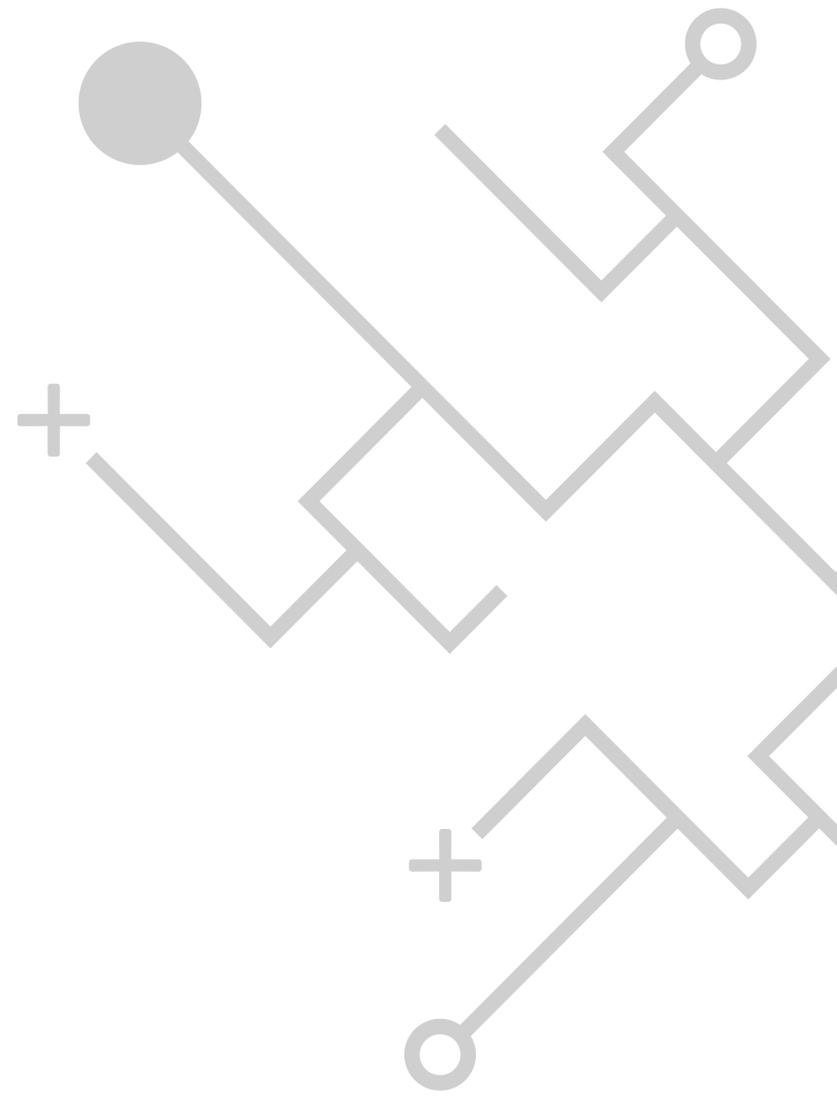


Decision *by* Design



Case Study:

Reaching a Crossroads: How Mirko Used Decision By Design To Decide on His Future Trajectory

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Mirko Serino had a lot to contend with. In 2019, his father, who ran the family business in the south of Italy, passed away after a battle with cancer. At the time, Mirko was busy with his postdoc in Israel, but he decided to come home to Italy.

Mirko was suddenly thrust into a new life. Working for the family cake shop and ice cream factory was incredibly different than working as a postdoc in physics. Not only that, but with Mirko's father gone, family members didn't agree on how to move forward. Mirko found himself at the helm, but he wasn't sure it was the right place for him to be.

“Should I stay or go?” As the months rolled by, this was the question that Mirko ruminated on. Mirko felt an obligation to his family, particularly his mother and sister. But he also had his own vision for his future and believed he'd be more fulfilled in a career in tech, a career that was likely to take him far away from both the family and the business.

Finding himself at a crossroads, Mirko decided to take Decision by Design. He needed a framework and tools to make the right decision for his future.

Challenge

MIRKO WAS AT THE HELM OF THE FAMILY BUSINESS, BUT WAS THAT WHERE HE WANTED TO BE?

Mirko had spent much of his adult life in academia, and his journey in scholarship took him far away from the small Italian town where he grew up and where he studied theoretical physics all the way to the PhD level. He'd also pursued two postdocs: three years in Poland and, after his father had already been diagnosed with cancer, had gone on to work for possibly three more years in Israel.

“The family obligation, especially towards my mother and my sister, is what brought me back to Italy, otherwise I would’ve stayed. I have never been interested in being a businessman, it’s just what happened, but I was able to thrive because of the lessons I learned over the years from my father.”

But when it was clear that there was nothing to do for his father any longer, Mirko decided to say goodbye to academia, cutting the Israeli postdoc short, and came home to help his family. He wanted to spend time with his father in the last months of his life. He also planned to step up to replace him in the family business.

As he began to immerse himself in the business, problems arose. Mirko was worn down by its cyclical and seasonal nature. He also found himself managing a slew of human resources issues, due especially to

the huge yearly turnover (roughly 25 new workers to find, train and manage every summer season). Not only that, but he didn't see eye to eye with his uncle, who had built the business together with his father.

Despite the issues, Mirko wasn't ready to run away. A large part of him wanted to stay there forever, future-proofing the business in the way his father envisioned. Another part felt that he needed an exit strategy, that he'd be happier in another line of work more aligned with his intellectual interests.

“If you live in Southern Italy, the landscapes and food are amazing, but the job opportunities

for people who are into tech or science are extremely limited,” he said. “If I want to pursue my technical interests, it’s likely that I need to leave the area.”

Mirko had a decision to make, one that would have ramifications for the rest of his life. He decided to take Decision by Design to help him formulate a plan.

Solution

DECISION BY DESIGN HELPED MIRKO FORMULATE THE RIGHT DECISION

For many months, Mirko went back and forth. He wanted to honor his father’s legacy and support his mother and sister by staying in the business, but he also wasn’t satisfied with the work he was doing.

“With every lesson I took, I felt more relieved. I understood that since these lessons are drawn from the greatest decision-makers in the world, I was not alone with my doubts, desire to wait, and feeling of uncertainty. Taking Decision by Design was a very relieving experience.”

Mirko had known about Decision by Design for a few months and decided it was time to jump in. “I considered my situation and the doubts I had about my future, and taking Decision by Design seemed like a good investment,” he said.

Mirko took the course in 12 weeks, following the lessons on a weekly basis. “I implemented the exercises and training to absorb as much as I possibly could. The lessons in the course are designed to get you unstuck when you are emotionally

crippled by the decision at hand, which was true in my case.”

The lessons helped Mirko not only formulate a decision but recognize which parts were most important. For example, Shane helped Mirko understand whether the decision was reversible or irreversible, if it was truly the right moment to act, or if he would feel guilty if he postponed.

Mirko was surprised at how much relief the course gave him. “With every lesson I took,

I felt more relieved. I understood that since these lessons are drawn from the greatest decision-makers in the world, I was not alone with my doubts, desire to wait, and feeling of uncertainty. Taking Decision by Design was a very relieving experience.”

Results

MIRKO HAS DECIDED TO LEAVE THE FAMILY BUSINESS AND PURSUE A CAREER IN TECH ON TERMS THAT ALIGN WITH HIS MORALS

After taking Decision By Design, Mirko has made a decision. He’s going to leave the family business, but he’s doing so on a generous timeline that will allow him to prepare his family and the business for his exit.

Although the course helped him move forward with confidence, it’s been a rollercoaster

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as he’s worked to make the decision. “I’ve presented all of this as a linear story, but of course there have been ups and downs throughout the past year as I worked everything out. There were bad days when I wanted to throw my hands up and quit right away,” he said.

“Now I have also discussed my proposal with my family and it was well received: though I cannot say that they are happy that I want to leave, I know that they understand my need to thrive in what suits me the most as a job and appreciate my offer to make the transition as smooth as possible.”

Throughout these ups and downs, Mirko was grateful he had taken a course that provided guidelines for making the right decision.

Because Mirko has now made a decision, he feels the course has paid for itself. “If you’re willing to do the work, Decision by Design is a great investment. And that’s the best compliment I can give a course... It’s a great course... But in order to make the most of your investment, you need to take the time and go through the lessons.”

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