Making difficult decisions.

1) Choose words from list below to fit into each sentence. Only one final solution should be attempted. Note: these sentences are useful for email or oral debate.

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a clue / matter for / Whenever / might consider / hard to / can't / right now / rests with me / faintest / on / Whatever / my mind / the other / to / for me / choose / one way / what / to take / sure about

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a) I'm not too ( 1.                   ) whether... (Inf / N)
b) I haven't decided ( 2.                   ) to do about... (Inf / N)
c) I ( 3.                   ) decide... (Inf / N)
d) I can't make up ( 4.                   ) about whether... (Inf / N)
e) I haven't ( 5.                   ) about... (Inf)
f) I haven't the ( 6.                   ) idea whether... (Inf)
g) I'm not sure but I ( 7.                   ) ... (Inf / N)
h) I find it difficult to decide ( 8.                   ) or the other about... (Inf / N)
i) Do I have to decide ( 9.                   ) about...? (Inf / N)
j) It's ( 10.                   ) decide between the two. (Inf / N)
k) In the end, I've decided ( 11.                   ) [the blue one.] (Inf / N)
l) After much thought, I've decided ( 12.                   ) [rent the premises.] (Inf / N)
m) It's not ( 13.                   ) to decide whether... (Inf / N)
n) To be perfectly frank, it doesn't matter to me one way or ( 14.                   ) whether... (Inf / N)
o) If you decide ( 15.                   ) the matter further, (N)
p) It ( 16.                   ) to decide whether... (N)
q) I believe it's a ( 17.                   ) John to decide; not me. (N)
r) ( 18.                   ) you decide, [let me know well in advance.] (N)
s) Whichever you ( 19.                   ), (N)
t) ( 20.                   ) you decide to come, (N)

2) Activity for discussion and practice.

You are going to read about and discuss certain situations where you must make the decisions.
Teacher’s notes.
(Time for activity: 40 mins approx. Level: intermediate.)

Making difficult decisions. (Context: email or meetings.)

Correct answers to question 1. (Note the key: Inf = for informal communication; N = for neutral communication (suitable for business correspondence).

| 1. sure about | 11. on |
| 2. what | 12. to |
| 3. can't | 13. for me |
| 4. my mind | 14. the other |
| 5. a clue | 15. to take |
| 6. faintest | 16. rests with me |
| 7. might consider | 17. matter for |
| 8. one way | 18. Whatever |
| 9. right now | 19. choose |
| 10. hard to | 20. Whenever |

Suggestions for activity 2.

In charge for a day and lots of decision to make.

This activity was designed for the employees of a particular company in mind (chemical). You may be able to use the same questions or adapt them. Write the situations on the board (or give Ss a handout). Get the students into pairs and tell them to ask each other what they would do in the given situations. Encourage Ss to use the sentences they have studied perhaps as an initial utterance but then offer some solution, eg situation j: “I can’t make up my mind whether I’d tell all the employees to go home or just ignore them. But I think I’d just ask them not to do it again.”

All the bosses and people in charge of all the departments in the company are off sick or on holiday. You are in charge of everything. What would you do in the following situations?

a) There is a power cut in the entire plant.
b) You get to work and find the plant is flooded.
c) There is a strong smell of gas coming from somewhere in the plant.
d) A female employee is about to have a baby and needs to leave work urgently but the electronic gate in the car park won’t open.
e) You are expecting an order of phosphates but when you check the merchandise, you discover it is pure marijuana.
f) Some employees play a joke on you one day and paint your car bright pink.
g) There is a plague of frogs (an endangered species) that invade your plant.
h) You are warned by NASA that in 30 minutes time a large meteorite will hit your factory.
i) An expert geologist visits your factory and gives you a confirmed report that a volcano may explode under the plant between now and the next hundred years.
j) On 31st October, all the employees arrive at work wearing Halloween costumes. Nobody is wearing regulation safety clothing.

Enjoy the lesson!