

Full Transcript:

Decision Adoption: 'Choosing the Holiday of a Lifetime'

This case study demonstrates the AI-augmented **Decision Adoption** phase for the 'Choosing the Holiday of a Lifetime' decision, conducted in a conversation with Google Gemini, as detailed in Chapter 9 of Mike Baxter's *AI-Augmented Decisions* book. The full transcript of this conversation is given below.

Following the formal selection of the Okavango Delta Mokoro & Mobile Safari, the objective of this final phase was to translate the decision into a concrete and actionable plan. This phase focuses on the human-centric process of engaging with the decision to ensure it moves from an abstract intention to a tangible reality.

AI platform: <https://gemini.google.com> (version 2.5 Pro)

Date of chat: 10 July 2025

Documents uploaded:

- Decision Adoption Super-prompt
- Final Decision (Holiday of a Lifetime)

Prompt: I have just uploaded the Decision Adoption Super-prompt. I would like you to work through the process specified in this document. The decision I'd like you to apply this process to is defined in the Final Decision document that I have also uploaded.

Response: Excellent points. You are absolutely right that it's more of a sequence of jobs than a list of competing priorities. And building in a viability check before committing is a crucial step.

Let's revise the checklist to reflect this sequential, phased approach.

Here is the updated **Sequence of Planning Activities**:

- **Step 1: Viability & Quotation**
 - Research and select a specialist and reputable tour operator to partner with.
 - Collaborate with the tour operator to get a detailed itinerary and a firm quote to confirm the trip is affordable and viable.
 - Consult a GP or travel clinic to discuss malaria prophylaxis and any other recommended vaccines/health precautions to understand the health commitments.

- **Step 2: Booking & Commitment**
 - Based on the above, make the final go/no-go decision.
 - If going ahead:
 - Finalise and agree on travel dates.
 - Book the safari package through the chosen tour operator.
 - Book international flights.
 - Obtain comprehensive travel insurance that includes robust emergency medical evacuation coverage.
- **Step 3: Final Preparations**
 - Ensure passports are valid (with at least 6 months' validity beyond your return date, as is often required).
 - Arrange any necessary visas.
 - Follow through on the health plan (e.g., get vaccinations, fill prescriptions).
 - Develop and acquire items on a final packing list.

This revised sequence ensures you don't commit financially (booking flights/insurance) until after you have confirmed the full cost and health requirements.

Does this revised sequence look better? Do you want to continue refining this checklist, or are you ready to move on to identifying the key stakeholders for these activities?

Prompt: One final point: I think we need to move 'Finalise and agree dates' to step one in a slightly re-worded form. Perhaps 'finalise dates and confirm that the trip works for these dates.'

Response: Excellent point. The tour operator will certainly need firm dates to confirm availability and provide an accurate quote. Let's make that adjustment.

Here is the final version of our **Sequence of Planning Activities**:

- **Step 1: Viability & Quotation**
 - Finalise and agree on your preferred travel dates.
 - Research and select a specialist and reputable tour operator.
 - Collaborate with the tour operator to confirm availability for your dates and get a detailed itinerary and a firm quote to ensure the trip is affordable and viable. ¹
 - Consult a GP or travel clinic to discuss malaria prophylaxis and any other recommended vaccines/health precautions to understand the health commitments. ²
- **Step 2: Booking & Commitment**
 - Based on the above, make the final go/no-go decision.

- If going ahead:
 - Book the safari package through the chosen tour operator. ³
 - Book international flights.
 - Obtain comprehensive travel insurance that includes robust emergency medical evacuation coverage. ⁴
- **Step 3: Final Preparations**
 - Ensure passports are valid (with at least 6 months' validity beyond your return date).
 - Arrange any necessary visas.
 - Follow through on the health plan (e.g., get vaccinations, fill prescriptions).
 - Develop and acquire items on a final packing list.

This looks like a solid, logical plan of action.

Since that completes our checklist, shall we now move on to **Activity #2** and identify the key people and partners for each step?

Prompt: From experience of booking similar holidays, it is often best to start by exploring a range of possible dates, check flights, tour logistics and climate, to learn about the trade-offs involved in different particular dates (e.g. climate is best in one set of dates but the tour locations are busier and the flights more expensive. Later dates have worse weather but tour locations are quieter and the flights are cheaper). On the basis of this information, then finalise the dates and get firm quotes. Can you try to reflect this in Step 1?

Response: You are absolutely right. That's a much more realistic and savvy approach to planning. Finalising dates isn't the first action, but rather the *result* of initial exploration. Thank you for clarifying that.

Let's restructure Step 1 to capture this iterative, exploratory process.

Here is the newly revised **Sequence of Planning Activities**:

- **Step 1: Exploration, Viability & Quotation**
 - **A. Explore Date Options:** Identify a range of potential travel windows. For each window, research the key trade-offs, considering:
 - Climate, weather patterns, and the impact on wildlife viewing.
 - Availability and cost of international flights.
 - Tour logistics, such as how busy the camps are and any peak/off-peak pricing.
 - **B. Finalise Dates:** Based on your analysis of the trade-offs, select and finalise the optimal travel dates.

- **C. Select Partner & Get Quote:** Research and select a specialist and reputable tour operator. Collaborate with them to get a detailed itinerary and a firm quote for your finalised dates.
- **D. Health Consultation:**

Consult a GP or travel clinic to understand the health requirements for the trip ¹, including malaria risk ² and any other recommended precautions.

- **Step 2: Booking & Commitment**

- Based on all the information gathered in Step 1, make the final go/no-go decision.
- If going ahead:
 - Book the safari package through the chosen tour operator.
 - Book international flights.
 - Obtain comprehensive travel insurance with robust emergency medical evacuation coverage³.

- **Step 3: Final Preparations**

- Ensure passports are valid (with at least 6 months' validity beyond your return date).
- Arrange any necessary visas.
- Follow through on the health plan from your GP consultation (e.g., get vaccinations, fill prescriptions).
- Develop and acquire items on a final packing list.

This version now accurately reflects the need to explore options before committing to specific dates.

Does this refined checklist now feel complete? If so, shall we move on to **Activity #2** and identify the key stakeholders?

Prompt: Yes, let's move on.

Response: Excellent. We now have a solid checklist.

Let's move on to **Activity #2: Identifying Key Stakeholders**.

In this step, we'll assign people, roles, or companies to the activities on our checklist. For a personal decision like this, many of the roles will fall to you, but we will also identify key external partners. The goal is to be clear about who is doing what and who we need to rely on.

Based on our discussion and your Final Decision document, here is a map of the key stakeholders:

1. Decision Owners

- **Mike and Cathy:** You are the ultimate owners of this decision. You have the final say and are responsible for driving the entire planning process from research to final booking.

2. Enabling Partners

These are the external specialists you will rely on to make the trip happen.

- **Specialist Tour Operator:** A crucial partner who will manage the complex logistics of the safari, including transfers and camps. You'll collaborate with them during Step 1 for quotes and Step 2 for booking.
- **GP / Travel Clinic:** Essential for providing advice on malaria prophylaxis and other health precautions in Step 1.
- **Insurance Provider:** The company you will engage in Step 2 to get comprehensive travel insurance, which must include medical evacuation coverage.
- **Airlines:** The companies you will research in Step 1 and book with in Step 2 for your international flights.

3. Affected Stakeholders

This category includes anyone who isn't directly involved in the planning but will be affected by your decision. For example, this might include family, friends, or employers who need to be informed of your travel dates.

The key to a smooth process is ensuring these partners have the right information at the right time. For example:

- The **Tour Operator** will need your desired dates, your focus on wildlife and adventure, and your acceptance of a higher cost for a more exclusive experience.
- The **GP/Travel Clinic** will need to know your precise destination is the Okavango Delta to advise correctly on the malaria risk.

Does this breakdown of stakeholders seem right to you? Do you want to spend more time discussing how to engage with these partners, or are you ready to move on to the next activity?

Prompt: This is all good. Let's keep going.

Response: Excellent. Let's proceed to the next step.

Activity #3: Establishing a Planning Framework

This activity is about setting some simple 'rules of the game' for managing the planning process. The idea is to ensure the planning stays on track and can adapt if needed, without becoming overly rigid¹.

I will guide you through a few questions to define your framework. We can keep this very simple and practical.

1. How will you measure success?

To ensure the planning is progressing well, it can be helpful to have a few key targets. For example:

- **Progress Metric:** Have the trip fully booked by a specific date, say the end of October 2025?
- **Impact Metric:** Keep the total cost within a pre-agreed budget?

2. How will you manage the process?

To keep things moving, you could agree to short, regular check-ins. For instance, you could have a quick chat every Sunday evening to review what you've done, what you've learned (e.g., from a tour operator), and what you'll do next week. This is like a mini "sprint"².

3. How will you handle roadblocks?

What will you do if you get stuck or disagree? For example, if you can't decide between two tour operators, you could agree that you'll each list the pros and cons, and then decide based on the "Exceptional Wildlife Experience" criterion, which was the primary driver for your decision³. This provides a clear way to resolve obstacles⁴.

4. How will you capture information?

How can you best keep track of all the research, quotes, and ideas? A simple solution is often a shared digital document (like a Google Doc or OneNote) where you can both add notes, links, and booking confirmations. This acts as your learning system⁵.

What are your thoughts on these points? We can use your answers to create a simple framework. Do you want to refine these ideas, or are you ready to move on?

Prompt: Agree with all this. A few minor adjustments:

Progress Metric: Have the trip fully booked within two months?

Impact Metric: Keep the total cost within the signed-off budget estimates?

3. How will you handle roadblocks?

What will you do if you get stuck or disagree? We will prompt AI with our challenge, provide all the relevant data and ask for the pros and cons of our options in relation to the agreed acceptance criteria in the Decision Brief

Points 2 and 4 are fine as written.

Response: Excellent, those are great refinements. Using the AI to work through roadblocks is a perfect example of keeping the process "AI-augmented" all the way through.

Based on your input, here is a summary of your finalised **Planning Framework**.

Our Planning Framework

- **Success Metrics:**
 - **Progress:** Have the trip fully booked within two months.
 - **Impact:** Keep the total cost within the signed-off budget estimates.
- **Rhythm & Process:**
 - We will have a quick check-in every Sunday evening to review progress against our checklist and plan the next week's tasks.
- **Roadblock Resolution:**
 - If we get stuck or disagree, we will prompt our AI with the challenge, provide all the relevant data, and ask for the pros and cons of our options in relation to the agreed acceptance criteria from our Decision Brief.
- **Information Management:**
 - We will use a shared digital document (e.g., Google Doc, OneNote) to act as a central repository for all research, quotes, links, and booking confirmations.

This simple framework provides a clear, agile, and effective way to manage your planning process.

This completes Activity #3. We are now ready for the final step. Shall we move on to **Activity #4: Producing the pack of Decision Adoption Resources?** This involves consolidating all of our work into a single, comprehensive "Holiday Plan".

Prompt: Yes, let's move on.

Response: Of course. Let's create your "Holiday of a Lifetime" Planning Pack.

This is the final activity in our process. The goal is to consolidate all our work—the decision, the rationale, the action plan, and our planning framework—into a single, practical document. This pack will serve as your comprehensive guide to move from deciding to doing.

Below is the draft of your "**Holiday of a Lifetime**" Planning Pack. Please review it and let me know if any refinements are needed.

Decision Adoption Resources

1. The Final Decision & Rationale

- **Final Decision:** The Okavango Delta Mokoro & Mobile Safari is selected as the "Holiday of a Lifetime".
- **Decision Owners:** Mike and Cathy.
- **Approval Date:** 10 July 2025.
- **Core Rationale:** The Okavango Delta was chosen for three key reasons:
 - **Exceptional Wildlife:** It offers one of Africa's greatest wildlife concentrations and an unparalleled big-game safari experience, which was the primary driver for the decision.
 - **Unique Adventure:** The trip uniquely combines an expeditionary 4x4 mobile safari with serene, water-based exploration in a traditional mokoro canoe.
 - **Strategic Trade-Off:** A higher cost is consciously accepted in exchange for a more exclusive, remote, and high-quality wildlife experience that aligns with the core "Holiday of a Lifetime" goal.

2. Sequence of Planning Activities & Stakeholders

- **Step 1: Exploration, Viability & Quotation**
 - **Actions:**
 - Explore a range of potential travel dates, analysing trade-offs (climate, cost, crowds).
 - Finalise the optimal travel dates based on the analysis.
 - Select a specialist tour operator and get a detailed itinerary and firm quote.
 - Consult a GP/travel clinic regarding health requirements (malaria, etc.).
 - **Stakeholders Involved:** Mike & Cathy, Specialist Tour Operator(s), Airlines, GP/Travel Clinic.

- **Step 2: Booking & Commitment**
 - **Actions:**
 - Make the final go/no-go decision based on Step 1.
 - Book the complete safari package.
 - Book international flights.
 - Obtain comprehensive travel insurance, including mandatory emergency medical evacuation coverage.
 - **Stakeholders Involved:** Mike & Cathy, Chosen Tour Operator, Airline, Insurance Provider.
- **Step 3: Final Preparations**
 - **Actions:**
 - Ensure passports are valid for the required duration.
 - Arrange any necessary visas.
 - Execute the health plan (vaccinations, prescriptions).
 - Develop and finalise a packing list.
 - **Stakeholders Involved:** Mike & Cathy. Inform any Affected Stakeholders (e.g., family, employers).

3. Our Planning Framework

- **Success Metrics:**
 - **Progress:** Have the trip fully booked within two months.
 - **Impact:** Keep the total cost within the signed-off budget estimates.
- **Rhythm & Process:**
 - We will have a quick check-in every Sunday evening to review progress and plan the next week's tasks.
- **Roadblock Resolution:**
 - If we get stuck or disagree, we will prompt our AI with the challenge, provide all relevant data, and ask for the pros and cons of our options in relation to our agreed criteria.
- **Information Management:**
 - We will use a shared digital document to act as a central repository for all research, quotes, links, and booking confirmations.

With the completion of this pack, the five-phase AI-Augmented Decision process is now complete.

The focus now shifts from **deciding** to **doing**. The Decision Adoption Resources we have just created provide the strategic foundation and operational framework for your journey of execution, learning, and adaptation. You are now equipped not just with a high-quality decision, but with a clear and actionable path to turning that

decision into a meaningful and lasting change—in this case, the "Holiday of a Lifetime".

I wish you the very best with your planning and an incredible trip to the Okavango Delta.