



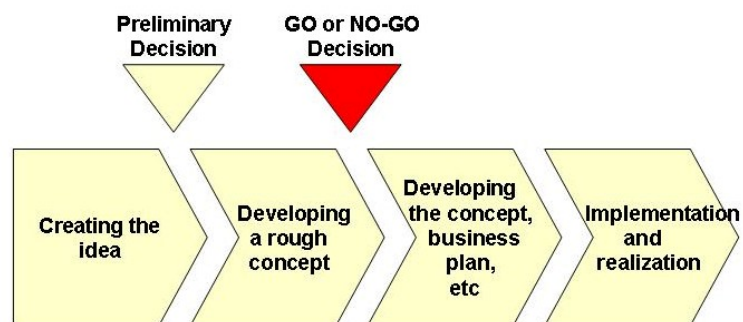
“JUST DO IT”

“Boss, I have an idea!” Does this sound familiar to you? How many sentences like this one did you as a manager hear from your associates or employees during the last three months? And to be honest: how many ideas did you – within your field of responsibility – bring to realization?

I estimate the average **ratio between created ideas and ideas, which are going to be realized**, in most of our small and medium-sized companies is **about 1:100**.

And what do you think is the reason for such a disproportion? According to my experience a lot of managers are often afraid of taking the risk for a GO-decision. **So, instead of crossing the Rubicon an excellent “high-potential” idea unfortunately just ends in talk.**

In modern business literature you can read how projects are going to be realized or ideas are translated into reality as the following. The most crucial phases and decisions are in a nut shell:



Of course, there are a lot of reasons, why projects may fail or ideas aren't realized: maybe the idea was not good enough or the business plan did not foresee a proper success or certain mistakes and errors occurred during the implementation. But **let's concentrate more on the “GO or NO-GO decision”**, because there is not so much written in modern business literature about this kind of a manager's competence.

I remember for instance a manager, who spent a lot of time listening to his people's ideas, but whenever it came to the point to say “GO” he continued **to philosophise about “how beautiful the world will be with this new idea” instead of realizing it**. The fact was that this gentleman and his company have never become really successful, because they had a huge lack of innovations, especially compared to other players on the market.

Or there was another manager, who was afraid of taking the risk and saying “YES, we are going to realize this idea”. He postponed the GO or NO-GO decision so many times, asked for hundreds of analyses and researches, until the supplier of the idea gave up. Why? It seemed to be much better for that manager – from his personal point of view – **not to make mistakes and to be among the average than to realize an idea**



and in case of a success to climb up the job ladder, but at the same time to accept certain project related risks.

Some years ago I was in charge of a huge IT project in a bank. The objective was to migrate from a local banking core system to an international one. For that purpose the international software provider supported our team with external business consultants. I don't remember anymore, how many of those highly-educated and well-paid managers joined our team, but it was always the same scheme: **they analysed, they showed us several solutions, they gave us hundreds of pieces of advice, but when the time came to say: "Let's now go in this direction or in the other one?"** they were not able to provide us with their proposal and to recommend "A" or "B". At the end I took the risk for doing the decision on my shoulders ... and we succeeded with that project.

In my last long-term assignment I had the opportunity to work with employees on the Balkans. I don't want to generalize anything nor do I want to create stereotypes, but in that specific case I realized a certain scheme: a lot of people there were so-called **"Masters of Creativity"**, they literally came up with hundreds of ideas, but whenever I raised the question: "OK, an excellent idea, but who wants to be in charge of the implementation?" a silence could be heard in the room... Nobody had enough self-conquest to take responsibility and especially to accept the big burden of running a project.

Another bad case was a manager, whom I got to know some years ago and who has just always wanted to be praised by his shareholders in case an idea became successful, but who on the other hand made his staff responsible for unsuccessfulness. The result was that no one in his business environment wanted to deliver ideas anymore to this manager and **the company got stuck in regards to innovations.**

I am sure that if you as a manager are not willing **to cross the Rubicon by taking the responsibility and saying "GO"** for realizing an excellent idea or implementing an interesting project you might miss the chance or an opportunity

- to learn how to deal with challenges and also to learn from mistakes,
- to gain experience and on that basis develop your future career,
- to develop your staff and at the same time provide them with a back up or a safety net,
- to become more self-confident in our today's business world,
- to do something exciting and
- to increase the number of innovations in your company!

Dear Reader, I hope I was able to present you with so many worse cases scenarios "how not to do it", so that you as a manager will from today on behave in accordance with NIKE's slogan: **"JUST DO IT"** and that you won't miss any of the aforementioned chances and opportunities.