



Presenting:

**The Value and Danger of “Story” in
Getting to Commitment to Action**
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The **Value** and **Danger** of “Story” in Getting to **Commitment to Action**

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Content

- Introduction
- Illustrative examples: power and use of stories
- Problem statement
- Empirical framework and approaches: value and danger
- Illustrative examples: leveraging value, mitigating danger
- Next steps
- Q&A

Motivation

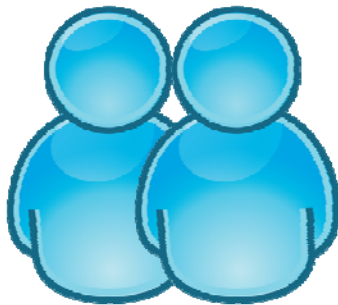
- Two decision analysis practitioners in Raffia-Howard Award-winning companies
- Empirical observations:
 - Robust Decision Analysis (and clarity) but not Commitment to Action
 - Commitment to Action based on story without much supporting analysis
 - DAAG: Use of story to augment analysis and help get to Commitment to Action (e.g., David Matheson in 2016); Head/Heart of DA (in 2015)

Perspectives

When and how can Decision Analysis Practitioners use “story” to help enable **“Commitment to Action”**?

“Story” can be dangerous and may cause problems. How can we keep it from undermining **Decision Quality**?

POWER of Story
(and value)



POWER of Story
(and danger)

Illustrative examples: Power and use of stories

- Outside Decision Analysis:
 - Headache researcher presentation: statistics + individual stories
 - Politicians: selective statistics + individual story
 - Clinical researcher: clinical data presentation vs. individual story
- Decision Analysis examples:
 - Communication to Decision Makers: DA outputs translated into narratives (vignette 1)
 - Clinical data: analytics → shared narrative/story (vignette 2)
 - DA “stamp of approval”: story written → use DA to add credibility (vignette 3)

Problem statement

	Decision Quality	Value of Story	Danger of Story
Appropriate Frame	✓	✓	? or Intent
Creative, Doable Alternatives	✓	✓	? or Selective
Relevant, Reliable Information	✓	✓	? or Selective
Clear Values & Tradeoffs	✓	✓	? or Selective
Logical Correct Reasoning	✓	✓	? or Selective
Commitment to Action	✓	x ✓	✓

Diagram annotations: Blue brackets group the first five rows of the 'Value of Story' and 'Danger of Story' columns. A blue arrow points from the bracketed 'Value of Story' column down to the 'Commitment to Action' row. Another blue arrow points from the bracketed 'Danger of Story' column down to the 'Commitment to Action' row. The text '+ Story' is placed between the two columns in the middle of the diagram.

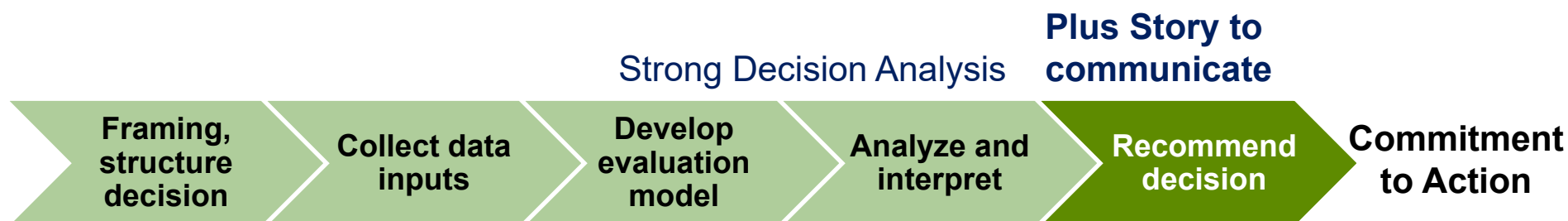
Situation: DA alone sometimes does not enable Commitment to Action

Question:
Can Story Help?
(Leverage Value)

Situation: Story is so powerful that it alone can enable Commitment to Action without DQ

Question:
How to ensure DQ?
(Mitigate Danger)

Value of Story: Create impartial narratives & enable clarity

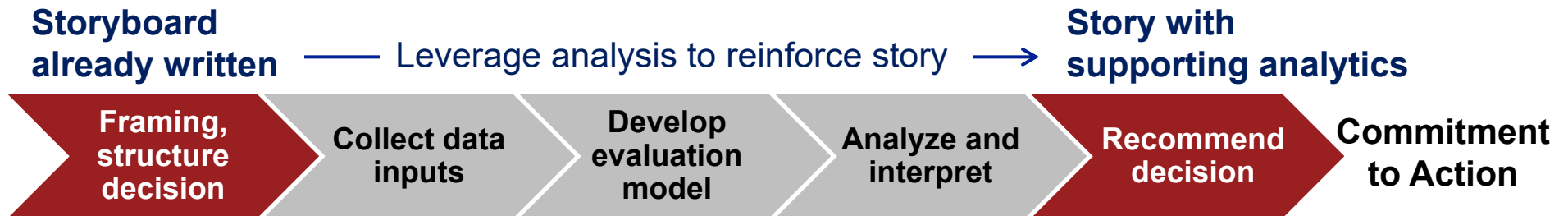


Potential symptoms: Decision analysis alone not enough to achieve commitment to action

Key takeaways: Know the audience (decision makers, stakeholders, ...) & leverage story

Considerations	Suggestions
Engage the audience (context, style)	Provide context within decision frame via story Utilize analogies to connect with audience when recommending decisions and seeking commitment
Communicate model	Synthesize model structure , relevant assumptions and interdependencies in relatable manner
Ability to comprehend analysis	Summarize insights , leverage data visualization to support narrative, turn complexity in clear narrative
Instill culture	Collaboration of analytics and story as mutually beneficial; leverage story (impartially) to support DA

Danger of Story: #1 - Predetermined recommendations



Potential symptoms: Completed storyboard prior to initiation of decision analysis process

Key takeaways: Be aware of possible intent to use DA to support preferred “story”

Considerations	Suggestions
Leverage framing and engage stakeholders early	Leverage framing (including stakeholders) to reset pre-conceived story & identify creative and doable alternatives
Create holistic, objective analyses	Collect data to inform decision, not confirm recommendations: capture assumptions, highlight rationale when data conflicts
Maintain impartiality / objectivity	DA practitioners as impartial resource , engage independent perspectives, e.g., external reviewers, devil’s advocate role
Instill culture	Collaboration of analytics and story as mutually beneficial; instill culture of ODQ to reinforce need for DA & decision quality

Danger of Story:

#2 - Rationalize data through stories



Potential symptoms: Analytic insights (including inputs into DA) that aren't holistic and communicated largely as story (and sometimes appear to be too good to be true)

Key takeaways: biases in data analysis can easily manifest in creation of stories about conclusions (including new stories if data doesn't support pre-conceived hypothesis)

Considerations	Suggestions
Track changes in story	Identify and capture reframe / reassessment / revision of hypothesis to rationalize unexpected data read-out
Leverage process	Embed expectations and processes that enable holistic transparency, multiple perspectives and clarity of thought
Broaden perspectives	Encourage alternate perspectives , engage others and external parties for differing perspectives, leverage devil's advocates
Instill culture	Collaboration of analytics and story as mutually beneficial; instill culture of ODQ to reinforce need for DA & decision quality

Illustrative examples: Leveraging Value, Mitigating Danger

Leverage value of story	Mitigate danger of story
Probability assessment outputs	Probability assessment process
Commercial decision (Phase 3) outputs	Commercial decision process
	Portfolio management
	External review

Next steps

- Engage with DA community
 - In what ways are our experience similar to yours?
 - How is our experience different from yours?
 - What are the approaches you have tried?
 - What works? What does not work?
 - Any suggestions?

Q&A

- Questions, Comments, Thoughts