



SOCIETY OF DECISION
PROFESSIONALS

Clarity & Insight for Decisive Action

NEWSLETTER

Issue 19

December 2020

President's Message

By Leslie Lippard

Hello SDP,

As many of you know, our SDP leadership team transitions on July 1 each year. We've chosen this time so that DAAG, which is typically in April, is behind us and the new leadership team has enough time to settle in before the next DAAG comes barreling towards us.

We begin the process of recruiting for next year's transition in November, by forming a nominations committee. The VP chairs the committee and the committee's primary role is to identify candidates for officer and BOD positions.

We also identify co-chairs for DAAG (typically we have these in place 2 years in advance, to allow people to watch and learn before they need to step into role), and chapters, councils and interest groups also consider their makeup and leadership.

There are also a handful of operational roles that volunteers fill (everything from working on the newsletter to acting as a central point of contact for councils or chapters). Although there isn't a specified transition time for these, we generally think about succession planning during this time window, as well.

With all that in mind, I wanted to ensure that all of our members are aware of the many ways to get involved in the leadership side of SDP. Over and over again, what I hear from members is that the real benefit of being part of SDP is getting to know other members, and one of the best ways to do that is to work together on a committee, a council, on the BOD, or through some other shared task.

Please keep in mind that the time commitment is a continuum that ranges from small to large and know that your contributions are welcome at whatever level is right for you.

Continued on page 2

In this issue

President's message	1	Interest Group news	8
Upcoming events	3	Council focus	9
DAAG details	4	Ask the Fellows	10
Certifications	6	Sponsor message	12
Chapter news	7	Brain teaser/links	13

SDP's footprint is continually growing as we advance our mission, bringing new topics and new target audiences into our sights. This is how our connection with the data analytics/ data science community began, and there is an ongoing need for people who can help us build bridges and act as change agents. Whether you are looking for something big or small, existing or new, clear-cut or ambiguous, there is a place where you are needed.

One place you might consider serving is the Board of Directors. The primary role of the BOD is governance—to ensure that the organization is run in a professional, competent, and transparent manner. Per our bylaws, the BOD had between 6 and 18 members, and includes an executive committee that consists of a president, a vice president, a secretary and a treasurer. Director terms are 3 years long; the treasurer and secretary roles have a 2-year term, and the VP and the President each serve for 1 year, although the VP transitions into the President role at the end of their VP term.

Serving on a council is another excellent way to begin to meet SDP colleagues—we have councils focusing on Awards, DAAG, Certification, Knowledge Sharing, Membership & Communication, and Outreach & Chapters, and Programs.

We have chapters in Calgary, Houston, London, San Francisco, Seattle, and Vancouver.

If you are in an area that has a local chapter, this is an especially good way to meet people in your city. Although most of our chapters have been meeting virtually on account of the pandemic, many chapters hold in-person meetings on a variety of topics during normal times.

If you are interested in a chapter and you don't see your local area listed, there is opportunity to establish a new chapter. Currently, Jeremy Walker is serving as our Cross-Chapter Lead, and he can share best practices to help new chapters get up and running. Several of our chapters started with the efforts of one or two people, so critical mass can be quite low.

We also have several interest groups-- including CSRA (cost and schedule risk analysis), Data Science, Finance, Pharma, and Scenario Planning which are all great ways to share or develop your knowledge as well as participate in our community.

One of our key initiatives this year is to renew our commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. When we speak about diversity, we want to think about it in the broadest sense possible, so that it comprehends diversity of thought, diversity of industry, diversity of age/seniority. We are also aware that some demographic groups are significantly under-represented in our community. This is a loss for each of us, as well as something that we believe is a barrier to our organization's growth. We are actively working to change this, to reach out and include people from groups who we aren't currently as connected with as we would like. If your impression of the SDP is that there isn't anyone like you at DAAG, at your local chapter meeting, on your council, or on the BOD--- then you are the person whose perspective we are most in need of hearing.

President's Message, continued from page 2

If stepping into an existing role is overwhelming, then start small. Attend one council meeting and see if you like it. And if, after attending one meeting, you aren't convinced it's the right group for you, try another—each team has its own mix of mission and personality. Whatever your interests are, if you are a decision professional, I am confident that you will find a place where your participation is welcome, valued, and you feel amply rewarded.

And, if you are someone who currently contributes to the leadership of our organization through service of some kind, thank you for your efforts. I would also like to ask you to please think of decision professionals who you know and who have a contribution to make to SDP. And then, please encourage that person to serve by telling them how you think they can contribute and why their contribution is important.

That is how almost everyone I know in SDP leadership got started. Someone asked them to step up, and they said "ok". So now I am asking you to step up and telling you that we need your valuable contribution-- and I very much hope that you too say "ok".

If you would like to learn more about opportunities to participate in SDP leadership you can reach out to me (llippard@gmail.com) or to Eyas Raddad (eyas@aburaddad.com) and we will be happy to answer questions and offer any other help you might need.

Upcoming Events



**SOCIETY OF DECISION
PROFESSIONALS**
Clarity & Insight for Decisive Action

[SDP Annual DAAG 2021 Conference \(on-line\)](#)

April 14 – 16 , 2021

Webinars:

**Decisions Professionals and Decision
Professors: Synergies and Opportunities
between Practitioners, Academics and
Organizations**

Wednesday, Jan 13, 2021

8 am PT | 11 am ET

**Virtual Decision-Modelling Workshops for
Creating the Future**

Wednesday, Feb 10, 2021

8 am PT | 11 am ET

Webinars: (continued)

Risk-Based Decision Making

Wednesday, Mar 3, 2021

8 am PT | 11 am ET



Save the Date!

[SMDM 43rd Annual Meeting:](#)

Toronto, ON, Canada

October 17 - 20, 2021

The meeting theme is *Individual and
Society in Health Care Decisions*

Meeting co-chairs: Negin Hajizadeh, MD, MPH and
Victoria Shaffer, PhD

Do you know of upcoming professional events that might be of interest to other SDP members?

If so, please email the SDP newsletter at newsletter@decisionprofessionals.com



SDP ANNUAL DAAG *online* conference & workshops

APRIL 14-16, 2021



DAAG
DECISION ANALYSIS
AFFINITY GROUP

2021 DAAG CONFERENCE TOPICS

- Case Studies
- The Art of Decision Framing
- Innovative Methods for Addressing Uncertainty
- Superforecasting
- Bridging Data and Decision Sciences
- Sustainability
- Decision Leadership
- New to Decision Analysis

DAAG 2021 3 day Virtual	Early Bird Price January 15	Regular Price
SDP Member	\$385.00	\$450.00
Non-Member	\$595.00	\$650.00

REGISTER at www.daag.io

Get Your SDP DAAG Conference Tickets
EARLYBIRD pricing expires Jan 15, 2021

SDP DAAG 2021 Conference
KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Annie Duke

Annie Duke
Author | Speaker
Decision Strategist

How to Decide
Simple Tools for Making Better Choices
Annie Duke

Complimentary Book to 1st 100 registrants

SDP DAAG 2021 Conference
KEYNOTE SPEAKER

ED Rogers

ED ROGERS (RETIRED)
Chief Knowledge Officer
NASA Goddard Space Flight Center
2003-2020



2021 DAAG PRE & POST CONFERENCE

View our **WORKSHOP**

** MENU ** Register for 1 or Many!

- * **Ask the Better Question™: Engaging Stakeholders for Sustainability Action**
- * **The Metalog Distributions 101**
- * **Decision Analysis Evaluation with Simulation**
- * **Decision Science 101, or Using Structured Thinking to Supplement Your Business Smarts**
- * **Data Sciences for the Decision Professional**
- * **Assessing Multiple Value Drivers in Decision Analysis**
- * **Practical and Powerful Insight from Decision Tree Analysis — An Energy Transition Case-Based Learning Experience**
- * **A Practical Introduction to Game Theory**

2021 DAAG PRE & POST CONFERENCE



Sponsorship of the SDP ANNUAL DAAG CONFERENCE & WORKSHOPS will promote your company throughout the journey!

- We PROMOTE you BEFORE the event
- We PROMOTE you DURING the event
- We PROMOTE you AFTER the event



READY TO COMMIT? Contact us for full details on benefits & sponsor levels

EMAIL: info@decisionprofessionals.com

Sponsorship Opportunities

Join Us in Producing the SDP Newsletter

We, the editors, are actively looking for other SDP members to join us in producing this newsletter. If you are interested, please contact us. [Click here](#) to email the editors.

Emilia Silebi and Jack Kloeber
SDP Newsletter Editors



Congratulations to New SDP Practitioner Becky Watson



Becky is currently the Regional Exploration Development Manager, Europe, Russia & Caspian Region within Shell's Exploration organisation. A Geoscientist by background, in this role she is accountable for supporting value delivery via both front-line support and decision board membership of all region projects including licence rounds, exploration/exploratory appraisal wells and new business development deals. Aside from this, she has latterly been delivering the global implementation of an IT product across the organisation in the role of Product Owner. She is an experienced facilitator and actively supports staff development through 1:1 and group coaching including sharing her experience in DADQ.

Outside of work, she is active externally as a speaker and panellist at the annual Imperial College (University of London) Energy Forum, various careers fairs and the London Chapter of the SDP. Small increments of spare time are filled with Shotokan Karate, gardening, hiking and generally enjoying the chaos of life with 2 kids!

Chapter News

Calgary Chapter:

The Calgary Chapter was lucky to host Prof. Eric Bickel in October where he presented his 'simple' COVID-19 forecasting model and how, with only three inputs, it stands up to large complex epidemiological models. He discussed the implications for decision analysis and had us question whether details in models really improve decision making.

We look forward to learning some new tips & tricks at our December meeting where Ellen Coopersmith from Decision Frameworks will lead a session on successful remote framing sessions.

Houston Chapter:

SDP – Houston returned to virtual general meetings in the second half of 2020. We have been fortunate to welcome Dr. Eric Bickel and Matt Distel, Mauricio Lira and Colin Bower from BHP as guest speakers. As we take a break for the winter holidays, the executive committee will meet to plan next year's calendar. We are excited to announce the speaker for our first general meeting of 2021, so keep an eye out!

Seattle Chapter:

We have made the transition to virtual meetings because of the pandemic. This is working well enough that it's likely we'll find ways to continue to offer virtual access to some or all meetings even after this is all over. We're looking forward to being able to get together in person at some point soon, though. We have been holding monthly meetings:

August:

Speaker: Amy Day

Topic: Projects and Gamification Make Learning Fun

September:

Speaker: Troy Helm

Topic: Virtual tools for remote DQ engagement

October

Speakers: Steve Glickman & Phillip Venice

Topic: Superforecasting

November:

[Postponed to December]

December (upcoming)

Speaker: John Black

Topic: Two Sides of a Coin – The Science and the Human in the Loop

Vancouver Chapter:


The Vancouver Chapter continues to be active and has been meeting monthly. In September, we elected a new Executive Board and Chapter Officers. We also featured Amy Day of Clarity4Action who presented on gamification using a short movie developed by high school students intended to help spot biases. In October, Lee Failing and Brooke Moore presented on Decision Skills in the Classroom, based on their experience developing and applying a decision making guide for teachers that draws on tools and experience using Structured Decision Making but applied in a classroom setting. Our November event featured Nalaine Morin, a member of a First Nation in BC, who presented on Indigenous decision-making and knowledge in order to minimize the adverse effects of development projects.

Interest Group News & Knowledge Sharing Council

Explore our Publication [Decision Analysis](#) Hosted by Medium

This publication is a strategic opportunity to expand the impact of SDP beyond decision professionals and guide humanity with relatable and accessible writing on difficult decision domains. The latest stats say that Medium has close to 100 Million active readers a month. That's a lot of decision makers!

We have 3 simple asks:

- Please check out [Decision Analysis](#) - no sign in required.
- Please follow [Decision Analysis](#) by signing in (no charge) with email and clicking on  on lower right-hand side of cover picture. Paid membership is not necessary.
- Please share your thoughts on the articles already posted by clicking the chat bubble on the left-hand side of each article.

You may also follow authors. If you have already published using Medium or would like to, please email brig@decisionprofessionals.com.

Cost & Schedule Interest Group:

At the last Cost and Schedule Interest Group meeting we discussed “Presenting the Results of a CSRA”. We will have another meeting in January to continue discussing best practices in CSRA. All interested parties are welcome to participate and share their best practices. Contact Brian Putt (Brian@ThePutts.com)

Finance Interest Group:

The Finance Interest Group has been meeting with a small group, we have had great discussions on risk, what does it truly mean in a finance context, what are the different approaches to quantify risk and what are the pros/cons of each method, what are the various applications of utility theory. We are now focused on developing a framework to handle “model risk” by coming up with principles on how to validate models. Model risk is present whenever an insufficiently accurate model is used to make decisions, so a procedure that is consistent with DA principles and can reduce this risk is highly valuable.

Scenario Planning Interest Group:

The Scenario Planning Interest Group has been active since May 2020. Every first Thursday of the month at 10 AM PST a meeting is held. Typically, an interest group participant will deliver a short presentation followed by discussion. Recordings and materials are stored so those who have missed the session can catch up if they wish.

The subject matter concerns the use of future scenarios of the business environment and specifically considering how this can assist with decision making. This does mean that the type of uncertainties that are in play are usually rather intangible and play out over the long term. They are therefore difficult to quantify and capture in models, as would be the common inclination of decision analysts. In the interest group we try to explore how these different worlds of qualitative thinking and quantitative modeling relate.



Council Focus

Membership & Communications Council:

In the September Newsletter, we shared some professional demographics and high-level observations from our close-ended questions from our 2020 Member Survey. Since then, we have been taking a closer look at the responses to our open-ended questions. Below is our summary.

If you are not taking full advantage of membership benefits, why not?

Over half of the respondents answered this question. The leading response to this question pertained to time constraints or other conflicts for attention and energy. Another category of answers indicated lack of relevance of the various topics to their current position.

What does the SDP offer/do that provides the most value to you as a member?

Just under two-thirds of the respondents answered this question. DAAG and Networking are the leading answers here followed by webinars and other knowledge sharing.

Of these offerings/activities, for which would greater enhancement/investment potentially provide even greater value?

There was a little variety in the responses here. About 40% of the respondents provided an answer to this question. Networking (virtual or in-person) and knowledge sharing such as webinars were prominent on the list of responses as was training and certification.

What do you see as the most important improvement opportunities for SDP?

Slightly over half of the respondents answered this question. There was, not surprisingly, overlap in response with the previous question such as Networking. Certification also came up a few times. We also learned that discipline (academia, consulting, industry) diversity seemed prominent – and likely diversity across industries as well – as did growth (non-specific).

Of those you mention, where do you feel we should place our greatest focus?

Just under a third of the respondents answer this question. A top these responses was a member directory, training and mentoring, and knowledge sharing.

In an upcoming SDP Board Meeting (targeting January or February) we look forward to sharing more information with the SDP Board seeking guidance and support for possible next steps.

Lastly, we are now engaging in making contact with those individuals who asked to be contacted in the survey.

We, the Membership and Communication Council, thank you for your thoughtful comments. We look forward to moving forward with your feedback in mind.

Ask the Fellows

In every issue, we ask our active Fellows to share their experience and wisdom with us, to answer some of the tougher questions.

Question for the Fellows: Assuming that one of our goals in SDP is to improve decision-making in the world – with respect to education, what is the most important change we should try to effect?

→ Middle School/ High School:

We have made significant progress in the Decision Education Foundation.

<https://www.decisioneducation.org/nov-7-2020-event>

And yet, we have only scratched the surface in 20 years. That leaves me with the question: *Why is it so hard* to gain broad adoption of a DQ curriculum? Here are some that come to mind:

- Convince the adults to decide to adopt DQ
- Spread the word with success stories and data that demonstrate the value
- As a decision professional, leverage the curriculum from DEF and volunteer at your local school. (Talk to Frank Koch about his experience)
- Contribute to DEF or the DQ education venture of your choice.

→ High School:

I think the most important things to get through their heads are: 1) to question "facts" that they hear, 2) to not be afraid of saying "I don't know" which is the correct answer to virtually all questions in an uncertain world, and 3) to always ask what else could I do that might be better (look for better alternatives).

School emphasizes that all questions have a correct answer, know the answer and pass the test, and that trains them to resist embracing uncertainty. Critical thinking needs to be embraced by all subjects, not just math and analytics. In history, don't memorize dates and names, but try to understand why people did what they did, what decisions they made, and what that caused. In literature, read for understanding and deeper meaning beyond the 280 character limit in Twitter. In physical education and sports, help them understand strategy and trade-offs, not just "beat the other team".

All retired decision analysts should find a school where they can volunteer! It's fun and keeps you young.

Continued on page 11

→ **High School/Undergraduate:**

Understanding statistics is difficult for most. However, if taught using simulation and graphics can add real understanding vs plugging numbers in a formula.

Teach statistics in high school and undergraduate classes using simulation. There are several free Excel tools such as SIPmath that can assist. Khan Academy and YouTube are wonderful resources.

→ **Graduate level/MBA programs:**

I have met many smart, MBA-trained professionals, and only a few have even heard of DA. I think one important way for DA/DQ to gain traction is it needs to get into MBA programs in a more integrated way. It needs to be an integral part of a strategy curriculum, and as such should be a topic in introductory business strategy courses, and then a class that anyone emphasizing strategy should be required to take. I think if DA/DQ comes to be seen as an approach to strategy by getting taught as a strategy topic, it will gain some awareness and traction and not be seen as a niche specialization.

→ **Within Industry:**

As I say often, DA is a workflow of framing and analysis with dialogue/conversation throughout, and one can use different tools. The underlying tool of traditional DA is decision theory, but there's no reason other tools like game theory cannot be included (I follow a DA workflow when I use game theory).

Our thanks this time to Fellows: **Brian Putt, Carl Spetzler, Frank Koch, Paul Papayannou** (alphabetical order, first name)

A Word From an SDP Sponsor

In every issue of this newsletter, we include a message from one of the SDP sponsors, whose support contributes significantly to the on-going success of the Society.



Make uncertainty your friend!

Founded in 2000, [SmartOrg](#)'s methods for evaluating opportunities allow organizations to align innovation and finance to drive profitable growth. We tackle growth challenges in two domains – Strategic Portfolio Management and Innovation through software and services.

SmartOrg's Strategic Portfolio Management approach helps companies align on where and how much to invest in four ways: cut through the clutter, tame uncertainty, drive the upside, and overcome conflict. Our collaborative analytical software platform improves organizations' business processes. Our consulting services support efforts to deploy, educate, and manage change.

Our flagship software product, Portfolio Navigator, embeds decision analysis into the project evaluation process and provides strategic portfolio management – helping companies know where they stand and where to steer. One doesn't need to be trained as a decision analyst to get the benefit of DA. Through Portfolio Navigator, everyone can easily access tailor-made decision models around critical management conversations and gain insights from tornado diagrams to drive upsides.

At the portfolio level, the Innovation Screen, Efficient Frontier Curve, and rolled-up P&Ls redirect resources from incremental projects, optimize for ROI, and show how to improve portfolio mix. Specified in Excel and powered by calculation engines and APIs, Portfolio Navigator scales DA to the large-enterprise level. One of our clients named us on par with SAP in our contribution to their organization's success.

While Portfolio Navigator builds organizations' capability, SmartOrg's services accelerate their portfolio journey. SmartOrg consultants work with organizations to jumpstart the journey, address growth challenges, drive change, leverage technologies, and expand horizons. We bring expertise, horsepower, and perspectives to level up organizations' portfolio.

SmartOrg's Innovation Management approach helps innovators to align innovation to executive expectations. We offer a mash-up of real options analysis and lean startup methodology for novel growth. SmartOrg consultants help innovators build credibility through uncertainty, including framing hypotheses, evaluating potentials, buying down risks, and communicating readiness. We are hard at work migrating the methodology into a digital interface to provide computer-aided innovation intelligence.

SmartOrg has helped customers like Corteva, DuPont, and Rogers Corporations on their innovation and portfolio journeys. Whether your growth challenge is to explore an exciting new area and develop credible investment grade proposals or to balance investments across competing areas and interests, SmartOrg can help you build your capability.

Brain Teaser

**Congratulations to Tony Fernandez (5 tanks full).
Honorable Mention goes to Pat Leach (6 Tanks full)**

	Boat A		Boat B		Boat C	
	Position	Fuel (tanks)	Position	Fuel (tanks)	Position	Fuel (tanks)
	Home port	1.00	Home port	1.00	Home port	1.00
Step 1	Point 1	0.75 -> 1.00	Point 1	0.75 -> 1.00	Point 1	0.75 -> 0.25
Step 2	Point 2	0.75 -> 1.00	Point 2	0.75 -> 0.50	Home port	0.00 -> 1.00
Step 3	Point 3	0.75	Point 1	0.25	Home port	1.00
Step 4	Point 4	0.50	Home port	0.00 -> 1.00	Home port	1.00
Step 5	Point 5	0.25	Home port	1.00	Point 7	0.75
Step 6	Point 6	0.00 -> 0.25	Home port	1.00	Point 6	0.50 -> 0.25
Step 7	Point 7	0.00 -> 0.25	Point 7	0.75 -> 0.25	Point 7	0.00 -> 0.25
Step 8	Home port	0.00	Home port	0.00	Home port	0.00

	Position	
	Home port	
Step 1	Point 1	Boat C transfers 0.25 tank to each of Boat A and Boat B
Step 2	Point 2	Boat B transfers 0.25 tank to Boat A, Boat C fills tank
Step 3	Point 3	
Step 4	Point 4	Boat B fills tank
Step 5	Point 5	
Step 6	Point 6	Boat C transfers 0.25 tank to Boat A
Step 7	Point 7	Boat B transfers 0.25 tank to each of Boat A and Boat C
Step 8	Home port	

View September Brain Teaser and Solution [Here](#)

THE DECEMBER BRAIN TEASER

Instructions: You can win "bragging rights" by being the first to submit the correct answer of this brain teaser to the newsletter editors ([SDP Newsletter: Brain Teaser](#)). We will announce the winner in the next issue.

Fun with Numbers

Actual Brain Teaser: The number 8,549,176,320 is a very unique number. What is so special about it?

Tie Breaker: Find a number less than 200 that is increased by one-fifth of its value when its digits are reversed.

Useful Links

The SDP Board has posted the Society's Bylaws and Policy and Procedure Manual, which can be found at: <http://www.decisionprofessionals.com/about/governance>

A listing of courses in decision analysis available to SDP members is at: <http://www.decisionprofessionals.com/courses/training-program>