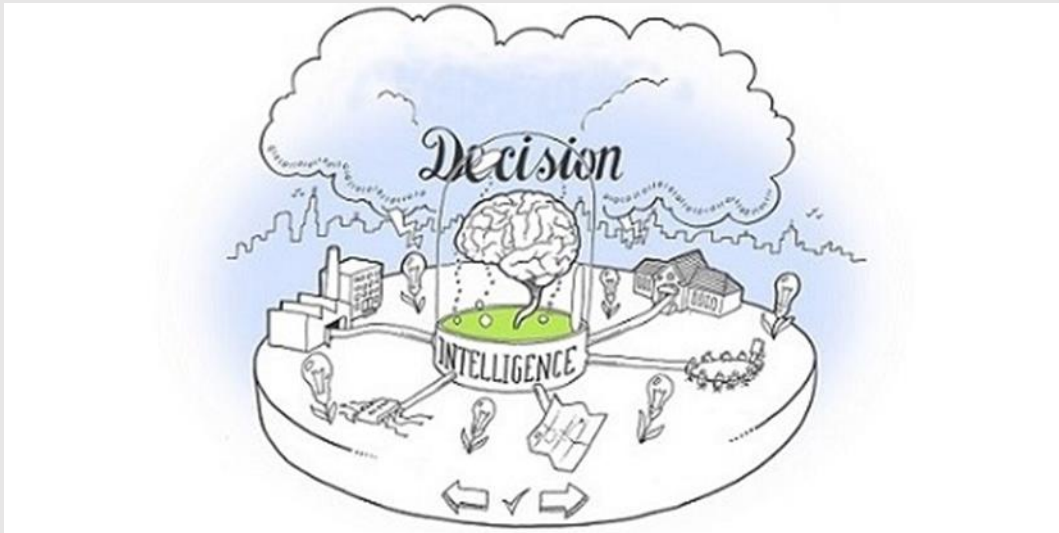


stars insights: 27 May 2020

Decision Intelligence in a COVID-19 World



*In the COVID-19 world, all decision makers face the challenge to create a fit between their intelligence requirements due to the high level of uncertainty about how their organization's environment might look like tomorrow and in the long run and the intelligence gathering and processing capacities of their organizations. stars alumnus Dr. **Roger MOSER**, who teaches decision intelligence at universities in Switzerland, Australia and India, has put together a Delphi study consisting of 10 provocative hypotheses about which specific behaviours of executives turn them into good leaders in a new COVID-19 world. Click [here](#) to participate in the survey for a real-time benchmarking of your opinions with those of your peers around the world. Your opinions will be kept strictly confidential and anonymous. This stars insights provides additional background information about the decision intelligence framework.*

When we will look back in a few months or years to the situation we faced during these early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, we will wonder how we could complain before that about the allegedly fast changes that robotics, digitization and Artificial Intelligence had caused to our organization before the outbreak of the CoV-Sars-2 virus and we might realize that most change is relative. One of the most prominent management thinkers of all time once said: *"We are at the beginning of a period of extreme flux, of extreme change and great competitive pressure in which traditional ways of doing things, traditional products, traditional processes will be challenged on all sides."*

I believe every reader of this article would readily apply this statement to our current situation. However, these words are from Peter Drucker who wrote them in 1955.

The lesson learned from this short story is that every generation of leaders is facing its unique sort of change in the business context and it is their key challenge to adapt to the

resulting uncertainty and ambiguity with new ways of gathering and processing information.

In the recent past, Google, IBM or Alibaba have embraced a concept called Decision Intelligence (DI). According to Cassie Kozyrkov, Chief Decision Scientist at Google, Decision Intelligence (DI) “...is the discipline of turning information into better actions at any scale.”

In practice, this requires decision-makers to apply the four key elements of the Decision Intelligence Navigator – especially in the Context of COVID-19:

Step #1: Create your DECISION CONTEXT:

This first step implies that you are clarifying which decisions you need to make during the different phases of the evolution of the pandemic situation and clearly determine which QUESTIONS you need to get answered before making each decision:

- Lockdown Phase (now, next few weeks)
- Re-opening Phase (next 3-6 months)
- Transition Phase (6-24 months)
- New Normal (2022 onwards)

In our current projects with different organizations, we simply develop a classic mindmap for the key decisions during each phase and the related questions we need to get answered.

Step #2: Select the most suitable FRAMEWORKS:

This second step requires you and your team to probably improve your **FRAMEWORK PROFICIENCY**. In the context of such dramatic change as we currently experience with COVID-19, it is essential that you and your team are able to choose those approaches, concepts and tools that are most suited to answer the questions you defined in your decision contexts for each phase. At the moment, it's probably all about strategic forecasting about immediate challenges along the supply chain and the development of mid- and long-term scenarios about which rules of the game will still be valid in the context(s) your organization operates in. Research has clearly proven the benefits of thinking in scenarios during such times of crisis – not to find the truth about how the future will look but to develop an understanding as a team about a multitude of options how the company can prepare or react as the future unfolds.

Step #3: Make sure that you have the necessary INTELLIGENCE ACCESS:

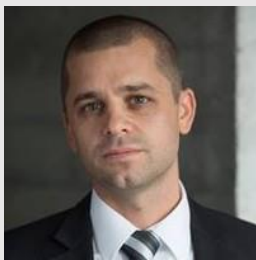
This third step is currently the most challenging one. Many executives were so proud of their growing big data platforms just to see that they are mostly not useful at the moment for two reasons. First, many companies have lots of data but not enough qualified personnel to make direct use of it at the speed it is required now. Second, when change is so profound as it is today, data about how the world looked even one month or week ago does not tell you how it will look in the future. This is why now is the time of trusted networks (i.e. the social capital of executives) to quickly test hypotheses about how the future could look like, which strategic options seem to be the most promising or which practices to adapt an organization's business model are most likely to succeed. Such an approach requires decision-makers to collect opinions from a broad range of people with different kinds of expertise and experiences to ensure that as many aspects as possible are considered. Web-based, real-time expert panels are one of the most convenient and

effective ways to ask your network about what they think could work in your organization's specific new COVID-19 world.

Step #4: Turn insights into Action – Improve your **DECISION PROFICIENCY:**

While steps 1 to 3 have helped you to turn data and information into insights (i.e. decision-relevant knowledge), the fourth step ensures that you don't turn a blind eye on the biases that you as an individual or your company suffers from. This is now the time and place where real diversity in your company pays off as never before. However, you need to make sure that the multitude of experiences and backgrounds are deployed at the right level to turn insights into decisions and decisions into action.

If you follow these four steps of our Decision Intelligence Navigator, we are confident that you will create a better fit between what you really need to know and how you and your organization are gathering and processing the necessary insights so that you can master the various decision-making challenges ahead of you. However, please keep in mind that whatever technical or human resources you as decision-maker can tap into, there is no substitute for you taking time to just think and reflect whether you truly focus on the right decisions and questions ahead of you.



Dr. **Roger MOSER** serves as faculty in different roles at Macquarie Business School, Australia, University of St. Gallen, Switzerland and the Indian Institute of Management Udaipur, India. He also acts as Chairman of SatSure, a satellite data analytics and intelligence provider for banks, insurers and governments. Roger is a thought leader in the emerging field of Decision Intelligence – a combination of managerial, behaviour and data sciences to improve the decision-making practices of senior leaders. Based on his expertise, he coaches MNCs and SMEs in how to improve their intelligence gathering and processing practices in dynamic business contexts including Asia & Digitization or now COVID-19.

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