Make up your mind:
Critical thinking and decision making for success

MSBO Facilities and Operations Directors Conference
October 7, 2019
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If critical thinking is important, why doesn’t anyone know what it is?

7 Critical Skills That Predict Success
If you want to succeed in life, psychologists have figured out the skills you’ll need. Since knowing is half the battle, see how you’re doing and where you need to improve.
Critical thinking defined...at least for today’s purpose

CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS INCLUDE:
The ability to gather data and information from disparate sources and design and implement and analytical strategy that allows you to reflect on the items that influence and/or cause a problem or create an area of concern so that you can design a set of alternatives, decide on a course of action, communicate the plan, implement a solution, and evaluate its effect.
If that is what it is, how do we do it?
How do you think?

- Meta-cognition – Thinking about how we think and decide
- No one needs to be a genius but we do need everyone to think and analyze
- Questions for a transportation department:
  - How do we seek out information?
  - How do we build situational analytical skills?
  - How do we assess information?
  - How do we build judgement?
  - How do we prepare people with thoughtful questions?
  - How do we provide a path to resolution?
Becoming the decider

Severity

Frequency

- Accident Management
- Strategic plans
- Training plans
- Terminations
- Bus replacement
- System design
- Vacation day
- Abuse
- Layoffs

System design
## What impacts our decisions?

### Things that stop us from deciding
- Loss aversion
- Status quo bias
- Vividness
- Availability bias

### Things that impact the way we decide
- Representative bias / Associate decision making
- Small samples
- Hindsight bias
- Optimism bias
A Model for Thinking

How much do you know?

How certain are you that you know?

Adapted from “Introduction to Decision Analysis”, David C Skinner
You thought, you decided, now what?

“I want you to find a bold and innovative way to do everything exactly the same way it’s been done for 25 years.”
The 4Cs of Communication

- **Concise**
  - Focus on the question(s) at hand not all the questions you think you will be asked
  - Pictures are worth 1,000 words especially of bus stops, bus fights and bell time changes

- **Clear**
  - Your audience isn’t transportation pros; speak to them that way
  - Simplify, simplify, simplify

- **Customized**
  - Target your response to the population you are speaking to
  - My hangnail is more painful than your broken leg

- **Conditioned**
  - If you assume make sure your audience knows what you assumed
  - Certainty is for death and taxes while everything else is uncertain
  - When inputs change than the answer changes!!
CRITICAL THINKING IS IMPORTANT, BUT IT IS ALSO NOT ONE THING!

- THINKING: We all need to think AND we need to remember it is a skill that needs to be developed.

- DECIDING: No one decides in a vacuum and no decision is pure or “data driven”. Design a process to recognize that.

- COMMUNICATING: 4 Cs to mitigate the opportunity for misinterpretation or manipulation of your thinking and deciding efforts.
Suggested Readings

- *Mistakes Were Made (But Not by Me): Why We Justify Foolish Beliefs, Bad Decisions, and Hurtful Acts*, Carol Tavris
- *How We Know What Isn't So: The Fallibility of Human Reason in Everyday Life*, Thomas Gilovich
- *Misbehaving*, Richard Thaler
- *Thinking Fast and Slow*, Daniel Kahneman
- *Why Can’t You Give Me the Number?*, Patrick Leach
- *The 7Cs of Communication*, https://www.managementstudyguide.com/seven-cs-of-effective-communication.htm
- *8 Ways to Improve Your Communication Right Now*, https://www.inc.com/kevin-daum/8-ways-to-improve-your-communication-right-now.html
Questions

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