



Ways of Working: Decision Making

Conversation starters

Supporting decisions to be made at the lowest appropriate level, with the right people, applying the right judgement to make the best use of our capability at all levels of the APS

Background

Recent changes to the Public Service Act 1999 support decision making at the lowest appropriate level. The amendments require agency heads to implement measures to create a work environment that enables decisions to be made by APS employees at the lowest appropriate classification. This change seeks to ensure decision making is not raised to a higher level than necessary, improving decision making processes to reduce duplication of work, empower staff, and foster professional development.

Below are examples of conversation starters that can be worked through in your organisation or with your team, to discuss current decision making processes and procedures in your team/agency and opportunities to improve.

Questions to work through with your team:

- What are the most common decisions made in the team? This may include things like clearing briefs or other materials, case reviews, hiring decisions or expenditure of money
- Who currently makes these decisions and why?
- What settings would need to change to enable decisions to be successfully lowered? Are there any barriers, such as legislated delegations (for example, financial)? Are there mechanisms and is it appropriate to change the delegation or authorisation?
- What are the possible risks and/or benefits of lowering these decisions to another officer? Would that be appropriate to the classification and role?
- Are there scenarios that demonstrate delegating responsibility rather than tasks?
- Are there any recent examples where there has been collaboration with another team? What were the risks and benefits of doing this?
- What are our people telling us? Are there clear ways for staff to 'feed up' suggestions or provide innovative solutions, particularly in relation to processes?
- Does our organisation provide space for autonomy and collaboration at all levels?

Further information

To support your conversations or for further information, also refer to other decision making materials on the APSC website at www.apsc.gov.au.