



The 90% Rule for Decision-Making

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Have you ever made a decision that is, at best, marginal or which you have come to regret?

Or which involved more work than expected? Which impacted other work that was more important? That lead you to spreading yourself too thin?

Why does this always seem to happen? In short, we are not selective enough in the choices we make. There is a simple and effective way to do this I call it the 90 Per Cent Rule.

The 90 Per Cent Rule

You can apply the 90 Per Cent Rule to just about every decision or dilemma. As you evaluate your decision or dilemma, think about the *single most important criterion* for that decision, and then simply give the option a score between 0 and 100. If you rate it any lower than 90 per cent, then automatically change the rating to 0 and simply reject it. This way you avoid getting caught up in indecision, or worse, getting stuck with the 60s or 70s.

In doing this we put the decision to an extreme test: if we feel total and utter conviction to do something, then we say yes. Anything less gets a thumbs down!

Applying highly selective criteria is a trade-off; sometimes you will have to turn down a seemingly very good option and have faith that the perfect option will soon come along. Sometimes it will, and sometimes it won't, but by applying selective criteria forces you to choose which perfect option to wait for, rather than letting other people, or the universe, choose for you.

When our selection criteria are too broad, we will find ourselves committing to too many options. What's more, assigning simple numerical values to our options forces us to make decisions consciously, logically, and rationally, rather than impulsively or emotionally. Making our criteria both selective and explicit affords us a systematic tool for discerning what is essential and filtering out the things that are not.

Yes, it takes discipline to apply tough criteria. But failing to do so carries a high cost.