

4.1.5: Chapter Summary and Case

Chapter Summary

- Decision making is a critical component of business.
- Some decisions are obvious and can be made quickly, without investing much time and effort in the decision-making process. Others, however, require substantial consideration of the circumstances surrounding the decision, available alternatives, and potential outcomes.
- Fortunately, there are several methods that can be used when making a difficult decision, depending on various environmental factors. Some decisions are best made by groups. Group decision-making processes also have multiple models to follow, depending on the situation.
- Even when specific models are followed, groups and individuals can often fall into potential decision-making pitfalls. If too little information is available, decisions might be made based on a feeling. On the other hand, if too much information is presented, people can suffer from analysis paralysis, in which no decision is reached because of the overwhelming number of alternatives.

Chapter Case

Moon Walk and Talk^[1]

Warning: Do not discuss this exercise with other members of your class until instructed to do so.

You are a member of the moon space crew originally scheduled to rendezvous with a mother ship on the lighted surface of the moon. Due to mechanical difficulties, however, your ship was forced to land at a spot some 200 miles (320 km) from the rendezvous point. During reentry and landing, much of the equipment aboard was damaged, and because survival depends on reaching the mother ship, the most critical items available must be chosen for the 200-mile (320 km) trip. Please see the list of the fifteen items left intact and undamaged after landing. Your task is to rank the items in terms of their importance for your crew to reach the rendezvous point. Place the number 1 by the most important, 2 by the next most important, and so on, with 15 being the least important.

Table 4.1.5.1

Undamaged items	My ranking	Group ranking	NASA ranking	My difference	Group difference
Box of matches					
Food concentrates					
50 feet of nylon					
Parachute silk					
Portable heating unit					
Two 45-caliber pistols					
One case dehydrated milk					
Two 100 lb. tanks oxygen					
Stellar map (of moon's constellations)					
Life raft					
Magnetic compass					
5 gallons of water					

Undamaged items	My ranking	Group ranking	NASA ranking	My difference	Group difference
Signal flares					
First aid kit containing injection needles					
Solar powered FM receiver–transmitter					

1. NASA educational materials. Retrieved March 2, 2008, from www.nasa.gov/audience/for...al_Lesson.html.

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