

The scenario

You are part of the management team at Riverside Café. Customer numbers have fallen over the last three months. The owner wants to understand why and decide what action should be taken. Your group must use the evidence in this pack rather than relying on assumptions.

Decision to make: What should the café do first to improve customer numbers, and why?

How to complete the activity

1. Identify the problem and define what decision needs to be made.
2. Examine the evidence. Separate facts, opinions and possible assumptions.
3. Consider more than one possible solution.
4. Recommend an action and justify it using specific evidence.
5. Decide how you would review whether your decision worked.

Evidence 1: Customer numbers and sales

Month	Customers	Average spend	Total sales
May	1,240	£8.40	£10,416
June	1,120	£8.35	£9,352
July	980	£8.25	£8,085
August	890	£8.10	£7,209

What has changed? Which figures are most relevant to the problem?

Evidence 2: Recent customer feedback

- “The coffee is still good, but lunchtime queues have become too long.”
- “I used to come in before work, but the café now opens later than it used to.”
- “Prices have gone up and there are cheaper options nearby.”
- “Staff are friendly, but tables are not always cleared quickly when it is busy.”
- “I like the café, but the menu has not changed for a while.”

Which themes appear more than once? Which comments would you want to look at further?

Evidence 3: Staff views

- Two colleagues report that lunchtime shifts have felt understaffed since the rota changed.
- One colleague believes the main problem is the recent price increase.
- Another colleague thinks a new competitor nearby is attracting customers.
- The manager notes that social media promotion has been less regular over the last two months.

Which points are evidence, which are opinions, and what additional information would help?

Evidence 4: Local context and operating information

Information available	What you know
Opening hours	Weekday opening moved from 7:30am to 8:00am in June.
Prices	Average menu prices increased by around 6% in June.
Staffing	Typical lunchtime staffing reduced from 4 people to 3 in June.
Competition	A new coffee shop opened approximately five minutes away in July.

Several things changed at a similar time. The evidence does not prove that one factor alone caused the decline.

Your group analysis

1. Identify the problem

What is happening, and what decision needs to be made?

2. Gather and evaluate evidence

What are the strongest pieces of evidence? Is there any information still missing?

3. Consider possible solutions

List at least two realistic options and identify an advantage and disadvantage of each.

4. Make and justify a decision

What should the café do first? Refer to at least three pieces of evidence.

5. Review the outcome

What would you measure after the change to decide whether it worked?

Decision summary

Our recommendation: _____

Evidence that supports our decision:

A different perspective we considered:

An assumption we avoided or tested:

How we will review the outcome:
