

In this part of Making Smart IT Choices, we briefly present an array of skills, techniques, and tools that can help you develop the information that you need to build a solid business case and make sound decisions. First, we present general skills for working with groups and presenting to an audience. These skills apply at every stage of a business case development project. We tell you what they are, what they can do for you, and what their limitations are. Then we discuss a series of techniques that can help you begin gathering the information you will need to make a case for an IT investment decision.

Next we present a collection of tools that help you work through each of the three phases of analysis that lead to the creation of a business case. Some of these tools will be familiar to you already while others may be new. For each tool we tell you a little about it is and what it can do for you. We also point out its limitations, since no tool is perfectly suited to every need. For some tools, (ones we have found easy to apply and valuable for everyone to know) we also offer brief how to's that lead you through the basic steps. For other tools (those that need special training or the assistance of an expert), we give you overview information and some advice about where real experts can help you. For almost all of the skills, techniques, and tools, we point you to print or electronic resources to learn more.