# manageris

# How to implement decisions more swiftly?

## The challenge

Responsiveness has become a key success factor. Faced with an environment evolving at an ever-increasing rate, companies must not only be adaptable, but they must also maintain their capacity to take the lead. Whatever the issue –evolving the way customers are served, adopting a new team organization, or launching a new technology ahead of one's competitors – making the right decision is not enough: ensuring that it is implemented swiftly is just as important.

### A constant preoccupation

Decisions can be implemented with considerably more speed by taking implementation issues into account upstream.

# Make decisions with their implementation in mind

Taking account of implementation challenges as early as possible greatly improves speed of action.

- Involve those in charge of implementation in the decision-making process: they are often in the best position to foresee possible difficulties. Moreover, getting them involved will enable them to take ownership of the choices made and facilitate their commitment when the time comes to take action.
- Check that the decision is workable. Ensure that the conditions are set for implementation: time, skills, suitable structure, means of dealing with opposition, etc. Anticipate the main obstacles and how to overcome them. E.g.: Postponing the launch of a project to have the time to train an employee crucial to its success.
- Check that the decision does not clash with other priorities or other projects.

# Facilitate the move into action

All too often managers act as if making a decision were enough. The only way of moving on from the intention phase, however, is by taking deliberate steps to organize action.

- **Create a sense of urgency** by demonstrating that the existing situation is not acceptable. Otherwise, when confronted with the first obstacles, everyone will find good excuses not to put in the efforts required. E.g.: Bring an unsatisfied customer in to raise awareness of the need to reorganize the after-sales service.
- Start with actions that are easy to implement. It is sometimes worth reducing the scope of a decision to speed up implementation. E.g.: Apply a new strategy for building customer loyalty to a single product before generalizing it.
- Translate decisions into a plan of action. So that decisions don't just remain words, organize work around concrete projects with clearly defined schedules, goals and individual responsibilities.
- Ensure sufficient autonomy is given: freedom to act speeds up the action. It is also key to making everyone want to get involved.



Planning action is not enough to ensure that progress is made in the right direction. The implementation process must also be monitored.

of the decision

- Organize frequent progress reviews to maintain a certain pressure, and regularly redefine
  milestones that take account of unforeseen difficulties or emergencies. E.g.: Start your
  meetings by ensuring that the actions decided during the previous meeting have been
  launched.
- Set-up simple and precise progress indicators for each action. Too much complexity risks obscuring the priorities.
- Offer the appropriate assistance. Action is sometimes hindered by the fear of not knowing how to implement the decision or of failing. You must ensure that advice, methods and support is provided if necessary.
- **Highlight the first results**. Making the first successes visible underlines the credibility of the decisions made and also maintains team enthusiasm.