



Framing Decisions: Decision-Making that Accounts for Irrationality, People and Constraints

By J. Davidson Frame

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The economic crisis of 2008–2009 was a transformational event: it demonstrated that smart people aren't as smart as they and the public think. The crisis arose because a lot of highly educated people in high-impact positions— political power brokers, business leaders, and large segments of the general public—made a lot of bad decisions despite unprecedented access to data, highly sophisticated decision support systems, methodological advances in the decision sciences, and guidance from highly experienced experts. How could we get things so wrong? The answer, says J. Davidson Frame in *Framing Decisions: Decision Making That Accounts for Irrationality, People, and Constraints*, is that traditional processes do not account for the three critical immeasurable elements highlighted in the book's subtitle— irrationality, people, and constraints.

Frame argues that decision-makers need to move beyond their single-minded focus on rational and optimal solutions as preached by the traditional paradigm. They must accommodate a decision's *social space* and address the realities of dissimulation, incompetence, legacy, greed, peer pressure, and conflict. In the final analysis, when making decisions of consequence, they should focus on people – both as individuals and in groups.

Framing Decisions offers a new approach to decision making that gets decision-makers to put people and social context at the heart of the decision process. It offers guidance on how to make decisions in a real world filled with real people seeking real solutions to their problems.

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Editorial Review

From the Inside Flap

The economic crisis of 2008–2009 was a transformational event: it demonstrated that smart people aren't as smart as they and the public think. The crisis arose because a lot of highly educated people in high-impact positions— political power brokers, business leaders, and large segments of the general public—made a lot of bad decisions despite unprecedented access to data, highly sophisticated decision support systems, methodological advances in the decision sciences, and guidance from highly experienced experts. How could we get things so wrong? The answer, says J. Davidson Frame in *Framing Decisions: Decision Making That Accounts for Irrationality, People, and Constraints*, is that traditional processes do not account for the three critical immeasurable elements highlighted in the book's subtitle— irrationality, people, and constraints.

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From the Back Cover

Praise for *Framing Decisions*

"*Framing Decisions* pushes decision-makers to go further than simply thinking outside the archetypal box. It helps them expand traditional perspectives and redefine boundaries. Readers learn why it is important when making decisions to accommodate constraints and account for social context so that they can improve their decisions beyond good enough."

—**Rudy J. Watson**, program director, Technology Management, Graduate Programs, University of Maryland University College

"A remarkably insightful work on the paradoxes of decision making. Faced with seemingly insurmountable issues such as economic uncertainty, unemployment, and technological challenges, today's leaders are presented with many difficult choices that test the core of their managerial effectiveness. Frame provides a roadmap for decision making that is unique in its account of intangible factors such as emotional and moral constraints, and social, personal, and environmental contexts that affect strategic and day-to-day decisions. The need for a book like this has never been greater than it is today."

—**Gustavo J. Crosetto**, chief learning officer, private and public organizations

"If we were truly capable of always making rational decisions there wouldn't be any need for psychiatrists or high-priced management consultants! In *Framing Decisions*, Frame exposes the weakness of traditional decision-making paradigms, offering instead a refreshing and realistic perspective on a topic too important to be ignored. Frame helps you make better decisions because he explains, in his hallmark pragmatic style, how

to improve your decision-making prowess by zeroing-in on factors traditional approaches ignore. Whether you're in the mailroom or the boardroom there's solid advice here anyone can use!"

—**J. LeRoy Ward**, executive vice president, ESI International

About the Author

J. DAVIDSON FRAME is academic dean and cofounder of the University of Management and Technology (UMT) in Arlington, Virginia, one of the first fully online degree-conferring universities in the United States. Prior to joining the UMT faculty, he served as chairman of the Department of Management Science at George Washington University. Frame is the author of four prior books with Jossey-Bass, including the business bestseller *Managing Projects in Organizations, Third Edition*. He is a fellow of the Project Management Institute (PMI), where he received PMI's Outstanding Contribution Award and was named PMI's Person of the Year.

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Anthony Youngblood:

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