



SOCIETY OF DECISION
PROFESSIONALS
Clarity & Insight for Decisive Action

NEWSLETTER

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President's Corner

By David Matheson



What does it mean to be “The World Forum on Decision Making”? Do you want to Learn, Network, Connect, Engage or Advance? Members are defining what our forums are by taking initiative and moving the society forward in powerful ways:

William Leaf Herman, Brendan Keinath, Martin Stahl and **Peter Ray** have rallied locals to create a new Boston Chapter that will be having their inaugural meeting 1 November – creating a new way to **Connect** in this geography.

Michelle Florendo has stepped forward to lead our many members committed to youth and those who support them as the chair of the Decision Education Interest Group – **Advancing** our ability to contribute to this critical issue.

Eyas Raddad, John Mark Agosta and **Fadi Micalian** are weaving many complex threads together into a one-day virtual conference on “Decision Intelligence confronts AI” in November – to **Engage** with those working in AI, Machine Learning, and Data Science.

Wayne Fisher and I are partnering with the PDMA (see iigy report) – creating opportunities for you to **Network** with professionals focused on innovation.

Do you know someone who wants to **Learn** more about the society? Give them our new [Five Things You Can Do Today](#) card to invite them to **Join**

What would you like to do with the Society? Our board members are ambassadors to members: the formal, informal, and nascent leaders in our organization. Your involvement creates opportunity for you and the society, so reach out!

I'd love to hear from you. Alternatively, if you'd like to connect with someone from the SDP leadership team, you can find their contact information in this [directory](#).

David Matheson, President, SDP

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Member Profile - Colin Bower

1. Tell us about your work history? Most interesting, least interesting?

My first job was actually in my father's hardware store long enough ago that I don't actually remember what year I started. It was a great education in the trials of small business, customer service and retail hardware ... it didn't pay much mind you, well unless you count Dad paying my university fees, which, looking back now, was probably a better deal than it felt at the time! My professional work history started when I joined BHP's graduate program in 2006 in remote Australia in the Port Hedland finance team. From there I worked across a variety of accounting, DA, valuation, strategy, M&A and commercial roles in Australia, London, Africa, Canada and the US. Picking the most interesting role is impossible since each of them allowed me to learn something new and work with talented and interesting people. This brings me to my current role with Woodside's Decision Analysis and Evaluation team where I support our New Energies projects. There is so much happening in the new energies world that every day is exciting and presents the opportunity to contribute to something new and important.



2. Tell us about how you ended up practicing decision analysis?

I fell into it really. I was looking for a new challenge and the manager of the DA group needed some extra help for six months. My boss at the time let me switch teams on the promise to come back afterwards fortunately he doesn't hold a grudge as I never did!

3. What is your favorite part of decision professional's career?

Framing. I love working through novel problems with people and trying to develop creative solutions to a challenge.

4. Do you have any areas of DA that you specialize in?

Not really. The Woodside team is small enough that we end up wearing many hats and often get called upon to help out in many areas. We help with framing, commercial discussions, valuation, training and a lot more. For me this is one of the really great parts of DA, you sit in the middle of this nexus of workstreams and you have latitude to help out where it is needed the most. This means you have great variety of roles each day and work with people with a huge range of skill sets.

5. What do you do outside of work – hobbies, activities, etc?

Well, I would say cycling, rock climbing and archery ... however I got a bit lazy post pandemic. I still cycle but not enough. Now days weekends are a mix of home improvement projects (sigh, thanks Dad for all those little lessons at the hardware stores!) and far too many computer games. My wife and friends are threatening to hide my x-box controller!

6. What is your involvement in SDP?

I was the 2022-23 Houston chapter president having just passed the baton to Jack Neal a few weeks ago. I really enjoyed helping the Houston committee expand our network and be part of this great community in Houston and internationally. I'm still be part of the committee and I look forward to meeting and catching up with everyone at our next event.

Interest Group News

Innovation Interest Group:

iigy goes to the PDMA conference in NOLA.

Board member Wayne Fisher, Hilda Cherekdjian, and Dave Matheson recruited 10 new SDP members from the PDMA as part of our alliance with this sister organization. Our workshop on Decision Making and Innovation was well received, and innovation professionals really appreciated the idea of DQ.

When asked “How would you know a good decision if you saw one”, audience members said things like “Alignment with goal and vision” and “Aligned with expectations” and “True alignment (not just superficial agreement)” – are you getting a theme? Many people had breakthroughs: getting commitment was the part of a good decision and the result of a process that could be engineered! Many also realized that their current process framework (Stage Gate) wasn’t set up to deliver good decisions, resulting in frustration in this area, and were inspired that there might be a better way.



Decision Professionals can really help. While innovation has some unique issues, their problems are very similar to things we all know well. When participants scored decisions they faced on the [Decision Complexity Card](#), 77% scored high enough to warrant “slowing down and running a decision process” and 25% scored so high that they should “consider consulting a decision professional.”

Now that we have connected more directly to the innovation community at the PDMA, iigy is going to restart meetings and run another design thinking cycle that taps this broader network. Come to our next meeting on 18 October from 10-11:30 PT to welcome new members and help set the direction for the next cycle.

Join us - [RSVP HERE](#) .



Interest Group News (cont'd)

Probability of Success Interest Group:

POSIG held a webinar in August in the form of a fireside chat with Doug Hubbard. Over 170 people attended. Doug reiterated high points of his DAAG talk (SDP Annual Conference 2023, formerly known as DAAG), to wit, that individuals can be taught to give calibrated assessments, and Doug's FrankenSME procedure for combining multiple experts' opinions is better calibrated and more informative (lower Brier score) than other approaches. FrankenSME interprets experts' judgments as deviations from a reference probability and aggregates those deviations. This is an example of an algorithmic approach to combining expert opinion. The other main paradigm is discussion-based, which, if done properly, can be viewed as shifting the relevant reference probability by sharing information among experts. There is not yet any data on the calibration and informativeness of this behavioral approach.

Decision Education Interest Group:

Thanks to two great strategy sessions facilitated by Eyas Raddad, the Decision Education Interest Group (DEIG) is working toward creating an inspired vision and concrete next steps for the upcoming year. We will be reaching out soon to invite those who are interested to our October meeting. We are excited to be a part of SDP's greater vision as a 'World forum on decision making' in decision education. If you have questions or would like more information please email info@decisionprofessionals.com.

Council Focus

Membership & Communication Council:

In the June 2023 issue of the SDP Newsletter, we shared that we were planning to approach the Certification Council and the Chapters to provide a foundation for mentoring relationships where they may be well suited. We have made inroads here, and in the coming weeks, the Certification Council and Membership and Communication Council will discuss and develop ideas for incorporating mentoring for members on the Certification Track. Before the end of the year, we hope to begin similar conversations with the Chapters.

*Lastly, **the Membership and Communication Council is seeking a new Chair** to begin in early 2024. If you are interested in growing your visibility within SDP and making a tremendous impact for members, the role of Council Chair is an excellent means of doing so. Please email the newsletter editors at newsletter@decisionprofessionals.com if you want to learn more about this opportunity.*

Hero Awards Council:

*We will be kicking off thinking of our next round of awards toward the end of the year. Would encourage anyone to think about nominating others for the recruiter award or volunteer award. Should you have ideas on who you would like to nominate – let me know as early as you like!
Lindsay Oyola, HERO Award Chair*

Lindsay.Oyola@shell.com

Chapter News

Houston Chapter:

The Houston Chapter held two technical and networking events this quarter - hotter than the string of 100-degree days we endured under the Summer Heat Dome! The first, hosted by bp, was a talk on "Multiple Objective Decision Analysis: Basics and the USAF 2025 Study" by Dr. Bill Klimack (slides available on the link: <https://www.decisionprofessionals.com/chapter/houston/events>). Bill walked us through a MODA approach to DQ and shared work using that technique to guide US Air Force Strategy development for a 30-year future. News flash: global surveillance and targeting plus uninhabited combat air vehicles (i.e. drones) were projected to deliver great value - I guess the MODA did a good job!. Our second talk, hosted by Woodside, was given by George Danner of Business Laboratory (<https://business-laboratory.com/>) on "The Intersection of Decision Making & Artificial Intelligence." George's energetic presentation of AI application to optimization problem solving highlighted a need for human guidance in problem construction (i.e. framing) before getting the maximum value out of an AI model or "digital twin." Thanks to Bill and George along with hosts bp and Woodside.

We look forward to continuing our talks & networking through the Fall with an upcoming talk from Chevron in late October. Please join us!



2024 SDP Annual Conference

The Society of Decision Professionals (SDP) is set to host its highly anticipated Annual Conference from April 15th to 19th, 2024, at the Hilton Arlington and Towers in Arlington, Virginia.

Mark your calendars for a remarkable gathering of decision-making experts and enthusiasts.

The conference schedule unfolds with pre-conference workshops on April 15th and 19th, paving the way for the main event, which takes place from April 16th to 18th.

Key Highlights of SDP 2024:

- **Industry-Centric Streams:** At the core of the main conference, spanning three dynamic days, lies an innovative approach. Three dedicated rooms have been meticulously designed to align with industry streams, covering government, energy, pharma, natural resources, and even a "Chair's Choice" category for unconventional topics. Attendees seeking profound insights into artificial intelligence, organizational transformation, or innovation within the realm of strategy and decision-making will find themselves seamlessly navigating between rooms, fostering comprehensive discussions.
- **Special Sessions:** The conference kicks off with a day dedicated to tailored individual sessions that cater to both seasoned practitioners and newcomers alike. The primary objective is to unite all participants at the culmination of these sessions, creating a distinctive learning opportunity. This format enables in-depth exploration of the central themes that define the conference. The second day promises an extraordinary, DC-centric, interactive experience that ensures every attendee departs with unforgettable memories and fresh perspectives.
- **Immersive Workshops:** The bookends of the conference promise to be equally engaging. Six immersive, in-person workshops are meticulously designed to encourage dynamic participation and stimulate innovative problem-solving. These workshops align closely with the core conference themes, providing attendees with actionable insights to take back to their respective fields.
- **30th Anniversary Celebration:** The opening evening of the conference is dedicated to a special 30th Anniversary dinner—an exclusive occasion to celebrate SDP's rich history and embrace the myriad opportunities that lie ahead.

Now, more than ever, SDP invites its members and collaborators to actively participate in elevating the conference experience. The vision is clear: to transform this event into more than just an intellectual gathering. The aim is to create an immersive and profoundly interactive platform that fosters networking, engagement, dialogue, and collaborative thinking. By doing so, SDP aspires to attract a broader audience and, in turn, significantly enhance its membership.

If you have any questions or would like to get more involved in the planning process, please do not hesitate to contact Hilda Cherekdjian at info@decisionprofessionals.com.

Join us at the 2024 SDP Conference, where we celebrate our legacy and shape the future of decision-making together.

Registration coming to you soon, watch your email for the official announcement.

2024 SDP Conference Chairs
Terrence Karner
Neil Hamlett



Certifications

The SDP Certification Council is pleased to announce 5 new certifications this quarter. Congratulations to each of you.

Fellow

Audrey Del Vescovo

Audrey is a decision and risk analysis professional with 20+ years of extensive international experience with Chevron, providing decision support for a diverse range of opportunities and investments. Audrey created and co-developed Minimum Functional Objectives (MFO)—an innovative and pragmatic approach to decision-making that is used extensively throughout Chevron, resulting in better decisions, and better decision quality. A self-confessed decision-quality evangelist, Audrey founded Pragmatic Decisions to support and mentor executives, leaders and teams in their decision-quality journey.



Audrey is a member of the Society of Decision Professionals. She holds a BSc in Mathematics and Statistics from Melbourne University, a Graduate Diploma of Business (Accounting) from Victoria University, and an MBA from Curtin University.

Lead Practitioner

Laura Keating

Laura works as a Conservation Decision Analyst at the Wilder Institute/Calgary Zoo in Calgary, Canada where she provides decision analysis support for the Conservation & Science team. Projects range from informal internal support to facilitating formal conservation planning workshops with external stakeholders, primarily for projects that involve conservation translocations. She holds a BSc in Environmental Science and Biology from Queen's University and a MSc in Mathematical Modeling and Scientific Computing from the University of Oxford. Prior to joining the Wilder Institute in 2017, Laura spent almost a decade working in the consulting industry as both an environmental and corporate strategy consultant, with the latter at Strategic Decisions Group where she developed a passion for decision analysis. Off the job, Laura has spent most of her time recently parenting her small children but also enjoys hiking, camping, and yoga.



Certifications

Associate

Hehewutei “Cody” Amakali



IDOWU Hamed



Mikael Petrosyan



Please join the Certification Council in congratulating these individuals on their accomplishments. We also encourage you to consider applying for your next level of certification to encourage others to do the same – including those not yet part of the society but have commenced their learning journey. You will find details at <https://www.decisionprofessionals.com/membership/sdp-member-certification>.

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THE POWER OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN ENERGY TRANSITION

What is Experiential Learning?

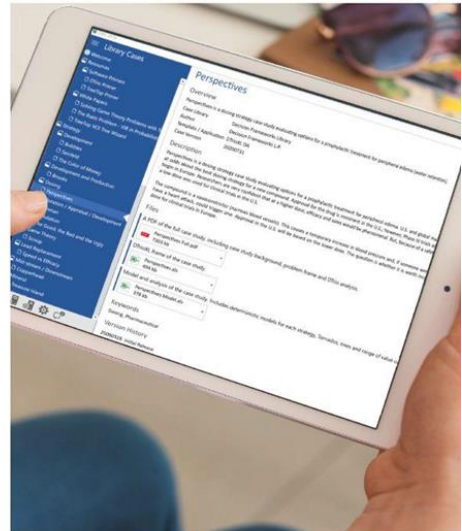
In the world of decision-making, knowledge alone can fall short. Experiential learning is a dynamic process where individuals immerse themselves in hands-on experiences, refining their skills through the application of theory and personally navigating situations. At Decision Frameworks, we believe experiential learning is THE most effective method for mastering Decision Quality and have always focused on case-based training honoring three important tenants: relevance, repetition, and ease of use. This learning approach serves as our crucible, where professionals confront familiar decision scenarios, make choices, face outcomes, gain insight, and critically reflect upon them.

Energy Transition Decision-Making

What makes energy transition decision-making difficult? It's new, complex, and ubiquitous across industries striving to achieve carbon reduction goals while remaining viable businesses. Like it or not, this requires multiple stakeholders from technology, government, and businesses to work together in a global manner like never before. Complex and uncertain regulatory and market conditions are defining aspects of the energy transition. It's no longer just about the decisions we face but also about forecasting carbon policy pathways and grasping the broader impact that leads to proactive change.

Expansive Case Reference Library

Successful experiential learning incorporates two essential elements: formal training supported by a useful case reference library. Therein lies the purpose of OWL, Decision Frameworks Organizational Wisdom Library software, with over 50 cases examples readily available for quick decision reference. With the stakes high in energy transition decision-making, we continue to develop new and relevant case studies for many industries ranging from energy, life science, and manufacturing, to technology. We invite you to learn more about our experiential learning approach by scanning the QR codes to view our OWL case library and training opportunities.



Training



Decision Frameworks



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Brain Teaser

Winner of June 2023 Brain Teaser - Hourglass Head Spinning

Congratulations to Patrick Leach winner of the June 2023 challenge, both in fastest time and complete answers!

7 Min. 11 Min.



Answer to Hourglass Head Spinning - June Brain Teaser

Question 1: there are multiple ways to achieve a precisely timed 15 min with both hourglasses. Here are a couple:

- i) Run both for 7 min, flip #7, run both 4 min, flip#7, run 4 min, total 15 min.**
- ii) Run both for 7 min, start time, run #11 for 4 min, flip #11, run 11 min, total 15 min.**
- iii) From answer to question 2 you will see there are a lot more ways to time 15 min.**

Question 2: the key to this question is realizing that the official time count (reaction start) does not have start when you start the clocks, but can be at some convenient point after the clocks have started to enable achieving the desired total time from that point on. In order to achieve the required total time, you may have to perform various timed sequences back-to-back, as long as the sequences end with both clocks at zero if to be bolted in front of another sequence, or start at zero if bolted to the back of another sequence. With respect to the front end, there are two types of sequences, those that start with both clocks at zero being flipped, and those that require a setup sequence to achieve the right starting point. Example Q1 i) does not require setup, whereas Q1 ii) does require setup, thus Q1 i) is more flexible and can be bolted to the the front and back of other sequences, but Q2 ii) needs a setup so can be bolted to the front, but not the back of other sequences. Sequences like 7, 11 and 15 not requiring setup can be concatenated into multiples: 7, 14, 21, 28, 35, 11, 22, 33, 15, 30. They can also be concatenated with each other: 18, 22, 25, 26, 29, 32, 33, 36. That essentially leaves all the lower minute sequences as a challenge. To achieve these we have to recur to a setup sequence, and then start the official time count once the right off ramp point is reached. Then these low minute sequences typically ending with both clocks at zero can be bolted to the front of 7, 11, 15 combos. The end result and official Q2 answer is: it is possible to do all reaction times 1 min through 36 minutes!

The attached file provides the detail how by alternating the hourglass flips, any desired ramp-off time can be achieved for 1 min through 10 min, which can then be bolted onto other sequences to achieve any combination 1 through 36 min.

[Link to Brain Teaser Solution](#)

Brain Teaser

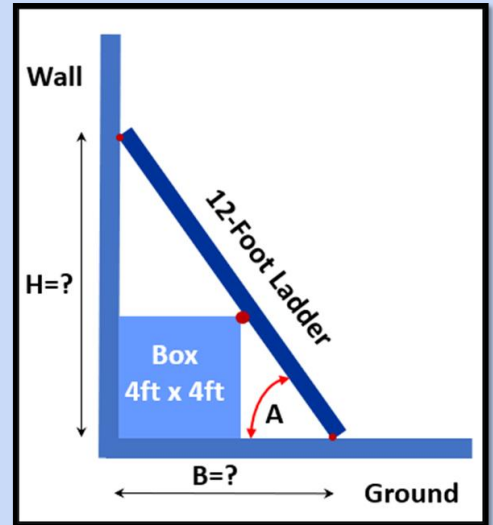
THE SEPTEMBER BRAIN TEASER

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. To encourage participation irrespective of timing, we intend to recognize all correct and complete answers submitted. Our Brain Teaser Editor is Tony Fernandez.

Ladder Safety

Ladder accidents are a huge issue with half million injuries, over 100,000 emergency room visits and hundreds of deaths in the US each year. Hopefully this teaser will refresh and challenge your geometry and most importantly make you aware of ladder safety.

John needs to install a new external lighting fixture about 15 ft high using his 12-foot ladder. Unfortunately, there is a 4ft x 4ft utility box at the base of the wall as shown in the diagram.



Question 1: To achieve a 3-point contact: ground-box corner-wall, what are the dimensions of H and B to reach the highest, each rounded to the nearest foot?

Question 2: With the setup per Q1 his spouse Mary observes that the ladder angle A is not safe and John is vertically challenged to reach the 15 ft fixture height, needing to climb on the top rung. “Honey, you know the safest foot ladder angle is close to 75° from the horizontal; your angle is nowhere near 75°. Your ladder is too short to do the job safely. You need to rent a longer ladder.” What is the full length of the ladder John should rent, rounded to the closest foot, to achieve the 3-point contact with angle $A = 75^\circ$?

Question 3: With the setup per Q2, John is concerned whether he is within arm’s length to reach the 15 ft high light fixture from the ladder? What is the horizontal distance from the ladder to the wall at the height of the 15 ft light fixture, rounded to the nearest foot?

Question 4: Is the setup per Q2 totally safe? If not, why not and how to make it safer?

Good luck!