

Personal Decision Worksheet

Course vs Self-Study - Make Your Choice in 15 Minutes

STEP 1: ASSESS YOUR STARTING POINT

Distributed systems knowledge (1–10): _____

Self-directed learning ability (1–10): _____

Combined score: _____ (Add both numbers)

STEP 2: DEFINE TIMELINE & STAKES

Weeks until first interview: _____

Interview importance (Practice / Important / Critical): _____

Timeline pressure (Low / Medium / High): _____

STEP 3: EVALUATE RESOURCES

Access to experienced engineers? (Regular / Limited / None): _____

Internal company resources? (Comprehensive / Some / None): _____

Budget constraint? (No constraint / Affordable / Hardship): _____

STEP 4: DECISION MATRIX

- Knowledge 7+, Self-direction 7+, Timeline 12+ weeks, Regular feedback access → Self-Study
- Knowledge <6, OR Timeline <12 weeks, OR No feedback access, OR High stakes → Structured Course
- Knowledge 6–7, Some feedback, Flexible timeline → Hybrid Approach

YOUR DECISION: _____

NEXT STEPS (Week 1 Actions)

Day 1–2: _____

Day 3–4: _____

Day 5–7: _____

Week 2–3: Schedule first feedback session