DECIDE to Thrive

Improving Business Performance through Decision Effectiveness

POINT of Reference:

At 172 pages, this is a medium effort and high value read. Contains good examples, stories, and even a worksheet for self-assessing decision effectiveness.

Genre

Business

Leadership

Business Management

Strategy Management

Business Psychology

An upgrade over books of a similar genre that were written about 15 years ago. Decisioning studies have been prevalent for over 50 years, and this book provides a current view of approaches.

Key POINTs

- Decision Effectiveness correlates to improved business performance in the areas of Return on Sales, Return on Assets, Return on Equity, and Market Share.

- High success rates with business initiatives are possible and they require a multi-disciplinary approach. Forty-year trends average 68% failure. Using a multi-disciplinary approach can enable an inverse effect of 70%+ success rates.

  Be intentional about mapping decision rights, just as businesses are about designing processes, selecting systems, software, and other job tools.
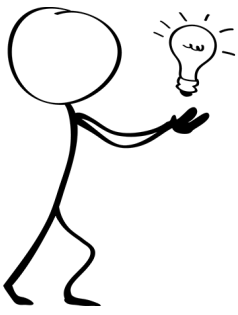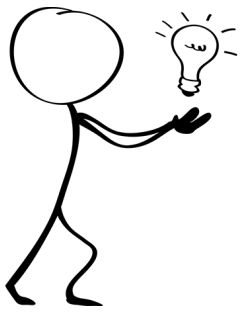
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*Get to the **point**, fast!*
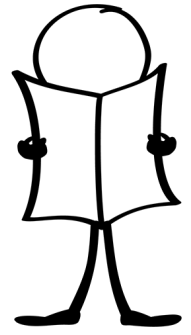
Main POINTs

With most business books, we tend to want to get to the new content as directly as possible. The authors encourage the reader to step back, and they do a nice job of putting the discipline of Decision Effectiveness into *perspective*. **Perspective** is the first main point with *DECIDE to Thrive*. Failure rates are high with business initiatives, and they have been historically at 68% or higher. It is possible to drive success rates at 70% or higher, but it requires a multi-disciplinary approach. Decision Effectiveness is one of seven performance disciplines and it has a moderate correlation to improved business performance. When combined properly with other disciplines such as organizational design, process design, systems, tools, people, and incentives a business can confidently drive performance and success rates.

The second main point is around *how* to *define* decision effectiveness. The authors anchor the definition in human psychology, but they do just enough to get us moving in the right direction. (It's not a psychology book after all, it's a business book.) This leads to the establishment of 5 dimensions of decision effectiveness which form the basis for how to measure the same concept. These include role clarity, quality of decisions, speed of decision making, yield (output) of decisions, and the

Extra POINTs

The last couple chapters of the book are equally high value. They take the reader through the process of measuring decision effectiveness, examining the various dimensions of metrics around decision making. Then, they close the book with a treatment on change leadership. The premise being that if you're going to make changes to how decisions are made, you will have to address the power structures, processes, systems, tools, and skills of your work teams. Identifying the change implications up front will make for a successful effort.
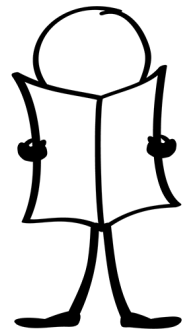
effort that goes into making a decision. Each of these dimensions are defined along with examples.

An interesting third point is on the dimensions of power and how decision rights play into power within organizations. This use of power, especially political power, within an organization is an often-untouched concept in business books. It fits exceptionally well when considering decision rights and decision effectiveness. It's a short chapter on power, but a very well written one.

There are five methods of decision making which the authors present as Solo, Inform, Discuss, Recommend, and Consensus (SIDRC). These methods are well-grounded and

based on psychology research that was conducted in the early 70's. A popular business book written by on the big-name consulting firms from the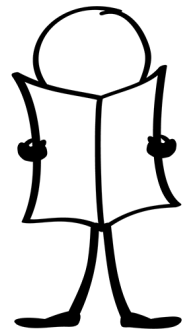 early 00's dealt with only 1 of these methods: Recommend. These authors provide the read with exposure to all 5 methods in a very practical manner, identifying the decision-performance dimensions that would cause you to choose one over the other.
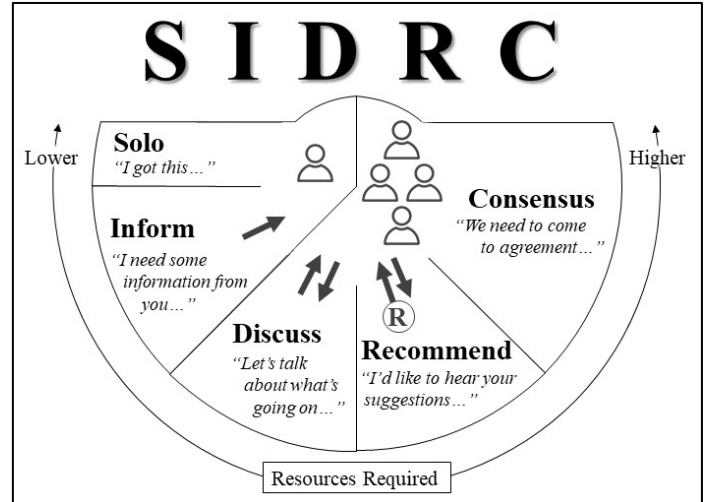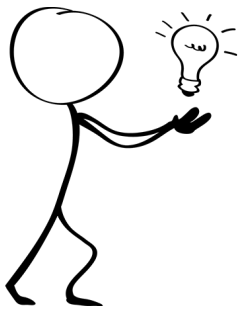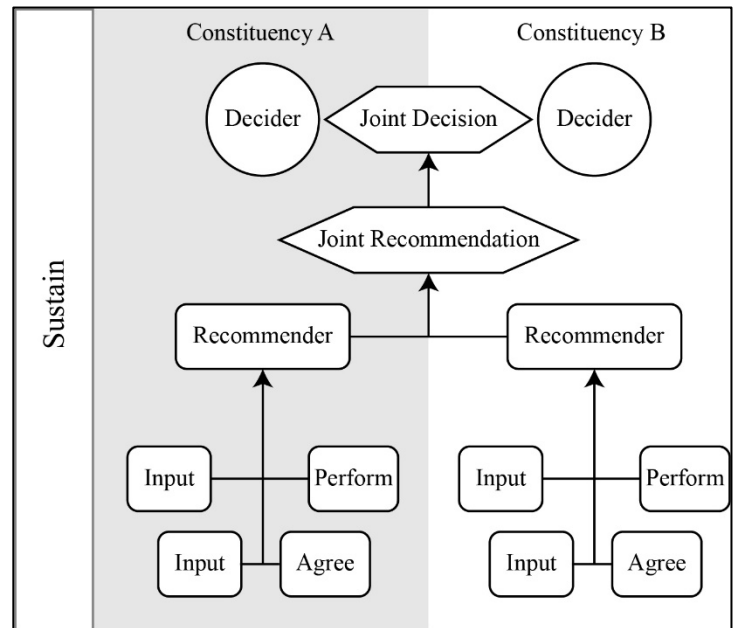
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Fourth, the authors walk you through how to apply decisioning processes and roles within business process management. The introduce the RAPIDS acronym for mapping decision rights and examine it side-by-side with the popular acronym RACI that's used in process mapping. They don't stop there. The further examine RAPIDS in contrast to a popular acronym used in healthcare called DECIDE. There are process illustrations and examples provided showing you how to adjust process workflows to specifically address the steps surrounding decision making and the critical roles associated with it.

The fifth point is where the authors walk you through how to write decisions in order to gain optimal role alignment. They extend both the writing, mapping, and role definitions into use in the consensus model. This is an area of decision making that is avoided by most popular business authors, as it's often seen as a taboo subject…the general view being that 'consensus is bad.' The authors readily admit that consensus decision making is slower and much more resource intensive; however, they provide you with the tools and coaching for navigating this space when you're confronted with it. The fact is that we sometimes have to use the consensus decision making approach. They use examples from joint-ventures to illustrate the need for using consensus decision making.

The authors teach a masters-level course on the same subject, using their book, at the University of Texas at Dallas. ■

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