

Strategies — Decision-Making Patterns⁸

There are many decision-making patterns. We'll list some in a moment that you might recognize in your own behavior. Most don't work as well as the four-step process you just learned. In fact, sometimes they can lead to disastrous results. Most of us have a tendency to use one or more of these patterns from time to time. Do you? Some of the patterns most often used are described below. See if you can think of other examples for each. Take them from your own experience, examples in this book, or any other source you'd like:

WISH PATTERN

Definition: Choosing an alternative that could lead to the most desirable result, regardless of risk.

EXAMPLE: You choose someone to marry hoping to change his bad habits.

ESCAPE PATTERN

Definition: Choosing an alternative in order to avoid the worst possible result.

EXAMPLE: You do not go to a party because you are afraid no one will ask you to dance.

SAFE PATTERN

Definition: Choosing the alternative that is most likely to bring success.

EXAMPLE: You take an art class knowing you are a good artist, rather than taking another subject in which you do not know how well you will do.

IMPULSIVE PATTERN

Definition: Giving a decision little thought or examination; taking the first alternative; not looking before you leap.

EXAMPLE: You move out of your dormitory room into an apartment without first determining the advantages and disadvantages.

FATALISTIC PATTERN

Definition: Letting the environment decide; leaving it up to fate.

EXAMPLE: You do not take the time to learn to swim before you go on a dangerous boat trip.

COMPLIANT PATTERN

Definition: Letting someone else decide, or giving in to group pressure.

EXAMPLE: You go to a party because your friend wants to.

DELAYING PATTERN

Definition: Postponing action and thought; procrastinating.

EXAMPLE: You leave your graduation requirements until the last semester.

