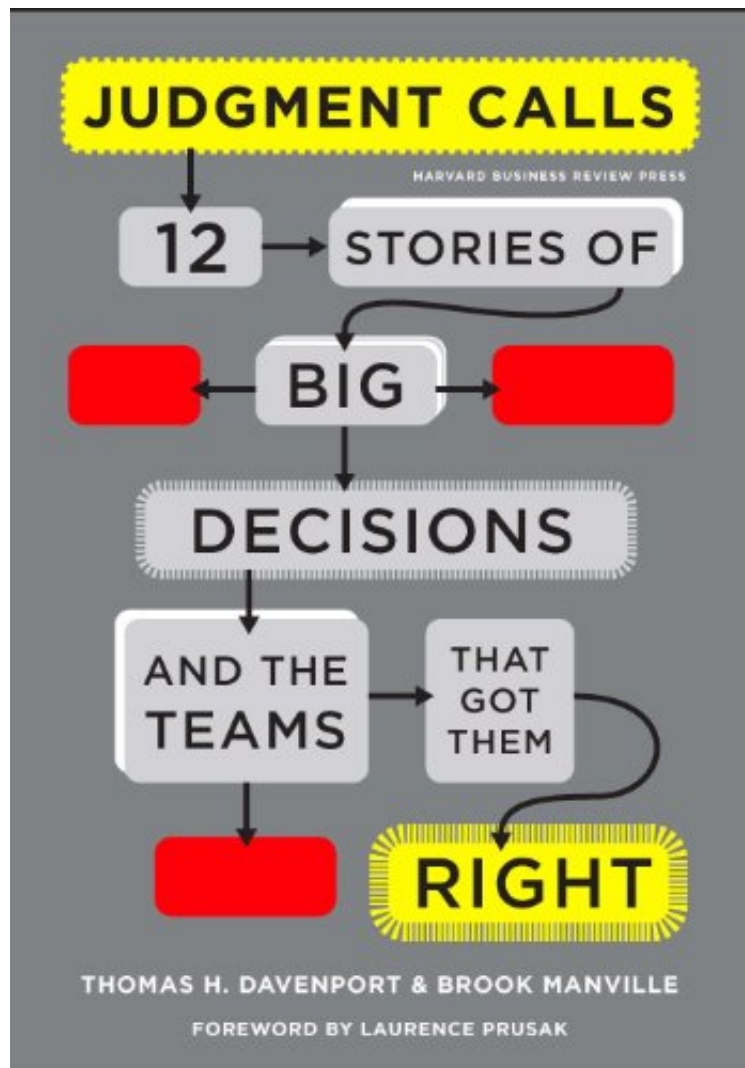


Judgment Calls: Twelve Stories of Big Decisions and the Teams That Got Them Right

Thomas Davenport, Brook Manville

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Thomas Davenport, Brook Manville : Judgment Calls: Twelve Stories of Big Decisions and the Teams That Got Them Right before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Judgment Calls: Twelve Stories of Big Decisions and the Teams That Got Them Right:

13 of 13 people found the following review helpful. Better judgment through participative decision making By John Gibbs Human judgment is frail and fettered, no matter which humans the judgment comes from, according to Thomas Davenport and Brook Manville in this book. The antidote to relying on the imperfect judgment of one fallible person is for organisations to build decision-making capacity, tapping into the expertise of a broad range of people. Rather than

using empirical research, the authors use stories from 12 different organisations to illustrate their thesis. Part One contains stories about participative problem solving processes from NASA, a home-building company, and McKinsey Company. Part Two contains stories about the use of technology and analytics to aid decision making, from a health-care organisation, a technology company and a school system. Part Three contains stories about organisational culture guiding decision-making, from ancient Athens, the Vanguard Group, and EMC. Part Four has stories about leaders with participative decision-making styles, from a media company, a philanthropic organisation and a niche product company. It may well be a lot more difficult to make an interesting story out of a participative decision-making process than out of a decision made by a lone hero, but I personally found some of the stories unconvincing. For example, the NASA story relates to a decision with a positive outcome, contrasting with earlier NASA decisions with disastrous outcomes. However, the bad and good decisions all seem to have been reached through participative processes; the difference seems to be more in the weight given to different opinions than in the participative nature of the processes. On the other hand, I found the stories about strong organisational culture and participative leadership styles both more interesting and more persuasive. There are various objections that could be made to the authors' thesis. It would be useful to see some sort of empirical evidence. Some decisions are clearly better because of a consultative process, but others are clearly worse, either because of groupthink or because an individual decision maker knows better than anyone else (e.g. Steve Jobs and the iPad). The high cost of participative decision processes can outweigh the benefits; for example, the Athenian style of democracy in which every man got to vote has long since been abandoned as impractical. Notwithstanding these objections, in my opinion there is a lot of merit in the ideas raised by the authors, and the book provides a useful challenge to the thinking of organisational leaders. 9 of 10 people found the following review helpful. An informative and engaging guide to tapping into organizational judgement

By Mark P. McDonald

Judgement Calls is the new book by Tom Davenport and Brook Manville takes on the fundamental issues of how organizations are applying judgement, collaboration, and participatory decision making into their organizations. Davenport and Manville present their argument in the form of stories surrounding major decisions at the organizational, cultural and individual level. Their approach is ideal for capturing the qualitative difference in making group judgments. The authors see this as the fourth era of thinking about organizational decision making and one in which the importance of judgement is acknowledged. The authors see four major trends in play for exercising organizational judgement. First is the recognition that none of us is as smart as all of us. The second is that you need to tap into both the wisdom and leadership of the crowd. Data and analytics remains important. Finally that information technology is an enabler of the increased participation and analytical decision support required for organizational judgement. The book is recommended for executives and managers seeking to understand, internalize and perhaps adopt this more collaborative style of decision making. Davenport and Manville use stories to illustrate the central elements they have observed for effective group decision making. These involve aspects of information, knowledge management and decision making processes. The book contains a wide range of stories from modern high tech companies like EMC and Cognizant to historic organizational decisions made in Athens, and public sector/service cases from the Charlotte - Mecklenburg school district to the Wallace foundation. The range, depth, and detail contained in these stories gives the reader a complete, informative and nuanced view of the challenges associated in exercising organizational judgement.

Strengths

A thoughtful and comprehensive treatment of the issues associated with creating, executing and sustaining organizational judgement. The topic is perhaps one of the most complex, contextual, culturally sensitive and socio-technical activities within an organization. Davenport and Manville recognize this and rather than trying to 'boil the ocean' and reduce reality into simple prescriptions they provide a diverse set of stories and situations that enable the reader to get a sense for the power and differences associated with organizational judgement. The stories are illustrative, easy to read and focus on the major points that matter in organizational judgement. The diversity of industries, situations, results and outcomes capture the range of applications of organizational judgement. I found the stories about Ancient Athens, EMC, WGB Homes, McKinsey and Media General to be particularly helpful. The concepts go beyond simple ideas normally associated with decision making and leadership. The book covers issues like experience, knowledge, information and organizational structure as factors rather than a silver bullet answer. This will leave proponents of the 'great leader' model of decision making looking for more. If you are looking for simple answers, recipes, twelve step processes, etc you will need to look elsewhere.

Challenges

By providing illustrative stories, the reader needs to work a little harder to internalize the ideas and messages found in the book's stories. This book requires active reading and consideration of the ideas and experiences of others and how they apply to you. Fans of management and leadership books will draw the conclusions that this book is relatively lightweight. The topic of organizational judgment challenges broadly accepted ideas of responsibility and resource control. They will be looking for more heavyweight analysis to change their mind - which is contained in the stories but not presented like other business books. Fans of Davenport's prior books on analytics and business processes will find this book light on these subject areas. The book discusses many of the organizational parameters of a successful Social Organization and the EMC story provides good details, but this book is not about social media, analytics, or other technologies. It is about how to you create a more collaborative workplace, and take advantage of the power of organizational judgement. These factors involve technology, but they are not delineated by

technology. The book's tone and prose sits between the popular non-fiction / journalism style of Gladwell and Friedman and the business / academic style of other business books. The authors have deliberately tried to write in a more journalistic style and they have largely succeeded in creating a book that is more accessible, descriptive and engaging. Overall, the book is a refreshing, engaging and helpful discussion of how leaders are gaining an edge through tapping into the judgement of the entire organization. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Four Stars By Tom Stoll Good read.

Your guide to making better decisions Despite the dizzying amount of data at our disposal today; and an increasing reliance on analytics to make the majority of our decisions; many of our most critical choices still come down to human judgment. This fact is fundamental to organizations whose leaders must often make crucial decisions: to do this they need the best available insights. In *Judgment Calls*, authors Tom Davenport and Brook Manville share twelve stories of organizations that have successfully tapped their data assets, diverse perspectives, and deep knowledge to build an organizational decision-making capability; a competence they say can make the difference between success and failure. This book introduces a model that taps the collective judgment of an organization so that the right decisions are made, and the entire organization profits. Through the stories in *Judgment Calls*, the authors; both of them seasoned management thinkers and advisers; make the case for the wisdom of organizations and suggest ways to use it to best advantage. Each chapter tells a unique story of one dilemma and its ultimate resolution, bringing into high relief one key to the power of collective judgment. Individually, these stories inspire and instruct; together, they form a model for building an organizational capacity for broadly based, knowledge-intensive decision making. You've read *The Wisdom of Crowds* and *Competing on Analytics*. Now read *Judgment Calls*. You, and your organization, will make better decisions.

provides a convincing illustration laying out a usable model in the area of collaborative decision making. CIO Digest *Judgment Calls* makes a strong effort to raise decision making into less of an individual basis and more of a cultural practice within a team. It makes a solid follow up to analytic books such as Jim Sterner's *Social Media Metrics*, *Performance Marketing with Google Analytics*, and of course, one of Davenport's earlier books *Analytics at Work*. *Judgment Calls* is driven by the 12 stories, each of which ends with reflections on how the organization successfully made the decision. It does offer ideas for judgment calls at your own workplace. The Globe Mail It is wonderful to have *Judgment Calls: Twelve Stories of Big Decisions and the Teams That Got Them Right* by Thomas H. Davenport and Brook Manville with twelve magnificently diverse parables of instances where good judgment was exercised and an organization got it right. Forbes.com Selected as one of PW's Top 10: Business Books. Publishers' Weekly Those who have the opportunity to re-shape any organization of any size, the way it works and develops, and the way people lead and can be led more effectively will find great ideas and encouragement in this book. It is worth reading and re-reading. HR Zone ADVANCE PRAISE for *Judgment Calls*: By integrating the lessons of twelve momentous decisions with a freshly imaginative perspective, *Judgment Calls* is a foundational contribution to the art and science of decision making. Warren Bennis, Distinguished Professor of Business Administration, University of Southern California; author, *Still Surprised: A Memoir of a Life in Leadership* How leaders and organizations approach decision-making is one of the most critical variables to succeeding. *Judgment Calls* is a must read for anyone that wants to ensure that their organization is using effective decision-making as strategic and competitive advantage. Allan C. Golston, President, U.S. Program, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Tom Davenport and Brook Manville have brilliantly written a collection of stories that provide both the proof and the guidance needed for organizations to make better decisions that depend on the skills, knowledge, and judgments of groups, rather than the oversold myth of individual heroics, which is ill suited for our ambiguous and fast-changing world. Douglas K. Smith, coauthor, *The Wisdom of Teams and The Discipline of Teams* *Judgment Calls* illustrates how nurturing an analytics culture improves organizational judgment and translates into better outcomes. Every leader can benefit from the iterative, deliberative decision processes highlighted in the case studies. Combining analytical insights and stories of collaboration among executives, engineers, marketers, partners, and customers, this book provides a winning formula for making more creative and innovative decisions. Jim Davis, Senior Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer, SAS; coauthor, *Information Revolution: Using the Information Evolution Model to Grow Your Business* This is a book that stands up to common sense, while breaking through the age-old image of hero decision makers. In story after story, the authors show how great decisions in a wide range of industry situations have required and benefited from many perspectives and iterations over extended periods of time. Jon R. Katzenbach, Senior Partner, Booz Company At last! A business book that's smart and great fun to read. Every leader especially aspiring leaders needs to read this book. Alan M. Webber, cofounder, Fast Company; author, *Rules of Thumb: 52 Truths for Winning at Business Without Losing Your Self*