Decisions! Decisions! Day to day indecision could soon be a thing of the past for all of us. A prototype computer game has been developed to help improve decision-making skills in all aspects of our lives.

Supported by EPSRC, a team at Queen’s University Belfast has developed a prototype that could be built on by commercial games manufacturers and turned into an e-learning or training tool for professionals in all walks of life – and for the general public too. Alternatively, some of its features could be incorporated in existing computer games that have a strategy element.

**SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO?**

The research is part of an interdisciplinary project harnessing leading-edge expertise in mathematics, statistics, critical thinking, knowledge management and education psychology.

The team, led by Dr David Newman, has explored whether people can be trained to make better decisions by improving their ability to recognise and make allowances for their subjective opinions and biases and to ‘factor in’ accurately their uncertainty over a decision’s likely outcome.

The prototype game teaches people to take their uncertainty into account and learn from experience when faced with simple choices. It presents a series of multiple-choice questions (e.g. ‘what is the capital of Egypt?’). But its aim is not to test knowledge, but to assess whether the participant can be trained to recognise, quantify and make allowances for their certainty or uncertainty regarding the answer to each question. The player indicates their confidence in their answer using an interactive slider and is awarded points based on how accurately they estimated their level of certainty. Detailed feedback then helps them recognise and correct the over- or under-confidence they tend to show when faced with similar decisions.

**“IT’S THE FIRST EVER ONLINE QUIZ DESIGNED TO LET PEOPLE ESTIMATE HOW SURE THEY ARE OF THEIR ANSWERS…”**

Dr David Newman

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In the future, games of this type could be used for both educational and entertainment purposes by public and private sector decision-makers and by private individuals in order to enhance their decision-making abilities.

The prototype game is available for anyone to try at http://quiz.worldofuncertainty.org/.
THE COMPUTER GAME
IMPROVING YOUR
CHANCES OF REACHING
THE RIGHT DECISIONS

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