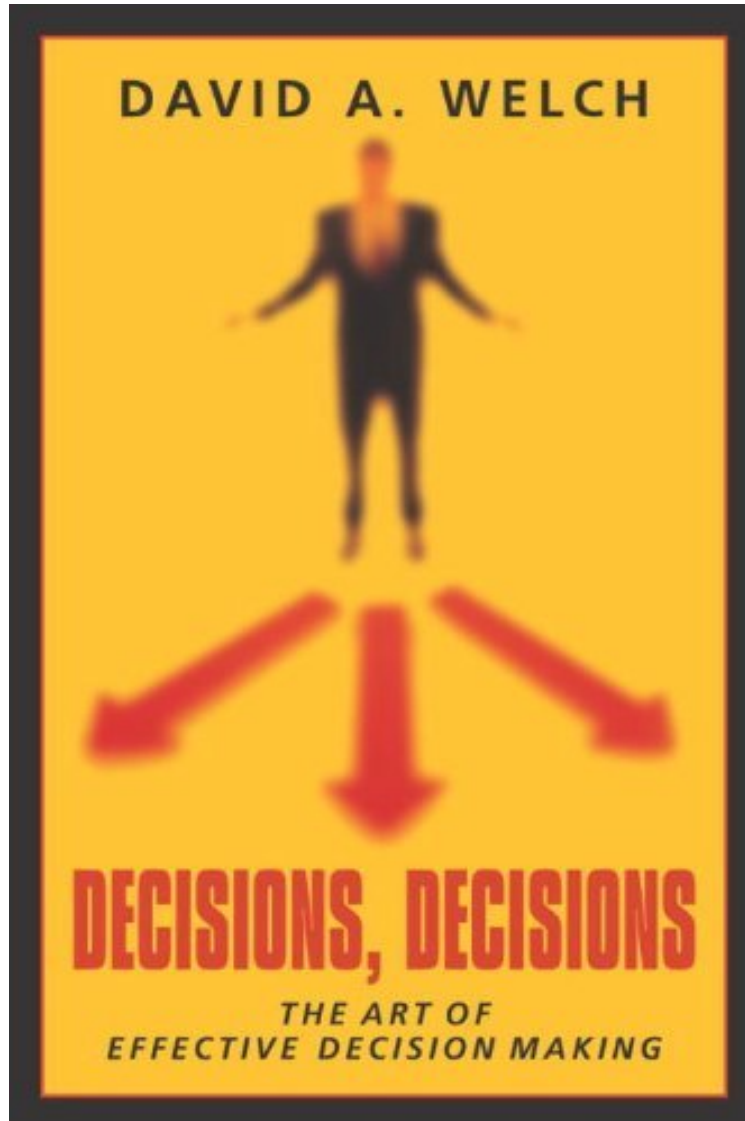


(Free read ebook) Decisions, Decisions: The Art of Effective Decision Making

## Decisions, Decisions: The Art of Effective Decision Making

*David A. Welch*

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**David A. Welch : Decisions, Decisions: The Art of Effective Decision Making** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Decisions, Decisions: The Art of Effective Decision Making:

35 of 53 people found the following review helpful. Only for the intellectual masochists  
By Jaewoo Kim  
I read a lot of books on strategy and game theory, which ultimately are also about making the right decisions. The information in this book is nothing new. Yet, I found it even more boring than other books in its genre. For example, the author outlines NINE steps to making a decision.  
1) Identify your Objective  
2) Do Preliminary survey of your options  
3) Identify the

implicated values  
4) Assess the importance of the decision  
5) budget your time and energy  
6) Choose decision making strategy  
7) Identify your options  
8) Evaluate your options  
9) Make your choice on time and budget

If you follow the author's nine steps to making decisions, then you are an idiot or an intellectual masochist. For example, if I walk into a donut shop and want to make a decision on which donuts to buy I must 1) realize that I want donuts to end my hunger 2) check out all 60 different donuts in the shop 3) realize donuts costs money 4) calculate how important it is to buy the right donut 5) realize you shouldn't take too much time to choose a donut because it just isn't worth it to ponder this in your head for too long and, besides, the other customers are yelling at you to make your choice by now 6) choose a strategy to choose the right donut while ignoring the donut shop manager's death stare 7) ask yourself if you want twinkies instead of donuts 8) donut vs twinkies? hmm I wonder which one is better? 9) ok I want the French Cruellers which costs a whopping 70 cents less than the good old twinkies! Ha, I have learned to make the right decisions while totally wasting my time and annoying everyone around me.

12 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Not Effective  
By KT  
The most insightful advice in the book comes on the first page of Chapter 1 - "All decisions have three parts: 1) you identify your goals 2) you identify your options; and 3) you choose from among your options". The rest of the book goes downhill from there. Nothing much more is offered. The examples used tend to lack demonstration of insights into real-world effective decision-making, which is unexpected considering that he studied the decision-making process of Middle East leaders. The second half of the book I found to be tedious without much actual usefulness. Even the selling points, the 9 main steps to effective decision making, are redundant and can be reduced down to those 3 parts stated earlier. Very boring reading. You can throw out most of the chapters and it wouldn't make much of an impact on the overall book. Pass on this one.

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Practical strategies and psychological insights  
By Carol Jacoby  
This book is worth getting just for the discussion of decision strategies. This lets you choose an approach appropriate to the importance of the issue and the amount of time and information you have available. Because these strategies are somewhat hidden, I will summarize them here:

- Optimize. Use this when the decision is so important that you seek the very best choice. Here you try to maximize your subjective expected utility (SEU), a measure of the overall goodness expected of an outcome, relative to your needs and desires. A weighted matrix is a simple and effective way to do this. The author provides several realistic, and often amusing, examples to show how this might be done, combining objective, subjective, and even moral, considerations.
- Satisfice. Rather than trying to find the very best alternative, accept the first one that is satisfactory, based on some criteria. This is much faster since you need not consider all alternatives nor all the criteria that you might take into account in optimizing.
- Preselect. If you have prior experience or a recommendation from a trusted source, that may be good enough to allow you to make a choice. An example is choosing a restaurant based on a review rather than comparing all the restaurants in the area.
- Constrained optimization. If you have a large number of choices you may constrain them to a smaller group that you are fairly certain will include a good alternative. Then do optimization within the smaller collection.
- Randomize. Use this if the decision must be fair and impartial, such as choosing a raffle winner. It is also a good strategy when you have evaluated the viable options and they all seem equally good, or if the differences among the options do not warrant spending time on evaluations. Just flip a coin and get on with it.

This quick summary may sound dry and pedantic, but the author enlivens the discussion with wit and real-life examples. The book is quick and enjoyable to read. There is a full chapter devoted to making decisions with moral considerations. This is the first book on decision-making that I have found that addresses this important issue. A compelling example of a decision about care for an aging parent illustrates the techniques, and shows how the general methods may be used to balance practical and ethical concerns. In addition, the author alerts the reader to psychological traps, biases, risk aversion, and gender differences that play into our decision-making.

You're tempted to accept a promising job offer in another city, but moving would entail considerable sacrifice on the part of your family. What should you do? Your elderly mother can no longer take care of herself but she doesn't get along with your husband and dreads the prospect of moving into a nursing home. What is the solution? Whether you are faced with decisions momentous or trivial, how you go about resolving everyday dilemmas will definitely affect your level of satisfaction in life. In this engrossing and entertaining guide, David Welch, who has studied the decision-making process at the highest levels, shows how both the science and the art of decision-making are essential to us all. Welch lays out nine steps to effective decision-making and then demonstrates how to apply these steps to real-world situations. He gives readers the intellectual tools to assess their strengths and weaknesses and stresses that self-knowledge is critical for making the right decisions. This enjoyable, clearly written guide will enable decision-makers at every level to find the best possible solution for dilemmas both big and small.