

# EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS BRIEFING

## DECISION MAKING

**This PDF supports the short video about decision making skills and it's one of nine paired videos and PDFs on Tunnelworks, each covering a common employability skill.**

The main aim with these resources is to help you understand what these skills are, and how they are used. You might be surprised to realise that you're probably using many of these skills in your school, social and family lives already.

So, even if you don't have lots of working experience, you do have relevant work skills to talk about when applying for jobs. Use these resources to help identify your skills and practise writing and talking about them. Then you'll be interview ready!

### What is a good general definition of decision making?

A good definition of decision making is understanding the opportunities and impacts of different courses of action and choosing the one that contributes most to a successful outcome.

### What does that mean in practice on the Thames Tideway Tunnel project?

The Thames Tideway Tunnel project is a large and complicated construction project where lots of things have to happen at the same time. There are many decisions to be made and some are very large, for example deciding on the route of the Tunnel or which contractors and major equipment such as tunnelling machines will be used. Some are smaller, for example choosing daily working tasks on individual construction sites. Behind every decision there will be either an individual or group of people who have the responsibility to consider all the options and available information before a final decision is made.

### What are two typical examples of decision making in action on the Thames Tideway Tunnel project?

One example would be planning the number of workers needed for the construction of different segments of the Tunnel. The Human Resources department will work closely with the Project Engineers and General Foremen to estimate how many workers they will need to recruit.

Another example would be the Planners working out and deciding the best locations, of least impact to the local community, to place construction sites near the Tunnel. There will be lots to consider but based upon all the information gathered, the Planners can make the best and most informed decision.

### What are the individual elements in decision making?

The individual elements of decision making include: identifying a problem or opportunity; gathering

information; considering and evaluating the options available; selecting a preferred option and then putting a plan in place to see that decision through.

---

#### **At school or at home what sort of activities might help me to develop decision making skills?**

If you've worked successfully with a group of classmates or friends or family then you will have developed and used decision making skills. Typical decision making skills include: deciding whether to join one club (e.g. football) over another (e.g. basketball) if they both train on the same day; deciding whether you could take on a weekend job on top of your studies; deciding whether to spend an evening at a family get-together or at a friend's house party; deciding which subjects to study further in order to give you the best chance of getting the sort of job you'd eventually really like to do.

---

#### **If I'm applying for a job and the employer says they want individuals with good decision making skills, how can I talk about things I've done and make them relevant?**

Think about and write down any occasions when you had to make a difficult or important decision. Practice and be ready to talk about them in an interview.

You could give an example of when you had to make subject choices at school. You could explain that you had to research fully the future career you were interested in and then consider which subjects would best support you in that area. You could say that you had some tough decisions to make as you had to think about dropping some subjects that you loved in order to concentrate on the ones that you knew would be most relevant to help you achieve your goal.

Or you could say that you had to choose between going with friends to a pop concert with your favourite band playing or attending your cousin's wedding. You could say that you had already saved up and bought your concert ticket before you knew about the wedding so you had to make a difficult decision as to which event to attend. You might have written out a Pros and Cons list to help you decide which would be the best course of action (including emotional and financial implications).