ZERO TO PROVE · BUSINESS INSIGHTS GUIDE

The Founder Decision-Making Guide

How founders and investors featured on Zero to Prove make difficult decisions under pressure and incomplete information.

Compiled from real conversations with founders, CEOs and innovators on the Zero to Prove podcast.
zerotoprove.org

Reframe the Decision

1 Value productive days over titles or status

Measure decisions by whether they move real work forward, not by how they affect your position or perceived status. — *Peter Mills, Former Partner, CMGI @Ventures*

2 Treat every decision as the start of a feedback loop

Rather than a single high-pressure verdict, see each decision as a hypothesis you'll test and adjust — this lowers the stakes of getting it perfectly right upfront. — *Peter Mills, Former Partner, CMGI @Ventures*

Apply Investor Discipline

3 Size your bets for genuine uncertainty

Founders who apply venture-style thinking to their own decisions — expecting some bets to fail — make faster, less anxious calls. — *Charles Grimsdale, Co-founder, Eden Ventures*

4 Back persistence over polish when the stakes are high

When deciding whom or what to bet on, prioritise sustained obsession with a problem over a polished plan — plans change, persistence compounds. — *Terry Garcia, Founder, Exploration Ventures*

Decide Under Personal Pressure

5 Redesign the business model around the decision you actually want to make

If your instinct is to reclaim your time, make the structural decision (delegating, changing the model) rather than only adjusting day-to-day habits. — *Cary Bowman, Co-founder, Lucky Bastard Distillers*

6 Solve the real problem, not the most visible opportunity

Founders make better decisions when they stay anchored to the underlying problem they set out to solve, rather than chasing the most visible new opportunity. — *Jay Samit, Author & Serial Entrepreneur*

Know When to Change Course

7 Recognise when a decision no longer serves your original purpose

The willingness to leave a secure, successful path — a law firm, a corporate career — when it stops aligning with your purpose is itself a decision-making skill. — *Terry Garcia, Founder, Exploration Ventures*
