

3 Steps Forward, 2 Steps Back

Growing a business doesn't happen overnight (usually). It's happens step by step, one decision at a time. As business leaders, we are faced with making decisions every day. We constantly strive to collect as much information as possible, and then act on that knowledge in an attempt to move our companies forward and upward.

I recently had a conversation with my office manager Mukesh in [Pondicherry, India](#), where he was asking my advice on making decisions. More specifically, he wanted to know how much information he needed to hold out for before making a decision. It occurred to me that many of us struggle with the same question. How long does one wait and continue to collect information before making a decision, without worry that it is wrong?

I told him that my experience has shown me that we have to work with the best information we have at the time. In a perfect world, all the necessary details would be right in front of you. You would weigh them, and then make a decision. The reality is that you rarely have all the necessary details. You don't know what other people are thinking, you don't know what the competitor has planned, and you don't know how the marketplace will react.



So what do you do? How do you make decisions that you can feel confident about? You have to realize that sometimes your decisions will be wrong, but there is no opportunity for

progress if you don't make any decision. You make the best decision you can based on the information you have, and move on to the next. It's the compilation of decisions that makes the most progress, not just one. Sometimes a decision will cause you to take a step back, but you will still be further ahead than if you had waited for everything to line up perfectly before making that first decision. You have to make progress to succeed, and research shows that the thing that motivates people the most is progress.

On a side note, big decisions – game changers – fall into a different category. It's important to work slow and collect as much information as you can, otherwise you may end up taking much more than a step or two back.