

STEP 1: Differentiate between short-term and long-term pros and cons.

warm-up: pros and cons over time

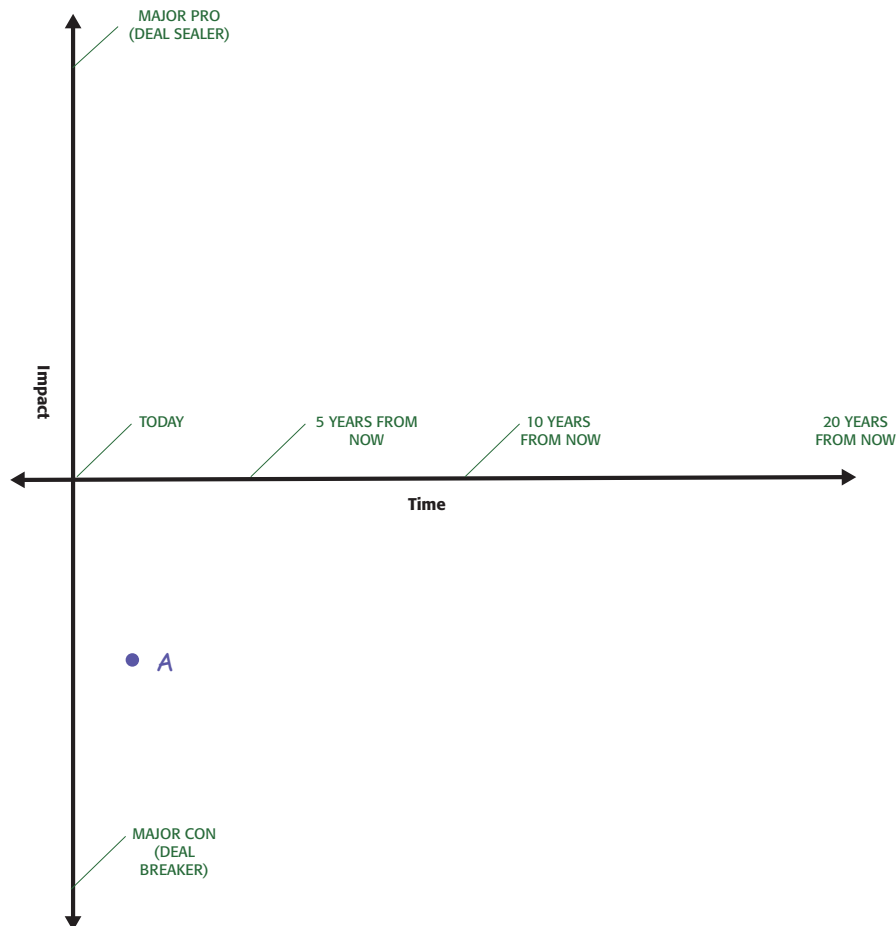
Read the following list of possible impacts of your postsecondary decisions. For each, ask yourself:

- Is this a pro or a con?
- How much positive or negative impact does this item have?
- Does it have short-term or long-term reach?

Then, place each impact on the graph below in the space where you believe it should go.

Potential Impacts:

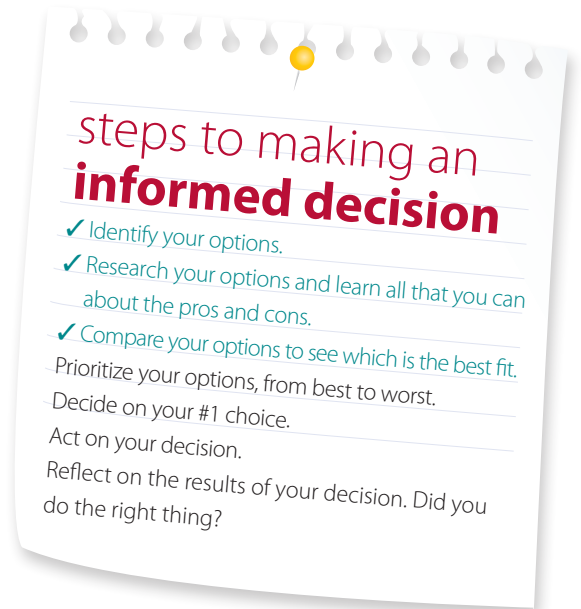
- | | |
|---|--|
| A) "I'll miss my friends." | J) "I could be in physical danger if I get deployed overseas." |
| B) "I won't be able to work full-time." | K) "I will make a lot of money immediately." |
| C) "I'll get to be on a campus with lots of fine looking ladies/men." | L) "I will meet cool people." |
| D) "I'll get to play on the basketball team." | M) "I will have to live in a city I don't like." |
| E) "I will earn a degree that will help me find a well-paying job." | N) "I will feel lonely." |
| F) "I will get to spend more time with my family." | O) "I will feel overwhelmed and scared." |
| G) "I will learn a trade that will help me find a well-paying job." | P) "I will need to make new friends." |
| H) "I will study what I love." | Q) "People there are going to be very different from me." |
| I) "I'll have to take out a lot of loans." | R) "My relationship with my girlfriend/boyfriend will suffer." |



Decision Making: Pros and Cons Over Time

pros and cons, costs and benefits

Last week, you learned about the importance of making an informed decision and gathered information about each of the schools and programs you're deciding between. Use your research to identify the pros and cons of each school.



SAMPLE: PeerForward University

+ Pros +

- Lots of financial aid in the form of grants (\$10,000)
- Big, diverse campus with lots of opportunities to get involved
- Biology program is the best in the country
- Freshmen get free tickets to home football games

— Cons —

- One big loan (\$5,000) means debt after graduation
- Far from home, I will miss my friends and family
- Bus ticket to come home costs \$50 each way!
- No one I know from high school is going there
- Latino/a population is less than 10%.

School One _____

+ Pros +

— Cons —

School Two _____

+ Pros +

— Cons —

BIG IDEA

By identifying pros and cons, you can compare opportunities (like schools and programs) to see which will have the most positive short-term and long-term impact.

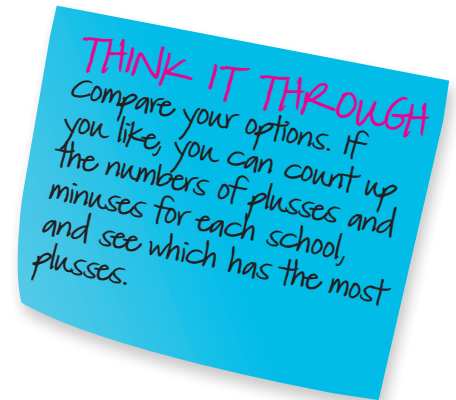
STEP 2: Compare and prioritize your options by identifying pros and cons.

prioritizing pros and cons

Not all pros and cons are created equal. As you saw in the Warm-Up activity, some have more impact than others. Rather than just counting up pros and cons, you should analyze each one to determine:

- How important is this pro/con to you, personally? How big of a deal is it?
- How much short-term impact will it have?
- How much long-term impact will it have?

Read over your pros and cons and decide how important each one is to you. Add pluses and minuses to visually show their importance.



PROS

SOME PROS “SEAL THE DEAL”

Maybe you’re really attracted to someone with a sense of humor, so if a date makes you laugh, they just “sealed the deal.” Likewise, if you really, really care about being an anthropologist, and you got accepted into the best anthropology program in the country, this college “sealed the deal.” A great pro can help you overcome some of your cons. Use this rubric to grade each of your pros, highlighting those that are high-importance:

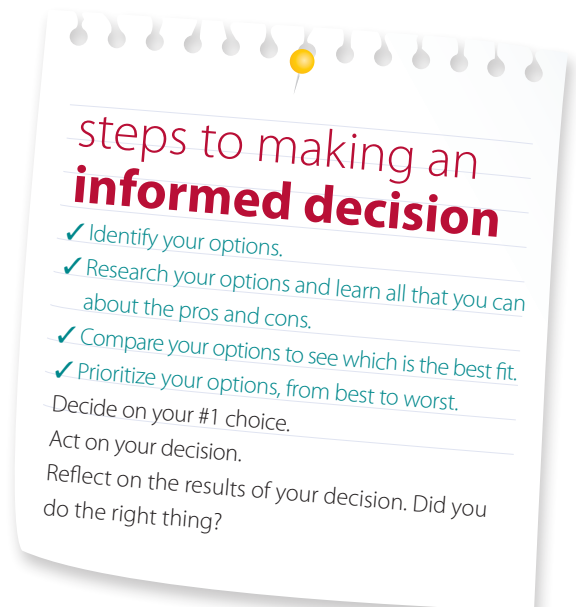
- + good, positive in the short term
- ++ awesome! positive in the long term
- +++ “seals the deal” — positive in both the short term and the long term

CONS

SOME CONS ARE “DEAL BREAKERS”

You wouldn’t date someone who had a habit you couldn’t stand or buy a car that didn’t run. Likewise, you wouldn’t attend a college if it just didn’t meet an important need. Do you have any “deal breakers” on your cons list? Use this rubric to grade each of your cons, highlighting those that are deal breakers:

- bad, negative in the short term
- – terrible, very bad, negative in the long term
- – – “deal breaker,” negative in both the short term and the long term



your decision

When you understand the pros and cons of attending each of your schools and programs, you have the power to compare and prioritize each school and program based on which will be best for you in the short-term, long-term, or both. Now it's time to make your final decision — where will you go?

List your schools or programs in order, from best to worst.

1st Choice Opportunity: _____

2nd Choice Opportunity: _____

Others: _____

your commitment statement

By now you should have made a clear, comprehensive decision about which school or program you want to enroll in. Now it's time to communicate your decision to others. In the next few months, you'll get a lot of questions about your future plans from friends and family. It's good to have your answer prepared!

making it real!

Memorize your commitment statement and present it in front of the class. How can you support each other as a class, through thick and thin?

I have made the informed decision to attend _____ this fall.

By attending _____, I will gain:

I might have to sacrifice _____, but I feel the benefits outweigh the costs.

This decision supports my short-term goals because:

This decision supports my long-term goals because:

BIG💡**IDEA**

Although it's impossible to predict the future, you can be confident you made the best decision you could if you had all the information and based your choice on your ultimate goals.

Ensure that you send all the proper paperwork and intent to enroll forms to your school.

STEP 5: Reflect on your decision to ensure it aligns with your ultimate goals.

after you make a decision: reflecting

In this short unit, you made one of the biggest decisions of your life: what to do after high school graduation.

Whenever you make a big decision, you will probably have questions that worry you or concern you. Although you can't possibly know the answer to these questions or concerns right now, sometimes it helps to identify steps you could take in the event of a "what if?"

If at any time between now and next Christmas, you start to doubt your decision, you have several options:

- Talking with a counselor or academic advisor on your new campus
- Changing your major, program, or course of study
- Changing your housing situation by moving to a new dorm or off-campus
- Transferring to a new school for your sophomore year

In Unit 7, you will explore all the resources available to you on college campuses and at your new job sites to help you reflect on your decision. You'll also identify all of the things you will need to do between today and the first day of your school or program in order to ensure you make the most of this important decision.

college 101

Now that you know which school or program you're going to attend, you need to act on your decision.

- Following the instructions on your online portal, submit your **Intent to Enroll** or otherwise accept Admission. There may be additional questions they ask about your intentions for the first semester.
- Submit a payment for your deposit, which holds your spot. If you need help with your deposit, speak with your teacher or the school's administration office.
- Don't forget about the schools you're not going to attend! Decline your admission to them as well. Sending regrets now means that the school can offer your spot to someone on the waitlist. That's good college application karma!

STEP 6: Share your final decision with your family and friends.

UNIT 6: SENIOR PORTFOLIO CHECK-IN

If you completed all of Unit 6, you should have completed the following **Senior Portfolio** items:

- Identified your options by making sense of all the decisions you received from your schools and programs, Lesson 26
- Generated a list of questions you still had about which school to attend, Lesson 26
- Researched your options using a variety of reliable sources, Lesson 26
- Compared pros and cons of each school or program, Lesson 27
- Prioritized your schools or programs, from best to worst, Lesson 27
- Made an informed decision about which school or program to attend, Lesson 27
- Acted on your decision by submitting your **Intent to Enroll** and your deposit before May 1st, Lesson 27

Give yourself a grade for each of the above items.

Based on the above, how would you evaluate your progress this year?

- Ahead of the game On track A little behind Off track

What can you do to improve?

taking the message home

Talk to your friends and family as soon as you can about your decision. If you've involved them in this decision at any point, from September until now, be sure to thank them for how they've helped you. For people who really went out on a limb for you, like your recommenders or your teacher, you might want to write a "Thank You" note or buy them a small gift, like a cup of coffee or some chocolate. Now is the time to celebrate!

Use this space to record your hopes and concerns about your decision.

Draw a picture or use words to show what you're excited about and what you're worried about.