

THE GOVORAUS DECISION UNDER UNCERTAINTY CANVAS

A practical worksheet for making an important decision when you do not have all the answers

GoVoraus | Clarity → Decision → Movement

PAGE 1 — DEFINE THE DECISION

You do not need to eliminate uncertainty to make a responsible decision.

Some decisions remain uncertain regardless of how much information you collect.

This Canvas helps you separate what you **know**, what you are **assuming**, and what genuinely **cannot yet be known**. You will then examine your options, the consequences of being wrong, what you can still learn or test, and what should happen next.

It will not make the decision for you.

Its purpose is to make the reasoning behind your decision visible.

01 | THE DECISION

What exactly are you deciding?

Write it as one clear question.

Should I / Should we _____

I want or need to make this decision by:

Date: _____

Why does this decision matter now?

What happens if I make no decision by that date?

What would a good decision mean to me?

Do not describe the perfect outcome. Describe what would make the **decision itself** responsible given what you know today.

DECISION CHECK

Before continuing, ask:

- ☐ Is the decision clearly defined?
- ☐ Do I know when I intend to make it?
- ☐ Have I included “do nothing / delay” if that is a genuine option?
- ☐ Am I trying to make one decision — or several different decisions at once?

If several decisions are mixed together, separate them before continuing.

02 | FACTS

Facts are things you can reasonably verify.

Avoid interpretations such as “the opportunity is better” or “the manager seems supportive.” Write what you actually know.

FACT	HOW DO I KNOW? IMPORTANT TO THE DECISION?
1. _____	☐ Yes ☐ No
2. _____	☐ Yes ☐ No
3. _____	☐ Yes ☐ No
4. _____	☐ Yes ☐ No
5. _____	☐ Yes ☐ No

03 | ASSUMPTIONS

What are you currently treating as true without knowing it?

Examples might include future career prospects, another person's likely reaction, expected costs, organisational culture, how quickly something will happen, or how you expect to feel.

ASSUMPTION	WHAT SUPPORTS IT?	COULD IT CHANGE MY DECISION?
1. _____	_____	☐ Yes ☐ No
2. _____	_____	☐ Yes ☐ No
3. _____	_____	☐ Yes ☐ No
4. _____	_____	☐ Yes ☐ No
5. _____	_____	☐ Yes ☐ No

Circle or highlight the assumptions that could materially change your preferred option.

Those deserve investigation before the assumptions that are merely interesting.

04 | GENUINE UNKNOWNNS

Some things cannot realistically be established before you decide.

What might remain uncertain even after reasonable investigation?

1.

2.

3.

Now ask yourself:

Which of these unknowns am I repeatedly trying to solve even though the answer may not be available yet?

Could I still make a responsible decision while carrying this uncertainty?

☐ Yes

☐ Possibly — I need to understand the risk better

☐ No — this information is genuinely necessary

If **No**, write what information you require:

05 | YOUR REALISTIC OPTIONS

Avoid forcing the decision into A versus B if other realistic possibilities exist.

	OPTION	WHAT BECOMES POSSIBLE?	WHAT DO I GIVE UP?
A	_____	_____	_____
B	_____	_____	_____
C	_____	_____	_____
DELAY / NO ACTION	_____	_____	_____

Is there a modified option you have not seriously considered?

For example: negotiate the terms, change the timing, test something first, make a staged commitment, ask for another conversation, or reduce the scale of the initial decision.

06 | STAKES & REVERSIBILITY

Not every uncertain decision deserves the same amount of analysis.

For each serious option, consider what happens if you are wrong.

Preferred option

If it goes well, what becomes possible?

If it goes badly, what are the most important consequences?

Career

Financial

Partner / family / other people affected

Time and opportunity cost

Other

How reversible is this decision?

- ☐ **HIGHLY REVERSIBLE** — relatively easy to change course
- ☐ **PARTLY REVERSIBLE** — possible, but with meaningful cost
- ☐ **DIFFICULT TO REVERSE** — significant consequences or commitments

If I changed my mind six months from now, what would be hardest to undo?

What risk am I genuinely willing to accept?

07 | CONTROL, INFLUENCE OR ACCEPT?

List the uncertainties that matter most.

UNCERTAINTY	CONTROL	INFLUENCE	ACCEPT
_____	☐	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	☐
_____	☐	☐	☐

Look at what you marked **ACCEPT**.

These uncertainties may deserve acknowledgement rather than another round of analysis.

08 | THE NEXT BEST INFORMATION

Ask:

What one piece of information would be most likely to change my decision?

Why could this information change the decision?

How can I obtain it?

I will obtain it by:

Date: _____

When I have it, I will:

- ☐ Decide
- ☐ Investigate one remaining question
- ☐ Run an experiment
- ☐ Reassess my options

THE INFORMATION STOP RULE

Complete this sentence:

Once I know _____,

I will have enough information to _____.

This creates a boundary between useful investigation and indefinite research.

CAN YOU TEST AN ASSUMPTION INSTEAD OF PREDICTING IT?

What important assumption could potentially be tested?

What is the smallest realistic experiment that could teach me something useful?

I will do: _____

By: _____

I will consider the experiment useful if I learn:

09 | PREMORTEM

Imagine it is **12 months from now**.

You chose your preferred option — and you now believe it was a poor decision.

What happened?

Reason 1

Evidence this risk is real:

- ☐ Investigate before deciding
- ☐ Reduce the risk
- ☐ Accept the risk

Reason 2

Evidence this risk is real:

- ☐ Investigate before deciding
- ☐ Reduce the risk
- ☐ Accept the risk

Reason 3

Evidence this risk is real:

- ☐ Investigate before deciding
- ☐ Reduce the risk
- ☐ Accept the risk

What could I reasonably do now to reduce the most important risk?

10 | YOUR NEXT STEP

You do not necessarily need to make the final decision today.

But you should know what happens next.

Choose **one**.

☐ **DECIDE**

I have enough relevant information to make the decision.

My decision is:

Why:

☐ **INVESTIGATE**

A specific unanswered question could materially change my decision.

The question is:

I will answer it by: _____

Decision date: _____

☐ **EXPERIMENT**

I can test an important assumption before committing.

I will test:

By doing:

By: _____

I will review what I learned on: _____

☐ **WAIT — WITH A REASON**

There is a defined reason to wait.

I am waiting for:

I expect this by: _____

I will reconsider the decision on: _____

FINAL DECISION CHECK

Before closing the Canvas, answer these five questions.

1. What fact matters most to my decision?

2. What assumption am I relying on most heavily?

3. What uncertainty will I have to accept rather than eliminate?

4. What is the most serious consequence if I am wrong?

5. What would I need to learn for my decision to change?

That final question matters.

If there is something realistically discoverable that could change your decision, investigate it.

If you can test an important assumption, test it.

If the answer cannot reasonably be known before deciding, recognise the uncertainty rather than disguising it as unfinished research.

And if no realistically discoverable information would change your choice, more information may no longer improve the decision.

YOUR COMMITMENT

My next action is:

I will complete it by:

My decision / review date is:

When I review this decision, I will ask:

What did I know?

What did I assume?

What did I learn?

Knowing what I know now, what should happen next?

RESEARCH FOUNDATION

The GoVoraus Decision Under Uncertainty Canvas is informed by established work in judgement and decision-making and applied decision practice, including:

Tversky, A. & Kahneman, D. (1974). *Judgment under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases*. Science, 185(4157), 1124–1131.

Klein, G. (2007). *Performing a Project Premortem*. Harvard Business Review, September 2007.

The Canvas is a GoVoraus structured reflection and decision-support tool. It has not itself been scientifically validated as a diagnostic instrument.

GoVoraus

Clarity → Decision → Movement

govoraus.de

© 2026 GoVoraus. All rights reserved.

This resource is provided for general educational and structured-reflection purposes. It does not constitute legal, financial, medical, immigration, psychological or other regulated professional advice. Where a decision involves such matters, consult an appropriately qualified professional.