

Ask the expert How to make better decisions

In squiggly careers, we face new choices all the time. Good judgment helps us slow down, cut through the noise, and make clearer, more confident decisions – and it's a skill we can develop. Sir Andrew Likierman's six-part framework offers a practical way to develop your judgment for decision making.

Coach yourself questions

What do I rely on most when making decisions?



What are 3 important decisions I need to make this year?



"Judgment matters most when things are complex and unfamiliar. It's a quality, because it draws on who we are – but it's also a skill we can develop to make better decisions when it really counts."

Sir Andrew Likierman, Author and Professor

Ideas for action



1. Start with what you know (and what you don't)

Better decisions begin with understanding what's relevant and what's missing. Try:

- ✍ *Writing down what experience or insight you already have around this situation.*
- ✍ *Spot the gaps: what don't you know yet? Who could help fill them?*

2. Choose who to listen to and trust

Your judgment is shaped by the voices you trust. Be intentional about whose input you use.

- ✍ *Write down 2–3 people you'd ask for advice – why them? Is their input based on evidence?*
- ✍ *Try discussing the issue with someone you trust who thinks differently to gain a fresh perspective.*

3. Spot what's shaping your thinking

Emotions, environment, and mindset can all affect your judgment and decisions.

- ✍ *Before deciding, ask: "What's influencing me right now – pressure, emotion, something else?"*
- ✍ *Spot patterns in how you usually respond (e.g. avoid risk, focus on positives). Write down 1–2 "watch outs" and who can help balance them.*

4. Reflect on your feelings and beliefs

You can't always avoid your values and biases influencing your decisions – but you can be aware of them in yourself and others.

- ✍ *Ask: "Is a strong feeling shaping this choice?"*
- ✍ *Press pause – give yourself time to think before deciding. Spot when your beliefs or biases might be leading, not logic.*

5. Pause to explore your choices

How you reach a conclusion when making a decision shapes the quality of your judgment.

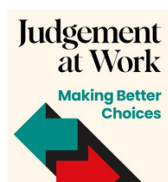
- ✍ *Ask: "Am I limiting my choices to what's being presented – or really exploring all possibilities?"*
- ✍ *Write down three possible choices, including one you wouldn't usually consider. Talk it through with someone who might see more than you do.*

6. Focus on delivery

Good judgment means your decision is also doable.

- ✍ *Ask yourself: "What will it take to make this decision happen?"*
- ✍ *Spot what might get in the way (e.g. confidence, clarity, support).*
- ✍ *Identify one action to move your decision forward.*

Recommended resources



Judgement at Work – Making Better Choices
By Andrew Likierman



Helen also talks to Dan Ariely about how his work on decision making can inform our career thinking and help us to make better choices in episode [#456](#).