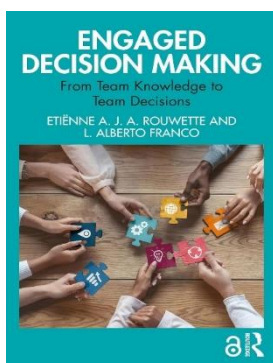


Understanding Decisions as Products of Collective Processes



Judul Buku	: <i>Engaged Decision Making: From Team Knowledge to Team Decisions</i>
Penulis	: Étienne A. J. A. Rouwette dan L. Alberto Franco
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Introduction

Decision-making can be considered a cognitive process that results in the selection of a course of action from several alternative scenarios (Chakhar & Saad, 2014). Modern organisations today and in the future will face complex problems in their decision-making processes, requiring cross-skill collaboration, teamwork, and knowledge exchange to achieve high-quality collective decisions. However, the problem is that abundant information and intense discussions do not always ensure quality group decisions or collaborative decision-making because team member involvement is often managed ineffectively. The above scenario is also influenced by an ever-changing context affecting every decision made (Pomerol, 2003). These conditions and scenarios further emphasise the importance of understanding how team knowledge can be transformed into meaningful organisational decisions.

Therefore, it is relevant to understand this through the scientific paper "Engaged Decision Making: From Team Knowledge to Team Decisions" (Rouwette & Franco, 2024). As the authors, experts in research methodology, intervention, and decision sciences, convey, this book is expected to make a significant contribution by combining intelligent analysis and stakeholder engagement to address the increasingly complex challenges arising from the interaction of social, ecological, and economic objectives.

Four key messages are discussed: an insight into the concept of individual and group or team decision-making (Chapters 1-3), an approach and implementation of advanced interventions in team decision-making (Chapters 4-10), a variety of interventions that combine simple and advanced approaches (Chapters 12-15), and an examination of the effectiveness and impact of interventions used in addressing various issues (Chapters 16-17).

The main message of this book is in line with the character of the group decision-making process, which essentially must consider three basic questions, namely, how to extract stakeholder knowledge and preferences, how to combine these preferences and knowledge coherently, and how to conduct discussions and resolve conflicts (Chakhar & Saad, 2014).

Exploration

In the opening message of the first section, the author begins by discussing pitfalls in individual and team decision-making. Individual-level pitfalls typically arise from complex decision-making modes (System 2). Simple decision-making (System 1) is commonplace in routine activities and does not require extensive thought about the impact of major problems. System 2 decision-making, on the other hand, requires more complex information retrieval and processing due to numerous influencing factors, potentially triggering cognitive biases, such as overconfidence bias, a tendency to overemphasise the most readily available

information and evidence (availability bias), a tendency to persist in unsuccessful actions (sunk-cost bias), favouring information that supports current beliefs or choices while ignoring evidence that challenges them (confirmation bias), and having a narrow view of existing decisions and assuming complete knowledge (framing bias). Teams often magnify individual decision-making pitfalls.

However, joint decision-making has the advantage of team members supporting each other's involvement. Therefore, the cognitive and social motivational dynamics associated with information processing must be managed to create productive conflict. This issue is discussed in Chapter 2 using Motivated Information Processing in Groups (MIP-G) theory as a reference. Methods that can be used to create productive conflict include simple intervention tools (debiasing strategies, brainstorming, and nominal group techniques, as well as clustering and prioritising) and advanced ones (group model building, group causal mapping, decision conferencing, and participatory scenario development).

Advanced intervention methods are discussed in more depth in the second part of the message, which discusses procedures, techniques, and tools for group model building rooted in system dynamics and causal loop diagrams (Chapter 4) and examples of their application to building educational business model decision-making (Chapter 5). Scenario planning methods for constructing descriptions of an organisation's future environment using participatory scenario development are discussed in Chapter 6, and examples of their application in government organisations to address housing and spatial planning issues are in Chapter 7. The idea that individuals have different perceptions and interpretations of the same situation due to using different mental constructs is discussed using the group causal mapping method (Chapter 8) and examples of its application to prioritise government projects to address youth issues (Chapter 9). Finally, a discussion of decision conferencing methods that offer comparisons of options or portfolios across multiple objectives is discussed in Chapter 10, and examples of their application are discussed in Chapter 11 using the same case as Chapter 9.

The third section, which discusses varying interventions using simple and advanced methods, begins with a discussion of intervention design to help improve unbiased team decision-making (Chapter 12). Once the design is created, the facilitator will assume the role of leading the collective decision-making process. The facilitator needs to possess five attitudes: helping, neutrality, enquiring, relational engagement, and self-reflexivity (Chapter 13). The facilitator's task of managing the process and content can be carried out using a directive (active) or laissez-faire (passive) approach, as discussed in Chapter 14. As a consequence of facilitating collective decision-making, conflict will naturally arise among team members. Pushing cognitive boundaries while keeping affective conflict under control will result in productive conflict. Meanwhile, unproductive conflict arises because multiple perspectives are ignored or not integrated (Chapter 15).

Finally, the fourth section examines the effectiveness and impact of the various intervention methods discussed in this book. Chapter 16 reports the evidence by identifying various applications for each approach, followed by an academic review of their use. Chapter 17 discusses efforts to improve the competency of intervention practitioners or facilitators through internships or in the classroom. Three key competency areas to improve are conducting analysis, managing processes, and appreciating context.

The book's systematic and interconnected discussion of the key messages conveyed through in-depth discussions in each chapter is a strength. Furthermore, the book includes appendices that discuss procedures for using simple intervention methods and a guide to selecting research data collection methods, which are useful for novice facilitators. However, a drawback, though outweighed by its many strengths, is the book's lack of in-depth

discussion of coaching techniques, which the author believes are effective for facilitators in developing quality group decision-making.

Discussion and Reflection

An interesting topic related to the five facilitator attitudes that must be possessed in managing content and processes, as emphasised by the author using coaching techniques: *"When a team leader has a coaching style, which is supportive and non-defensive in reaction to questions and challenges... Notice that a coaching style, encouraging team members to share information and minimising power differences in the team are all closely in line with facilitator attitudes discussed."* (p. 223).

Coaching is a technique that has increasingly been recognised as an important skill that needs to be provided to organisational leaders to improve efficiency and create conversations that can ultimately add value to the organisation (Alford & Cantrell, 2018). Coaching is a regular, synergistic, and goal-oriented learning and development process to improve facilitation skills. Thus, coaching is more beneficial for people who make decisions (Rosha & Lace, 2016). The use of coaching in the context of organisational management can gradually shape or change the organisational culture from a traditional one to an innovative one by bringing about aspects of change in people's behaviour, stimulating their creativity, generating plans, and taking action (Kołodziejczak, 2015).

For public organisations, organisational coaching has become an important strategy for corporate leadership development and change; its use is increasing as leaders at all levels and sectors face increasingly difficult challenges in complex businesses (Bennett & Bush, 2009) and are expected to produce meaningful and quality collective decisions for the organisation. Therefore, stakeholders who are always involved in facilitating decision-making in the organisation need to deepen their coaching skills so they can integrate rich knowledge from various perspectives of their team members towards meaningful collective decisions.

Such coaching is important because, based on our experience, the decision-making process in government organisations often results in high-quality collective decisions due to the diverse perspectives and interests each team member brings to the table. Therefore, training institutions facilitate this competency-building training for employees. For example, training on decision-making and leadership as coaches, as has been done in training institutions in the energy and mineral resources sector.

Conclusion

This book offers theoretical insights, procedures, and examples of their application that are useful for anyone seeking to explore the collective decision-making process in organisations that are constantly faced with complex and changing situations depending on their context. Organisational actors at all levels, civil servants, academics, and students are recommended to read this book and other supporting books on coaching to gain more comprehensive knowledge and practice in decision-making.

Penulis: Rohmatulloh, Sofian, dan Timtim Tauhidin PS (Widyaiswara Muda pada Badan Pengembangan Sumber Daya Manusia Kementerian Energi dan Sumber Daya Mineral)