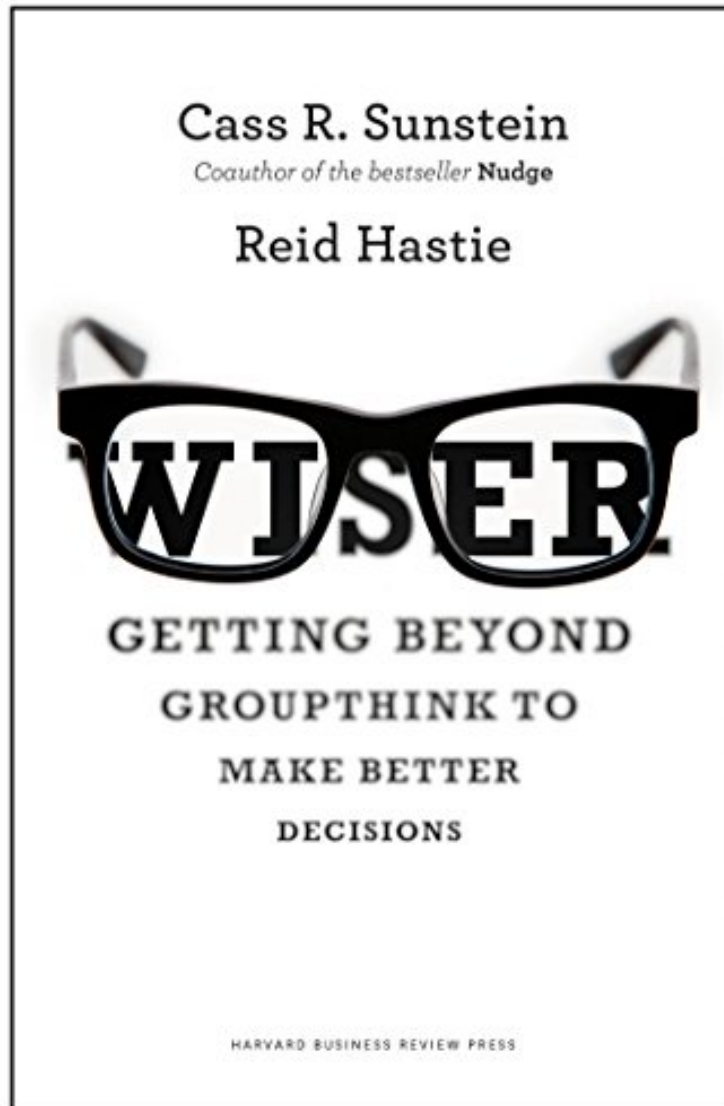


## **Wiser: Getting Beyond Groupthink to Make Groups Smarter**

*Cass R. Sunstein, Reid Hastie*  
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**Cass R. Sunstein, Reid Hastie : Wiser: Getting Beyond Groupthink to Make Groups Smarter** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Wiser: Getting Beyond Groupthink to Make Groups Smarter*:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Group vs Individual Decision Making By Vic Galfano The authors explored whether group decision making is better than individual decision making. They found that groups can be more effective, but typically aren't. Groups tend to be as good as the average member, but not as good as their best member. Groups are found to move pre-dispositions to the extremes, becoming more cautious or risk taking once issues are deliberated, depending on the initial position. They found that common knowledge is given more weight

than private knowledge, but that is the point of bringing individuals together - to gain uncommon insights - unfortunately, individuals become "self-silencing" in a group. The authors do have some suggestions on how to address some of the barriers to better group decision making. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Should be required reading for students and practitioners of task-oriented groups

By Marie An extremely accessible and well written book, it looks at much of the best recent research that indicts groups for their often bad decision making behavior and then shows, clearly and economically, how the latest research shows the way for groups to rise above their limitations to achieve excellence. It is a wonderful book. And it compresses a large body of scientific work into a very small and neat package. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Solid and clear

By Ben Bartlett Good advice on how to be aware of the most effective ways to draw good decisions out of groups. Helpful and clear, I plan to use these ideas soon.

Why are group decisions so hard? Since the beginning of human history, people have made decisions in groups—first in families and villages, and now as part of companies, governments, school boards, religious organizations, or any one of countless other groups. And having more than one person to help decide is good because the group benefits from the collective knowledge of all of its members, and this results in better decisions. Right? Back to reality. We've all been involved in group decisions—and they're hard. And they often turn out badly. Why? Many blame bad decisions on "groupthink" without a clear idea of what that term really means. Now, Nudge coauthor Cass Sunstein and leading decision-making scholar Reid Hastie shed light on the specifics of why and how group decisions go wrong—and offer tactics and lessons to help leaders avoid the pitfalls and reach better outcomes. In the first part of the book, they explain in clear and fascinating detail the distinct problems groups run into: They often amplify, rather than correct, individual errors in judgment They fall victim to cascade effects, as members follow what others say or do They become polarized, adopting more extreme positions than the ones they began with They emphasize what everybody knows instead of focusing on critical information that only a few people know In the second part of the book, the authors turn to straightforward methods and advice for making groups smarter. These approaches include silencing the leader so that the views of other group members can surface, rethinking rewards and incentives to encourage people to reveal their own knowledge, thoughtfully assigning roles that are aligned with people's unique strengths, and more. With examples from a broad range of organizations—from Google to the CIA—and written in an engaging and witty style, *Wiser* will not only enlighten you; it will help your team and your organization make better decisions—decisions that lead to greater success.

"Just because collective groupthink in business and public life decision-making is the prevalent paradigm, doesn't mean it's the right way to go. Discuss." Qantas The Australian Way "[Wiser] sheds light on the specifics of why and how group decisions go wrong, and share insights into how leaders can avoid the pitfalls and reach better outcomes.... With examples from a broad range of organisations from Google to the CIA, *Wiser* is designed to help leaders and their teams make better decisions that lead to greater success." Inside HR ADVANCE PRAISE for *Wiser*: Lawrence Summers, Secretary of the Treasury under President Clinton; Director of the National Economic Council under President Obama "No man is an island, and all important decisions are made collectively. This important book shows how they can be made better and so will make groups, crowds, and our society wiser and better. Anyone involved in making decisions that matter should read this book." John Engler, President, Business Roundtable "Drawing on academic research, real-world examples, and, in Sunstein's case, White House experience, the authors identify the most common mistakes groups fall victim to and offer sensible ways to avoid those often-expensive errors. In Sunstein and Hastie's recommendations, CEOs and managers alike will find much that leaves them, in a word, wiser." Claire Shipman, Correspondent, ABC's Good Morning America; Author, *The Confidence Code* "More minds aren't always better, according to Cass Sunstein and Reid Hastie. In *Wiser*, they deftly lay out the unexpected perils of group decision making and provide smart, straightforward, and often surprising fixes. Utterly fascinating and counterintuitive, this book is an essential read for executives and managers for anybody, actually, hoping to make an enterprise successful." Austan Goolsbee, Professor, University of Chicago Booth School of Business; former Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers under President Obama "There have been lots of books written on why and how individuals make bad decisions. But many of the most important decisions are made by committee, where normal problems get magnified. Finally, Sunstein and Hastie have provided crucial insights and lessons to help groups and teams avoid pitfalls and make effective decisions. Leaders everywhere should take these lessons to heart." Doris Kearns Goodwin, Pulitzer Prize-winning presidential historian; Author, *Team of Rivals* and *The Bully Pulpit* "This gem of a book is full of penetrating insight, sensible advice, and fascinating stories drawn from practical experience. Written with clarity and grace, it provides an invaluable road map for leaders and managers in both public and private life. I can think of dozens of historical decisions that might have been better made had our leaders followed these precepts." About the Author Cass R. Sunstein is a US legal scholar and served as Administrator of the White

House Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs in the Obama administration. He is currently the Robert Walmsley University Professor at Harvard Law School and coauthor, with Richard H. Thaler, of *Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth, and Happiness*. Reid Hastie is an expert on the psychology of decision making, especially by groups. He has authored or coauthored several academic books, including *Rational Choice in an Uncertain World*. He is currently the Ralph and Dorothy Keller Distinguished Service Professor of Behavioral Science at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business.