

Cambridge University Press

0521583063 - Psychological Investigations of Competence in Decision Making

Edited by Kip Smith, James Shanteau and Paul Johnson

Frontmatter

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Cambridge Series on Judgment and Decision Making

Psychological Investigations of Competence in Decision Making

The premise of this book is that most activity in everyday life and work is based on tasks that are novel, infrequent in our experience, or variable with respect to the action to be taken. Such tasks require decisions to be made and actions taken in the face of ambiguous or incomplete information. Time pressure is frequently great, and penalties for failure are severe. Examples include investing in markets, controlling industrial accidents, and detecting fraud. The environments in which such tasks occur defy a definition of optimal performance, yet the benefits of successful decision making are considerable. The authors refer to domains without criteria for optimal performance as “competency-based” and describe the able behavior of individuals who work in them by the term “competence.” The chapters of this book examine the propositions that metacognitive processes – thinking about the kind of thinking that a task requires – give structure to otherwise ill-structured tasks and are fundamental enablers of decision-making performance.

Kip Smith is Research Professor of Industrial Ergonomics at Linköping University, Sweden. After a first career as a geophysicist, Professor Smith received a Ph.D. in Information and Decision Science from the University of Minnesota. Currently, his research focuses on delineating the dynamic and neural constraints on models of individual and economic decision making and of team performance. Among his applied interests are foreign currency trading, air traffic control, and the Future Force warrior.

James Shanteau, Professor of Psychology at Kansas State University, received his Ph.D. in Experimental Psychology from the University of California at San Diego. His research interests include analysis of expertise in decision makers (including expert systems) and investigation of consumer health-care choices (especially organ donation/transplantation decisions). A cofounder and past president of the Judgment/Decision Making Society, he is former director of the Decision, Risk, and Management Science (DRMS) program at the National Science Foundation. Professor Shanteau is also the coauthor of many books, including *Emerging Perspectives on Decision Research* with Sandra L. Schneider (Cambridge University Press).

Paul Johnson is Carlson Professor of Decision Sciences and Adjunct Professor of Psychology and Computer Science at the University of Minnesota. He is also a member of the faculty in the Minnesota Centers for Cognitive Sciences and Political Psychology. Professor Johnson’s research focuses on the role of variability and expertise in health-care decisions, the decision failures that arise from the misperception or misrepresentation of information (e.g., deception), and the use of knowledge resources and decision technologies in business and professional settings.

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PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK

40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain

Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa

<http://www.cambridge.org>

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First published 2004

Printed in the United States of America

Typeface Palatino 10/13 pt. *System* L^AT_EX 2_ε [TB]

A catalog record for this book is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Psychological investigations of competence in decision making / edited by Kip Smith, James Shanteau, Paul Johnson.

p. cm. – (Cambridge series on judgment and decision making)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-521-58306-3

1. Decision making. I. Smith, Kip, 1951– II. Shanteau, James, 1943–

III. Johnson, Paul E. (Paul Erick), 1938– IV. Series.

BF448 .P79 2003

153.8'3 – dc21

2002035181

ISBN 0 521 58306 3 hardback

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