

QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT HOW DECISIONS ARE MADE

- What are your organization's hiring policies? Are all jobs posted on a department Web site or advertised in an industry publication? Must a job be posted for a certain amount of time before it can be filled? Are jobs sometimes filled without a formal search? Is the system much more informal?
- When are decisions about raises made in your organization? When is the best time to provide input to the decision maker? What about bonuses, pension benefits, stock options, vacation days—what's the process for handing out those and any other parts of the compensation package?
- Who decides how work is allocated? Does the same person assign projects, set schedules, and determine responsibilities or are these functions split up? If these functions are not performed by the same person, what is the chain of command among the people involved? Who is the most senior person with the most power?
- How does your organization collect information regarding performance? Are all employees evaluated according to a well-understood and standardized system? Which data are used? Who collects the data and when? How heavily do personal (possibly subjective) evaluations influence the process?
- Are promotions made according to a strict schedule or are they made on an ad hoc basis? Who participates in the decision-making process and how much does each person's opinion or recommendation count?
- Who makes decisions about eligibility for special benefits such as extra training, tuition reimbursement, or flextime arrangements? Are there written rules about how these benefits are distributed or are decisions made on a case-by-case basis?
- What are the rules about early retirement—when it can be taken, who can take it, and the benefits provided? Are these rules strictly enforced and universally applied or are exceptions made?