

# Tools for Knowledge Workers

## Decisions *a la* Benjamin Franklin

The Decision: _____											
PROS			I	P	W	CONS			I	P	W
Rate Importance (I) & Probability (P) on a scale from 1 to 10						Determine Weight (W) by multiplying I rating x P rating					

**Review & Reflection Questions:**

- How do the Pros and Cons stack up against one another?
  - How does the importance of the Pros compare with the importance of the Cons?
  - How does the probability of the Pros compare with the probability of the Cons?
  - What is the "mix" of importance and probability?
  - What patterns do you see? What do they tell you? What is the overall balance of consequences?
- What are you getting? What are you giving up? Are the trade-offs worth it?
  - What are you risking and are you willing to risk it?
  - Are there any inconsistencies to be resolved?
  - Which factors really matter?
  - Are there any overriding factors?
  - Who else, if anyone, should you consult?
  - When do you have to decide?

The table above reflects the decision making process used by Benjamin Franklin (with a couple of added refinements). Basically, it's a matter of writing down the decision facing you and then listing and weighting the pros and cons. Some of these cancel out and the balance of the remaining pros and cons suggests the proper course of action. A more detailed description of Franklin's decision-making process, including a real-life example, and a full-size job aid can be found by clicking [here](#).

