



The Virtues of Going Rogue

6 Situations Where Going out on Sturdy Limb is the Right Thing to Do

By Jean Van Rensselar

Going rogue isn't necessarily a bad thing. In fact, the world could use a few more practical rogues. I use the word *practical* to separate those who have some basis for their actions from those who act impulsively---to be clear, rogue can be good, but impulsive is always bad. Following are 6 instances where taking bold imitative has merit:

1. When You Know More than Everyone Else

The reason you know more is either because you've done your homework or you have more experience in that area. You may have done some reading and talked to experts because you anticipated the situation long before everyone else.

2. When Time is of the Essence

Not everything can wait until a committee gets around to making a decision that everyone is comfortable with. Some opportunities (and threats) need to be acted on immediately. If that's the situation and you're at least 51% sure of your decision, go ahead and act.

3. When the Situation is Hopelessly Stuck

You've been mulling the situation over with others for a long time now and things are either deadlocked or clearly not going anywhere soon. If you're tired of wasting time and the decision, no matter what it is, will be fairly inconsequential, go ahead and act.

4. When You're the Only Decision Maker

If you're the leader of a group that needs to make a decision, you may be the only one that everyone expects to act, anyway. If this is the case, your job is to listen to what everyone has to say and then make a decision.

5. When No One Else will take Responsibility

People that have been burned over a bad decision in the past are often unwilling to make even the smallest decision. My experience is that many people don't want to take responsibility for something that won't benefit them in some way if it's successful and may harm them if it's not. Your job is to make a decision based on whether it will benefit others, not just you.

6. When You're Absolutely Sure

Sometimes, even though you can't really articulate your reasons, you're certain of your decision and are committed to acting on it. This may be the best reason of all to take bold initiative.

Going rogue doesn't always involve making a decision or taking action---sometimes it means having the courage to refuse to make a decision or take action. A wise friend of mine once said, "If someone is trying to force you to make a decision, no decision *is* your decision."

About the Author

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