



LEAD Time

Making Sound and Timely Decisions
Leadership Category

To make sound and timely decisions, fire leaders assess the situation, seek out relevant information, weigh options, make judgments, and initiate action as required to create a positive outcome within inevitable time constraints.

Consciously or subconsciously, people go through this cycle every time they make a decision. How well perception matches reality is called **Situation Awareness**. If one's situation awareness is high, he or she has an accurate perception of reality.

Recognition means that a person determines that something needs to be done, that the environment must be changed in some way.

Option Selection involves understanding the factors and risks associated with various courses of action.

At the **Decision Point**, the best option is selected.

Action means acting on the selected option then returning to the situation awareness cycle—perceiving and gathering information—to assess the results of the action.

A better understanding of the decision-making cycle enables people to consciously step through the processes to make sure they gather appropriate information, weigh options, and ultimately make the best decision within time constraints.

Discussion Points

- What influences option selection?
- What do you do when a poor decision is made?
- Do you always have enough time to make the decision?

References:

[Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program](#)
[Leading In the Wildland Fire Service](#)

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