

# Management: overview

[Business](#), [Management](#)



CHAPTER 9: THE VERDICT ON GROUPTHINK 1. In my experience, I found that decision-making groups do not tend toward groupthink. Groupthink is a mode of thinking that people engage in when they are deeply involved in a cohesive in-group, when the members' striving for unanimity override their motivation to realistically appraise alternative courses of action. Groups displaying most of the symptoms of groupthink are more likely to display symptoms of defective decision making, resulting in poor policy outcomes.

There are seven ways to prevent this: \* Leaders should assign the role "critical evaluator" to each group member to allow each member to freely voice objective and doubts. \* Leaders should not express an opinion when assigning a task to a group. \* The organization should set up several independent groups, working on the same problem. \* All effective alternatives should be examined. \* Each member should discuss the groups' with trusted people outside of the group. \* The group should invite outside experts to their meetings.

Group members should be allowed to discuss the problem with and question the outside experts. \* At least one group member (a different person for each meeting) should be assigned the role of devil's advocate to intentionally challenge the groups' assumptions and conclusions. 2. Review the steps in the rational decision-making model (especially 1-4). This model, of course, applies to individuals and might be difficult to apply to group decision making situation. If, however, you were juror, how might you apply these steps to your own deliberations? In what ways might they give you some useful guidance?

In what ways would you have to make adjustments because of the contents (a trial) and situation (a group process)?

- i. Cohesiveness. A number of factors combine to ensure that the jury is a cohesive group.
- ii. Insulation. Once it's empanelled, the jury is isolated from other individuals and groups. Jurors are physically separated from other group in the courthouse.
- iii. Lack of tradition of impartial leadership. The only leadership in the group comes from the foreperson, which typically has an opinion on the case and cannot really be impartial in relating to other members.
- iv.

Lack of norms requiring methodical procedure. Juries have no set rules for how to proceed in arriving at a decision.

- v. Homogeneity of social background and ideology. Juries are rarely valid cross section of the community. Juries often tend towards homogeneity on those qualities.
- vi. Temporarily low self-esteem induced by situational factors. The more difficult it becomes to sort out alternatives and reach a decision, the lower a juror's sense of self-efficacy may become. In my opinion, the greater the number of these condition that exist, the greater the propensity towards groupthink. .

In what ways might bounded rationality affect a juror's approach to a decision? How about satisfying? Intuition? Ethics? Realistically speaking, people are limited by their ability to interpret, process, and act on information. This is called bounded rationality. Once juror have identified a problem, they begin to search for criteria and alternatives. But the list of criteria is likely to be far from exhaustive. They identify a limited list of the most obvious choices, which usually represent familiar criteria and tried-and-true solutions.

Next, they begin reviewing them, but their review will not be comprehensive. Instead, they focus on alternatives that differ only in a relatively small

degree from the choice currently in effect. Following familiar and well-worn paths, they review alternatives only until we identify one that is “good enough” that meets an acceptable level of performance. That ends their search. So the solution represents a satisfying choice the first acceptable one they encounter rather than an optimal one.

Intuitive decision making is a non-conscious process created from distilled experience. Its defining qualities are that it occurs outside conscious thought; it relies on holistic associations, or links between disparate pieces of information; it's fast and it's affectively charged, meaning that it usually engages the emotions. Intuition is not rational, but that does not necessarily make it wrong. Nor does it always operate in opposition to rational analysis; rather, the two can complement each other. Intuition can be a powerful force in decision making.

But intuition is not superstition, or the product of some magical or paranormal sixth sense. Ethics is the study of moral values or principles that guide our behaviour and inform us whether actions are right or wrong. Ethical principles help us “do the right thing.” An individual can use four different criteria in making ethical choices. The first is utilitarianism, in which decisions are made solely on the basis of their outcomes or consequences, ideally to provide the greatest good for the greatest number.

A second ethical criterion is to make decisions consistent with fundamental liberties and privileges as set forth in documents. An emphasis on rights in decision making means respecting and protecting the basic rights of individuals, such as the rights to privacy, free speech, and due process. This criterion protects whistle-blowers when they report unethical or illegal

practices by their organizations to the media or to government agencies, using their right to free speech.

A third criterion is to impose and enforce rules fairly and impartially to ensure justice or an equitable distribution of benefits and costs. Union members typically favour this criterion. It justifies paying people the same wage for a given job, regardless of performance differences, and using seniority as the primary determination in making layoff decisions. A focus on justice protects the interests of the underrepresented and less powerful, but it can encourage a sense of entitlement that reduces risk-taking, innovation, and productivity. A fourth ethical criterion is care.

The ethics of care can be stated as follows: " The morally correct action is the one that expresses care in protecting the special relationships that individuals have with each other. " The care criterion suggests that individuals should be aware of the needs, desires, and well-being of those to whom they are closely connected. This perspective does remind us of the difficulty of being impartial in all decisions. 4. A recent study found that racially mixed juries " deliberated longer, raised more facts, and conducted broader and more wide-ranging deliberations" than either all-white or all-black juries?

Why do you think this was so? Do you think that ' mixed' juries are more likely to avoid groupthink than racially homogenous juries? Explain your reasoning. Mixed juries make fewer factual errors, and they did make correction quickly. The structure of jury system may not only be conducive but often help create the occurrence of groupthink. Different type of groups

makes different types of errors, but caution that groupthink increases the risk that all type of decision-making errors will occur.