

# Strategic Decision Support

## Evidence-based Decision Making

Taking a major decision with the confidence that it will stick can be a challenge. So many decisions are quickly derailed because of the complexity of the situation and the many agendas at play.

As a decision maker you may need to:

- Engage stakeholders with different objectives
- Draw on technical expertise
- Consider the benefits, downsides, risks and costs for a number of options or scenarios
- Demonstrate a fair and valid outcome



## There is a way...

Catalyze has pioneered an approach to quickly get to an implementable decision that is robust and sustainable, backed up by evidence and clear judgment; a decision that is supported by the stakeholders and will stand up to scrutiny.

We have helped our clients with a wide range of tough decisions, including:

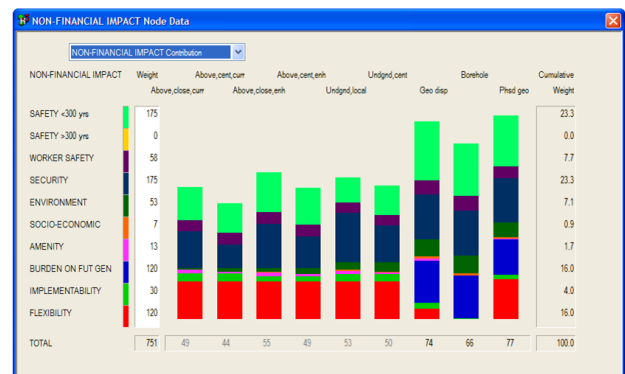
- Procurement – supplier selection
- Bids – choosing the best option to put forward
- Options Appraisal, in the context of the Five Case Model or Better Business Cases
- Health Service reconfiguration
- Site selection
- Energy infrastructure decommissioning

## How does it work?

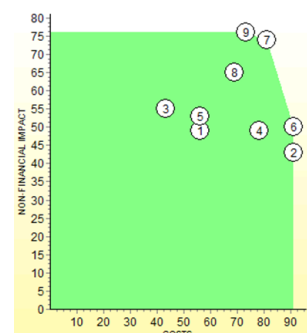
Our approach is to design and facilitate a structured programme of intervention and analysis:

- Clarifying the context of the decision
- Clearly defining the options
- Engaging the stakeholders and technical experts in structured workshops
- Developing the criteria to be used
- Collecting evidence
- Starting to build a multi-criteria model
- Developing the model until it supports a clear decision the stakeholders can support

The model provides an aid to decision making, and supports a wide range of visualisations. As an example, the following chart shows 9 options. The overall performance of each option is shown by the height of the bar, and the coloured segments show how each of the criteria contribute to the overall value.



Further visualisations include criteria trade-off maps, and sensitivity charts.

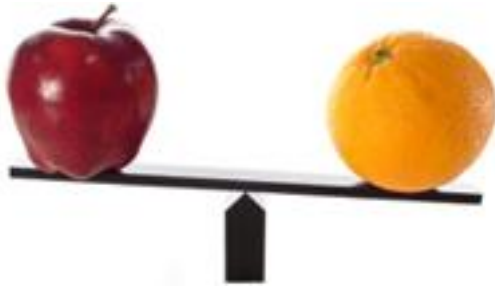


## Decision Conferencing

Decision making has many technical aspects but is also ultimately a social process. Decision Conferencing includes stakeholders and experts directly in the modelling process for true engagement.

## Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis (MCDA)

MCDA is a proven approach for assessing options by creating a common currency of value, allowing 'apples and oranges' to be compared. The potential benefits, risks and costs of the options can all be brought into the analysis to allow the key trade-offs to be understood.



MCDA also allows the problem to be broken down into manageable pieces, and provides a transparent process with an audit trail. Importantly, the model does not make the decision itself but serves as an *aid* to the decision makers.

Multi-criteria approaches are endorsed by many government agencies, including the UK Treasury and New Zealand Treasury.

*“The structured methodology and excellent facilitation provided by Catalyze was invaluable in steering a diverse group of stakeholders through a complex option appraisal process.”*

Tracy Allen, Managing Director, Derbyshire Community Health Services

*“I believe the key has been the ability of your process to fully engage personnel across the wide spectrum of stakeholders, ensuring that everyone has had an appropriate voice in leading us towards those sites that we’ll select for a detailed Investment Appraisal. Having a transparent audit trail for our future decision making will be essential as we move this project forward.”*

Captain Bob Rusbridger, DTT Individual Training Sponsor

*“We hope that this kind of collective engagement would help everyone to understand each other’s perspectives and I truly think this is being achieved.”*

Austin Hand, Brent Decommissioning Project Director, Shell UK

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*Strategic Decision Support enables organisations to make clear and deliverable decisions in complex and contentious multi-stakeholder situations*

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## About Catalyze

At Catalyze we help organisations create and execute decision-making processes which focus on the best possible outcome; engaging people, breaking down barriers, creating understanding of different perspectives, and making best use of resources.

Catalyze was founded in 2001 in conjunction with the London School of Economics and Political Science, applying techniques built on robust and validated decision theory. We support global clients from offices in the UK, USA and New Zealand.

[www.catalyze.co.uk](http://www.catalyze.co.uk)