

How to Achieve Effective Group Decision Making

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Abstract

This paper looks at the knowledge managers require in order to lead effective group decision making. Using a variety of sources acquired from the Lincoln Memorial University databases and library, group attributes and the structure of group decision making are defined and analysed. Areas of note include the role that brainstorming plays in effective group decision making, as well as how to avoid groupthink and satisficing. The paper highlights the importance of classifying and defining the problem, in order for a decision to be made on the correct problem. The role of technology in group decision making is included to impress the future that is present for geographically dispersed groups. As a result of the technological involvement managers will have to gain a solid knowledge of Group Decision Support Systems (GDSS)

Keywords: group decision making, group attributes, structure of group decision making, brainstorming, groupthink, satisficing, Group Decision Support Systems (GDSS)

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How to Achieve Effective Group Decision Making

In order to be successful in the business world, a business needs to be competitive. Effective group decision making can create a competitive advantage; as a result of this, effective decision making in business makes or breaks a company. In order to be truly successful in business managers must supply the correct environment for creative decision making. After looking into various group decision making articles used to formulate this paper, it is apparent that group decision making has more elements for solid and sound decisions than initially may be thought. Managers can only lead groups in decision making effectively if they have a comprehensive understanding of group attributes and the structure of group decision making.

Group Attributes

In order for the structure of group decision making to be assessed, firstly an understanding of group attributes needs to be present. Keyton and Beck (2008) claimed “Groups and teams are defined by group size, group goal, group member interdependence, group structure, and group identity” (p. 489).

Group Size

Group size is an important factor in effective decision making. As people work in groups there is far more information available than when an individual or pair make a decision. If all the facts are unknown to a single member, then others may be able to contribute in formulating the knowledge required to make an effective group decision (Bateman & Snell, 2011, p. 99). A third member brings in new factors that are not in place when only two people are present, elements of potential coalition formation and hidden communication can become present. However, when a group becomes too large logistical problems can occur. As a group grows, the amount of members actively participating can drop, and *social loafers* become present. If a task does not have the optimal amount of

members or communication does not adapt to the group size, this is when decision making can become far less effective (Keyton & Beck, 2008, pp. 489-490).

Group Goal

A group exists in order to achieve a group goal, and the effectiveness of decisions based on achieving the group goal is impacted when misinterpretation and ambiguity are present (Keyton & Beck, 2008). Individual goals can impact upon group goals and lead to *goal displacement*. When goal displacement is present the original goal can be lost. At this stage members may be more concerned with achieving their own goal rather than the goal of the group (Bateman & Snell, 2011, p. 100). At this stage people make incorrect decisions due to the affective conflict they have placed themselves in with the pursuit of their own goal over that of the groups.

Interdependence

When working in groups people are influenced by other members, an idea put forth by a member may totally change a person's thinking. Keyton and Beck (2008) perceive that, "Interdependence is the degree to which group members influence and are influenced by other group members" (p. 490). Groups work on goals that simply can not be achieved by a single person, or a pair, and when the interdependence leads to positive influences then groups can reach the point of *synergy*. According to Keyton and Beck (2008) "Synergy is present when the performance or outcomes of a group go beyond the capacities of the group members" (p. 490). Synergy is therefore an outcome of effective group decision making.

Group Structure

Group structure relates to the relationships that are created whilst working within a group, either by formal or informal methods. Formal structures are built on the idea of consistency and allow for regular patterns of communication between groups. Informal methods rely on communication; when members are exposed to informal methods, the norms

of the group are established, as well as the way in which people are expected to conduct themselves within the group. A leader may be assigned formally, however, when a group meets, if another member acts as the leader, they informally gain the role of leader. Having a clear understanding of place within the group is important. A member should identify their role and take it on themselves (Keyton & Beck, 2008, pp. 490-491). A clear understanding of the group structure is required to gain the respect of other members, and it will ensure that biases are not held against an individual's ideas. If members achieve this within a group, effective decision making will stem from it.

Group Identity

When members enjoy being in a group, believe they are part of the group, and ultimately behave as a group, then group identity is formed. Behaviours reflect whether people identify with the group in which they are involved. If people are willing to follow the norms and rules, they are displaying group identity. As everyone has different preferences it is hard to establish grounds where everyone can identify with the group (Keyton & Beck, 2008, p. 491). When people have a sense of group identity, they become more willing to share their input; this is imperative to effective decision making. As members share their input and become involved in group discussions, they become more aware of why a decision is made. This understanding allows group decision making to become more effective when moving on to implementation as members display a greater commitment to the decision (Bateman & Snell, 2011, p. 99).

Structure of Group Decision Making

The structure of group decision making has an impact on the overall outcome. Drucker (2008) focuses on the managerial skills in decision making and although this is singular, the head of the group, in this case the manager, has the power to make or break decision making. Drucker (2008) informs:

Good decision makers know that the most important, and most difficult, part of decision making is not making the decision. That's often quite easy. The most difficult and most important part is to make sure that the decision is about the right problem. (p. 295)

He puts forth seven elements of effective decision making: determining whether a decision is necessary, classifying the problem, defining the problem, deciding on what is right, getting others to buy the decision, building action into the decision, and finally testing the decision against actual results (Drucker, 2008, p. 296). Deciding on what is right will be broken down into subheadings to emphasize the depth in which companies need to go in order to find the right decision for a given problem.

Determining Whether a Decision is Necessary

The initial stage of determining whether a decision is necessary is a process to ensure that the time of those making the decision, and those implementing the plan is not wasted. Poor performance at this stage will also make potentially important decisions in the future ineffectual as members may not be motivated to follow through after previous unnecessary decisions were reached (Drucker, 2008, p. 296). This stage could be performed individually if the individual has the relevant experience.

Classifying the Problem

When classifying the problem, managers and group members need to clarify whether an event is truly unique or generic. Common rules and practices can be used in order to solve generic events, however unique events will require greater knowledge if the event truly is unique. As a rule, most events are not unique; the problem has been dealt with somewhere before, but gaining that knowledge is difficult in certain situations (Drucker, 2008, pp. 297-298). Truly unique problems require creative solutions, and this is where teams are required. "Focus on problem identification and construction in team problem solving not only can lead

to improved creativity but also can be used to create shared understanding and trust” (Reiter-Palmon, 2009, p. 351). When given a unique problem a team should be assembled in order for understanding and trust to be placed into the final decision.

Defining the Problem

Defining the problem is the next step in the process and is constantly overlooked by managers of all levels. A lot of managers fall into a trap, feeling that it would appear that problems are obvious. However, that is rarely the case. Problems can stem from areas that require thorough evaluation. Defining the problem is the most important stage in the decision making process. If the wrong problem is not defined, it is hard to come up with the right answer (Drucker, 2008, p.298).

Deciding on what is Right

Deciding on what is right is going to be taken into more depth than the other stages of decision making. This is because when extensive understanding from managers is shown in this area, effective group decision making can be enhanced. It is hard to decide on what is right within a group. Young (2011) made a valid point identifying that group members are prone to *self-serving bias* and stated that, “Bias is not caused by a desire to be unfair, but by a human inability to interpret information in an unbiased manner” (p. 202). Group members may feel they know what is right due to previous influences on their thinking. It is a manager’s job to ensure that the right decision is reached and often the best way to do this is to initiate group discussion. There are several methods used for effective group decision making.

Brainstorming. *Brainstorming* sessions allow for extensive group input and, if performed effectively, negate a single group member’s dominance (Bateman & Snell, 2011, pp.99-100). “Brainstorming is a variant of discussion groups aims to generate ideas or solutions and individualized approach in that the mediator has a minimal involvement”

(Vasile & Croitoru, 2010, p.13). As a result of brainstorming, ideas that other members feel negative towards can arise. However, brainstorming “focuses on participants to make suggestions without comment on the ideas of other participants” (Vasile & Croitoru, 2010, p.13). This allows for a safe environment for creative decision making to come forth. As members are required to give an input in brainstorming sessions, this leads to intellectual stimulation. This happens as members listen to other ideas and formulate their own creative ideas.

The reason as to why brainstorming can lead to success is present in Bazerman and Moore (2009). When talking of bounded awareness in groups, they stated:

Consider the fact that the information discussed by a group has a key influence on any final decision. Conversely, information mentally considered by individual members, but not mentioned, will have little influence on the eventual decision. Thus, while individuals’ awareness is bounded by the information they mentally consider, the awareness of groups is bounded by the information that becomes part of the discussion. (p. 50)

It is clear that brainstorming will reduce the levels of bounded awareness in groups as more information is being shared.

The role of the mediator is important to brainstorming success as Vasile and Croitoru (2010) stated, “The mediator in a brainstorming session, has an important role, because we must ensure that all participants feel good, actively contribute to discussions and debates that do not depart from key issues” (p.14). A manager, therefore, must assign a mediator to brainstorming sessions; without the guidance of a mediator, staying on task would prove difficult. The mediator assigns the questions to the group based upon the problem trying to be solved. Vasile and Croitoru (2010) discuss the format of the questions: “Open questions generate discussion and leads to a wider range of responses, directed questions encourage

debate and determine the participant to respond in a certain way and general or specific question encourage participants to think issues essential” (p. 14).

Well conducted brainstorming sessions work as a tool to move away from *groupthink*. “Groupthink occurs when a person’s thought process and decision-making capabilities become heavily influenced by peer pressure” (Maharaj, 2008, p. 75). A fear to communicate an opinion has the potential to damage the long-term health of an organization as groups can, “overestimate their power and morality, causing the members to ignore the ethical or moral consequences of their decisions. This behaviour can encourage an illusion of invulnerability, creating excessive optimism, and may encourage the group to take extreme risk” (Maharaj, 2008, p. 75). Providing an environment free of fear eliminates groupthink and the likelihood of taking extreme risks, which is in the best interest of management.

An effectively coordinated brainstorming session will help to reduce the want for group members to partake in *satisficing*. Satisficing is choosing the first option that would be deemed as an adequate solution. Although a group satisficing may get lucky and hit the best option early in discussion, the likelihood is that satisficing will cause a weak decision to be made. Satisficing can be a result of time pressures and laziness, so it is important for managers to motivate their employees and provide adequate time when decisions are to be made (Bateman and Snell, 2011, p. 93). Giving the proper time allocation to the decision making process will allow for less time spent trying to resolve the problem caused by poor decision making.

Conflict. Groupthink and satisficing can occur as group members may simply be trying to avoid conflict, however, conflict has the potential to be positive, therefore, managers should contemplate the outcome of conflict before intervening. Badke-Schaub, Goldschmidt, and Meijer (2010) define *cognitive conflicts* as, “differences concerning task-related issues which in the team context are expressed as disagreements” (p. 120). These conflicts can air

legitimate differences of opinion which in turn develops better ideas and problem solving. *Task/process conflict* are the same, except they relate to accomplishing the task, e.g. disagreement about timing. Badke-Schaub et al. (2010) further state that when cognitive conflicts are, “Managed adequately, they allow for a larger number of ideas and perspectives to be brought to discussion, which is especially important for developing new and innovative solutions” (p. 121).

Managers need to ensure that cognitive conflict does not evolve into *affective conflict*. When cognitive conflicts lead to members displaying emotional disagreements towards one another, affective conflict has been reached. “Affective conflicts relate to differences regarding personal issues, negative emotions and unsatisfactory relationships amongst team members” (Badke-Schaub, Goldschmidt, & Meijer, 2010, p. 120). Affective conflict can never lead to effective decision making. Cognitive conflict can help decide what course of action is right, and affective conflict will only lead to ego driven results.

Getting Others to Buy the Decision

A decision has to be “bought” by all members; if not, the decision will be ineffectual and will surface as a good intention. In order to demonstrate how a decision is “bought”, Japanese management provides a great example. Everyone in the business who is likely to be affected by a decision has to write down how the decision would affect their work, job and unit. Following this, management collaborate and make a decision from the top down (Drucker 2008, pp. 301-302). The decision has been “bought” by the employees because they can’t affect the outcome, they can only provide input. If managers are trained proficiently then this information from employees allows for a well thought out decision that can be “bought”. However, the low level employees may end up with that which they were trying to avoid.

Building Action into the Decision and Testing the Decision against Actual Results

When a decision is finally made it does not require a grand meeting where everyone involved in the decision meets and congratulates each other. Firstly, this is premature, and secondly, no action has been directly taken on the decision. In order for an action to be carried out, it is the job of the manager to ensure that people who need to know a decision has been made are informed, and the action is commenced. In order for effective group decision making to be a continual process, those making the decisions need to see action in order to be productive for the next decision making process. If group members do not see action they lose motivation. In order for effective decision making to be maintained by groups, the manager needs to keep up to date with the results of the decision. This allows for feedback, and if a decision needs to be altered, or a future decision on a similar problem arises, the manager can inform group members of the problems that occurred as a result of the previous decision. The best group managers are active and get involved with the action in order to see the results for themselves, not relying solely on reports and feedback (Drucker, 2008, pp. 303-305).

The Role of Technology in Group Decision Making

Globalization has led many groups to become dispersed; the resulting geographic dispersion calls for technology to intervene in the group decision making process. As a result, *Group Decision Support Systems* are being integrated into organizations. Chen and Kyaw-Phyo (2011) stated “Group Decision Support Systems (GDSS) have been defined as systems that combine communication, computer, and decision technologies to support problem formulation and solution in group meetings” (p. 30). GDSS are going to be ever present in the evolving technological business world. According to Chen and Kyaw-Phyo (2011), “The purpose of GDSS technology is to enhance the process of group decision-making by eliminating communication barriers, providing techniques for structuring analysis

and systematically designing the rules, timing and contents of discussion and planning activities” (p. 30). The future for effective group decision making could lie in the ability of the manager to handle these technologies.

As a result of geographic dispersion, task and affective conflict become harder to separate. Holahan, Mooney, and Paul (2011) concluded, “Thus, it appears members of distributed teams are inclined toward negative dispositional attributes about team members when they lack situational information to help them interpret behavioural shortcomings of their fellow team members” (p. 44). *Team tenure* (the amount of time a team has been together) needs to be increased within a group in order to lower the negative effects of affective conflict on group decision making. Holahan et al. (2011) concluded “Team tenure will moderate the interaction between geographic dispersion and conflict, such that with longer team tenure the task conflict-affective conflict link in geographically dispersed teams will be weakened” (p. 47). Managers must be aware of the effects of team tenure when undertaking group decisions

Analysis and Conclusion

A manager needs to allocate the correct group size. If the group is too large then members do not feel the need to contribute, too small and there is not enough information to make an effective decision. A manager needs to be sure that the group is aware of its goal. An effective manager will ensure that goal displacement is not happening within the group; in order to do this, the manager needs to be involved in the process and not work at arm's length. Interdependence is a valuable aspect of team decision making. A manager's aim should be to allow members to communicate and reach synergy. Managers should strive for a solid formal structure within the group, setting in place regular task driven communication that will lead to effective communication. A manager should also look to provide levels of informal structure to allow the group to define the norms and build a relationship less likely

to lead to affective conflict. A successful manager will work towards creating a positive environment for group identity to be reached for the members. A manager will have to work on creating a group identity that appeals to the majority. It is impossible to get everyone to identify with the group; a strong manager must be able to see that and be willing to lose members that are not going to fit.

Managers should break down each level of the decision making structure accordingly. When determining whether a decision is necessary, a manager, depending on his or her level of experience, may require help. A good manager should be willing to accept that he or she does not know everything, and should conduct research into whether a decision needs to be made; if that requires using other members of a group a manager should do so. Classifying the problem is the next stage; experienced managers are able to deal with generic problems and not have to put them to a group for a decision to be made. However, if a problem is unique, it is prudent for managers to put the problem towards a group. Acquiring more information is key to finding the correct solution. Defining the problem is the most overlooked problem by management. A manager may decide to make a decision alone; however, in doing so for a unique event, total failure could be a result. If a manager comes up with the wrong solution to a problem, or simply misidentifying the true cause of the problem they cannot rationally blame the group if a decision is ineffective.

When deciding on what is right for a unique decision, an effective manager will conduct brainstorming sessions. A manager should look into being part of the brainstorming processes and contracting a mediator to preside over the group (if the company has no one who can effectively conduct the role). By doing this the manager is at the same level as his or her group members, and his or her opinion has the same value. A manager who is keen to conduct brainstorming understands the negative effects of groupthink and satisficing. This understanding allows the manager to be an effective and intelligent addition to the process.

Affective conflict needs to be avoided in a group; if a manager works closely with the group avoidance can be achieved. Allowing task and cognitive conflict to reach the climax before it spills over to affective conflict requires experienced expertise. However, if a manager assessed his or her own performance they would be able to improve their performance.

Reaching a stage where other group members buy the decision is a stage that Drucker (2008) outlined. However, if the previous stages are managed effectively this stage does not need to exist. The phrase, “buying the decision”, does not seem to connect with groups. Buying the decision is not conducive to effective group decision making; the word “bought” makes it feel like the group who buys it has been conned. When the group reaches a decision, the manager must put the decision into action by assigning roles for members to carry out the action. A sound manager tracks the decisions that the group has made. As a result, future decisions can be improved, and if similar problems surface, less time and resources are required to make the decision.

After going deeper into group decision making, it is clear that a manager must be aware of all aspects of the attributes and processes in order to lead an effective and successful group. The ability for managers to adapt to technological changes will be paramount to effective decision making in the future. Up and coming managers should familiarize themselves with GDSS in order to gain an advantage in their careers.

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Reiter-Palmon, R. (2009). A dialectic perspective on problem identification and construction.

Industrial & Organizational Psychology, 2(3), 349-352. doi:10.1111/j.1754-

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Vasile, E., & Croitoru, I. (2010). Brainstorming - evidence collection techniques in the

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Appendix

Annotated Bibliography

Badke-Schaub, P., Goldschmidt, G., & Meijer, M. (2010). How Does Cognitive Conflict in Design Teams Support the Development of Creative Ideas?. *Creativity & Innovation Management, 19*(2), 119-133. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8691.2010.00553.x

Dr. Petra Badke-Schaub is Professor of Design Theory and Methodology at Delft University of Technology, NL. She wrote her PhD on Groups and complex problem solving. Professor Gabriela Goldschmidt is a graduate of the School of Architecture at Yale University her research is based in areas of design such as design cognition. The piece looks into cognitive conflict in design teams, any group or team make decisions through differing processes and the research looks into conflict that arises as a result of this and how the conflict aids or hinders creative ideas. The research studies groups and how conflict occurs within a group situation, from here the researchers compare the use of styles that the groups use either, competing, collaborating, compromising, avoiding and accommodating. They take these results and compare how the styles affect creative ideas and ultimately effective results. This article is meant for working professionals who can apply the finding in their own working environment. The article ties in with the conflict management sub heading found in Keyton and Beck's 'Team attributes, processes, and values: A pedagogical framework. Relating to my paper, this article allows for an insight into what styles of conflict support effective decision making.

Chen, J. & Kyaw-Phyo, L. (2012). User satisfaction with group decision making process and outcome. *Journal Of Computer Information Systems*, 52(4), 30-39. Retrieved from Business Source Complete

Dr. Chen is an instructor at the University of Wisconsin-la Crosse and is a specialist in network and communications. He has a strong information technologies background as he is actively involved in Software Engineering. Kyaw-Phyo Linn graduated in 2007 with a master's in Business administration from the National Cheng Kung University. The journal is based around computing involvement in the decision making process in the expanding, global business world. Throughout the journal group decision support systems are compared to other forms of decision making support. The table of results gives conditions in which group decision support systems are superior to other forms of decision making support such as face-to-face systems and vice-versa. The results provide advice as to where group decision support systems fit into the role of group decision making. This journal is intended for a technical audience, as is expected from journals written on computer information systems at the high scholarly level. Any business attempting to venture further into computer aided decision making would bypass trial periods if the findings in this article were applied. The journal can be linked with Humpheys and Jones article 'The decision hedgehog for creative decision making' as the theories provided here can be linked into that model.

Holahan, P. J., Mooney, A. C., & Paul, L. (2011). Part I: Managing conflict and justice:

Moderating effects of geographic dispersion and team tenure in the task—ffective conflict relationship. *Current Topics In Management*, 1541-61. Retrieved from Business Source Complete

Dr. Holahan conducts research on managing product development teams and the implementation and diffusion of new technology at the Stevens Institute of Technology. She has been a consultant for many several fortune 500 companies focusing on team management. Professor Ann C. Mooney is the Assistant Professor of Technology Management at the Stevens Institute of Technology and she received her PhD at the University of Georgia. Dr. Finnerty Paul received her PhD in Technology Management from the Stevens Institute of Technology. This journal is intended for professionals in the business world seeking to assess the effects of geographic dispersion and team tenure on both task and affective conflict relationship. Geographic dispersion can be handled in this modern technological age, however the effects on decision making can be negative, the lack of face-to-face contact provides issues on making clear and effective decisions. This piece explains how task conflict can greatly improve decision making and lead to synthesis, therefore it highlights the importance of managing affective conflict in order to make the most of task promising conflict. Dr. Reiter-Palmon's article 'A dialectic perspective on problem identification and construction' can be used in conjunction with this article as trust in a team is essential to effective group decision making. Geographic dispersion opens up for a lack of trust issues and therefore the articles can be used in unison.

Humphreys, P., & Jones, G. (2008). The decision hedgehog for creative decision making.

Information Systems & E-Business Management, 6(2), 117-136. doi:10.1007/s10257-007-0067-8

Patrick Humphreys is a Strategic Business Development Manager for IPC Media from Manchester, England. He has an extensive background in various business disciplines over the 12 years he has been in the working world. Information on Garrick Jones could not be obtained. This article is addressing business professionals and is an advanced theory relating to creative decision making. In the simplest terms the spine of the hedgehog is broken down into five levels with the base level five the start of the process. This is where decision-making groups gain a clear understanding of what is in and out of the equation when making the final decision. The following levels lead up to the decision that is finally made, this article allows reflection on stages group decision makers pass through. This article links with Chen and Kyaw-Phy 'User satisfaction with group decision making process and outcome' the decision making support system mentioned in this article can be implemented into the decision hedgehog. The decision hedgehog stands out as the only model used in this paper, as a result it adds a sense of how models can be implemented into the decision making process.

Keyton, J., & Beck, S. J. (2008). Team attributes, processes, and values: A pedagogical framework. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 71(4), 488-504. Retrieved from Business Source Complete

Dr. Keyton is Professor of Communication at North Carolina State University, she has had involvements with a wide variety of scholarly journal articles and she has published three textbooks for courses in group communication, research methods, and organizational culture. Dr. Beck obtained his PhD in 2008 from the University of Kansas. As the assistant professor of communication at North Dakota State University he teaches topics on decision making. The intended audience for this article is students, it has been written in order for them to analyse their group and team interactions. This article relates to all of the articles put forward. This is because the article deals with five group attributes that relate in any form of group decision making. Group size, group goal, interdependence, group structure and group identity. All these attributes are present in any group decision making situation. The article also discuss three communication processes, it has a direct section on decision making as well as, leadership and conflict management, areas that have been mentioned in all the other articles used. This article provided the framework for this junior writing requirement. The other sources have been used in order to expand on the sub headings used in this work in order to gain an understanding on how to achieve effective group decision making.

Maharaj, R. (2008). Corporate governance, groupthink and bullies in the boardroom.

International Journal Of Disclosure & Governance, 5(1), 68-92.

doi:10.1057/palgrave.jdg.2050074

Dr. Maharaj has performed research with many top companies in North America notably many oil and gas, mining, chemical, and pipeline companies. She continues to improve the bottom line for these businesses by transforming top ideas in to actions. When reading into the source it was clear that avoiding groupthink is a key to making impactful group decisions making. This article can be compared with Vasile and Croitoru's article entitled 'Brainstorming- Evidence collection techniques in the performance audit', this is because groupthink is avoided with process such as brainstorming. This article is intended for those who wish to deal with boardroom activities that are unethical, however it does highlight a key point. The article states that organisational environment needs to be tailored towards the sharing of information, a clear necessity for effective decision making. Groupthink is a result of persuasive power and is unnecessary when attempting to make effective group decision making and this article portrays this. Dr. Maharaj has a unique corporate governance model and is an affective asset that many North American companies have made full use of.

Reiter-Palmon, R. (2009). A dialectic perspective on problem identification and construction. *Industrial & Organizational Psychology*, 2(3), 349-352.

doi:10.1111/j.1754-9434.2009.01157.x

Dr. Reiter-Palmon is a Professor of Psychology at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. She graduated in 1993 from George Mason University with a PhD in Industrial/Organizational Psychology. Psychology plays a vital role in quality group decision making. This article discusses the various aspects of creative problem solving, notably problem construction as a result of identification. This article goes further by demonstrating how understanding and trust can be built within a team and this is important to making group decisions. If no trust is placed in the final decision made, the likely outcome of the action will be failure of some level. Identifying the problem that a decision has to be made on is important. If the wrong problem is identified then the best decision is almost impossible to make and Dr. Reiter-Palmon expands on this. The paper is aimed at organizations that are wishing to improve their decision making at the very first stage of the process. This can be linked to Keyton and Beck's 'Team attributes, processes, and values: A pedagogical framework' group goals and interdependence are seen in Dr. Reiter-Palmon's articles and they are a key contributor to group decision making.

Vasile, E., & Croitoru, I. (2010). Brainstorming - evidence collection techniques in the performance audit. *Internal Auditing & Risk Management*, 19(3), 11-20. Retrieved from Business Source Complete

Dr. Vasile obtained her Bachelor of economics in 2001 and is now a Professor at the University of Athenaeum teaching classes on tax and financial control, internal audit and economic statistics. Dr. Croitoru was a PhD student at Athenaeum University in Bucharest and through the guidance of Dr. Vasile they co wrote this article. The intended audience for this article is any business or business manager who is looking to incorporate brainstorming in the performance audit. Brainstorming can be used by businesses for effective decision making and that is why this article was chosen. Brainstorming is used in order to move away from groupthink and as a result this article can be used in conjunction with Dr. Maharaj's 'Corporate governance, groupthink and bullies in the boardroom' to provide an insight to how effective brainstorming can eliminate the problems that Dr. Maharaj depicts in her article. This article looks into the role that the mediator plays, a manager needs to be willing to give control to the mediator so that effective group decision making can be reached.