## Strategies for Professional Decision Making: The SMART Approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRATEGY</th>
<th>SAMPLE REFLECTION QUESTIONS</th>
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| SEEK Help                 | • Where might I seek additional information or an unbiased, objective opinion?  
                             • Would it help to involve a mediator or consultant?  
                             • Do I welcome correction or input from others, including subordinates?                                                                                   |
| MANAGE Your Emotions      | • What are my emotional reactions to this situation? Am I anxious, frustrated, or depressed?  
                             • How might my emotions influence my decision-making?  
                             • Would taking a “time out” or deep breath help?                                                                                                          |
| ANTICIPATE Consequences   | • What are the likely short-term and long-term outcomes of various choices?  
                             • Who will be affected by my decisions and how?  
                             • How might this decision impact my career and me?                                                                                                        |
| RECOGNIZE Rules and Context | • What are the causes of the problems in this situation? Which causes can I change?  
                             • What ethical principles, laws, or regulations apply in this situation?  
                             • Does anyone have the power to control outcomes? If so, who and how?                                                                                   |
| TEST Your Assumptions and Motives | • Am I making faulty assumptions about the causes of the situation, alternatives, or others’ intentions? How can I find out?  
                             • What are my motives? Are they the same as the people I serve?  
                             • How will others view my choices?                                                                                                                          |

**NOTE:** The strategies often overlap, e.g., testing assumptions is often a good way to manage emotions and it can lead to seeking help. Want to be SMARTER? Add “Evaluate” outcomes of your actions, and “Revise” your approach based on outcomes.

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