



A Purpose and Values-Based Strategic Decision Tool

- This is a useful tool to use when your business is hit by a major upset or has a great opportunity to seize. It can also be used for routine business decisions.
- Its value is that it helps you and colleagues identify places where major decisions are required and ensures these are aligned to your business' purpose and values. Like Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, the tool reminds you about what you need to survive as a necessary foundation for any higher-level activity.
- The hierarchy acts as a framework for your values. Populating it is a useful test of how well your espoused values cover situations where the shit has hit the fan as well as situations where everything is going swimmingly well. The content in the diagram below is what we use. You may have a different set that suits your business better.
- The iterative question sequence that accompanies the diagram is derived from the process of "mission analysis" used by the military. This has been stress-tested over many decades in highly complex multi-actor situations and is as applicable to the immediacy of a sudden emergency as it is to long term strategic multi-national campaign planning.
- We hope you find this useful. Please feel free to bend and bash into a shape that helps you best.

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- #1 Write down your purpose (your “why”, “north star” etc.). Has it changed?
- #2 What are the most urgent of your values-based strategic drivers to attend to? See hierarchy over on the right. Is time a critical factor? When must you make a decision by?
- #3 What constraints have been imposed on your normal freedom of action?
- #4 What new freedoms and opportunities do you now have?
- #5 What courses of action (COA) do these circumstances - purpose, strategic drivers, constraints and freedoms - give you? Consider for different time horizons.
- #6 Stress test these COAs, ideally with colleagues and others. Maybe form a red team of trusted advisors. Select and develop the most favourable COA.
- #7 What further critical information do you need before you commit to action? Frame these as questions. Understand the quality/reliability of the answers When is your last safe decision-action point?
- #8 Does this information change anything?
- #9 Keep cycling and reviewing. Keep focused on purpose and your values-based drivers. Each decision and set of completed actions will take you closer to satisfying your strategic drivers and your purpose.

