome correction or input from others, including subordinates?
<u>MANAGE</u> Your Emotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are my emotional reactions to this situation? Am I anxious, frustrated, or depressed? • How might my emotions influence my decision-making? • Would taking a “time out” or deep breath help?
<u>ANTICIPATE</u> Consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the likely short-term and long-term outcomes of various choices? • Who will be affected by my decisions and how? • How might this decision impact my career and me?
<u>RECOGNIZE</u> Rules and Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the causes of the problems in this situation? Which causes can I change? • What ethical principles, laws, or regulations apply in this situation? • Does anyone have the power to control outcomes? If so, who and how?
<u>TEST</u> Your Assumptions and Motives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Am I making faulty assumptions about the causes of the situation, alternatives, or others’ intentions? How can I find out? • What are my motives? Are they the same as the people I serve? • How will others view my choices?

NOTE: The strategies often overlap, e.g., testing assumptions is often a good way to manage emotions and it can lead to seeking help. Want to be SMARTER? Add “Evaluate” outcomes of your actions, and “Revise” your approach based on outcomes.



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