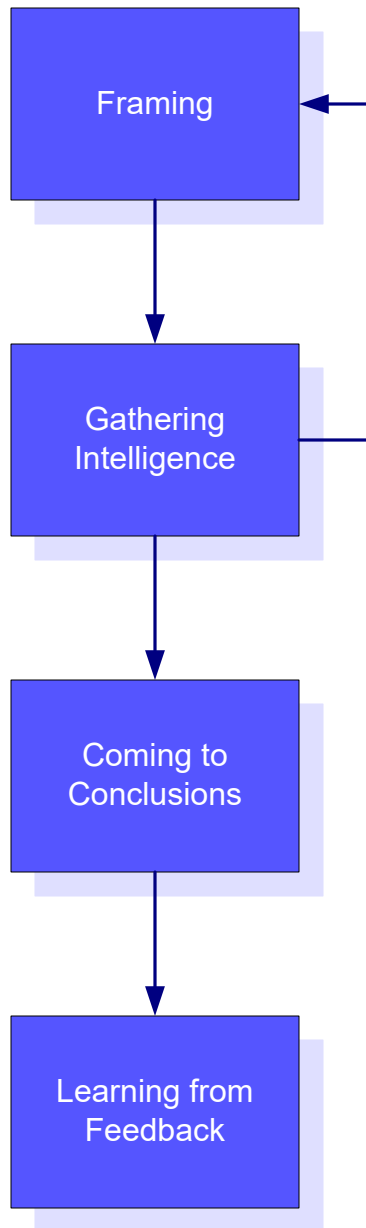


Decision Steps



Structuring the question. This means defining what must be decided and determining in a preliminary way what criteria would cause you to prefer one option over another.

Seeking both the knowable facts and the reasonable estimates of "unknowables" that you will need to make the decision. Good decision-makers manage intelligence-gathering with deliberate effort to avoid such failings as overconfidence in what they currently believe and the tendency to seek information that confirms their biases.

Sound framing and good intelligence don't guarantee a wise decision. People cannot consistently make good decisions using seat-of-the-pants judgement alone, even with excellent data in front of them. A systematic approach forces you to examine many aspects and often leads to better decisions than hours of unorganized thinking would.

Everyone needs to establish a system for learning from the results of past decisions. This usually means keeping track of what you expected would happen, systematically guarding against self-serving explanations, then making sure you review the lessons your feedback has produced the next time a similar decision comes along.