

# Misinformation in decision-making: reasons, consequences & ways to overcome



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# Importance

- One of the most important processes in any type of organization is the communication process and one of the most important functions is decision-making.
- The role and importance of information in these processes is more than obvious.
- All evidence-based methodology is the best validation of this idea.

# Importance

- The quantity and quality of information can have a decisive influence not only on a particular decision, but also on the organization as a whole, its microclimate, image or reputation. (Tucker, Melewar, 2005)
- **This is clear in theory, but there are many facts of misinformation in fact.**

# The main goals

- To show theoretically and empirically what are the main causes of misinformation in an organization,
- To show what are the consequences of relying on stereotypes, lack of information or overloaded information or other types of misinformation in decision-making,
- To find out what could be the ways to overcome it, what competences do we need for successful information management and decision-making

All the processes include the following steps:

1. *Identifying the evidence.*
2. *Selecting the best available evidence.*
3. *Critical appraisal.*
4. *Objectively reporting the evidence.*
5. *Synthesizing multiple evidence reports.*
6. *Basing conclusions on the evidence.*
7. *Updating daily.*

- A case study
- Focus group

The respondents were provided with a situation and a list of 12 specific people, with information of varying scope and content about each individually

# Case study

- **The description of the situation:** *To imagine that a catastrophe had occurred on Earth and that further life on it was impossible. The only way to survive was to hide in hideout.*
- **Task for respondents:** to decide who – totally 6 people - of the 12 people on the list could get permission to hide in hideout, which means that they could survive.

No any criteria were provided. The persons had to be chosen by the respondents themselves.

No.	Persons	Individual Choice	Pair Choice	Group 1 Choice	Group 2 Choice	Final Choice
1.	Woman, doctor, 66 years old, is known as a religious sectarian					
2.	Soldier					
3.	Biochemist, women					
4.	Women athlete					
5.	20 years old medical student, homosexual					
6.	16 years old girl with limited intellect, pregnant					
7.	30 years old nun (sister)					
8.	38 years old Peace Corps volunteer from USA, American					
9.	19 years old boy					
10.	Middle age man, the soldier in past					
11.	Member of parliament					
12.	25 years old girl					



- This research was repeated with several groups of people of different ages and backgrounds,

*but the same people were usually included in the final list.*

## Those people as usually were:

- “Soldier”;
- “Biochemist, women”;
- “Women athlete”;
- “20 years old medical student, homosexual”;
- “19 years old boy”;
- “25 years old girl”.

Sometimes to the list were added:

- “woman, doctor, 66 years old, is known as a religious sectarian”;
- “38 years old Peace Corps volunteer from USA, American”;
- “middle age man, the soldier in past”.

Very rare:

- “16 years old girl with limited intellect, pregnant”
- “30 years old nun (sister)”

Approximately never - “Member of parliament”.

# Analysis of the Choices Done by the Research Group

Arguments that let to choose the person	Arguments against the person	Not important arguments	Added features
<b>Woman, doctor, 66 years old, is known as a religious sectarian</b>			
Doctor	66 years old	Religious sectarian	Qualification (because is said that she is doctor)
Woman			Experience (because her age)
			Supportiveness (because if person believe in God, he/she will be supportive)
<b>Soldier</b>			
Soldier			Young (because soldiers always are young)
			Strong (because soldiers always are strong and athletic)
			Disciplined (because soldiers learned to be disciplined)
			Organized (because soldiers learned to organize)
			Man (because soldiers as usually are men)
<b>Biochemist, women</b>			
Biochemist	Women		Medical competencies (because biochemist)
Woman			Quite young (because biochemistry is quite new science)
<b>Women athlete</b>			
Women			Strong (because athlete. They all are strong)
			Healthy (sports are directly related with health)
Athlete			Disciplined (sports are directly related with discipline)
			Organized (sports are directly related with ability to manage time, activities)
			Women as usually are more organized as men
<b>20 years old medical student, homosexual</b>			



20 years old		Homosexual	Young (will be strong, will be able to have children)
Medical student			Medical competencies (because medical student);
			Man
<b>16 years old girl with limited intellect, pregnant</b>			
16 years old	16 years old		Too young (others should care about her and her baby)
Girl	With limited intellect		Pregnancy (other should care about her and her baby)
Pregnant (it is possible to save 2 lives)	Pregnant		Disability (her and her baby's)
			Baby (he/she will cry and disturb others and in the shelter it is not enough place for all)
<b>30 years old nun (sister)</b>			
30 years old	nun (sister)		Nun (sister) (will not be able to care about other's health)
			Physical weak (because she is nun, nuns do not care about physical body, only about the soul)
			Nun (will not be able to have children)
<b>38 years old Peace Corps volunteer from USA, American</b>			
Peace Corps volunteer	American (he is stranger)	38 years old from USA	Strong (because member of Peace Corps), (because 38 years old)
Volunteer			Disciplined because member of Peace Corps)
			Organized (because member of Peace Corps)
			Man (because member of Peace Corps)
			Care about other (because member of Peace Corps) (because volunteer)
			Have required knowledge (because member of Peace Corps)
<b>19 years old boy</b>			
19 years old			Young (because 19 years old)
Guy			Strong (because young)
			Healthy (because young)
			Man (boy)
			Will be able to have children (because young)
<b>Middle age man, the soldier in past</b>			
Man	Middle age	the soldier in past	Strong (because soldiers always are strong and athletic)
the soldier			Disciplined (because soldiers learned to be disciplined)
			Organized (because soldiers learned to organize)
			Man (because soldiers as usually are men)
<b>Member of parliament</b>			
	Member of parliament		It's impossible or very difficult to trust him/her
			Disciplined (because member of parliament)
			Organized (because member of parliament)
			Too authoritarian
<b>25 years old girl</b>			
25 years old			Young (because 25 years old)
Girl			Strong (because young)
			Healthy (because young)
			Woman (girl)
			Will be able to have children (because young)

# Main tendencies

- In most cases the final decision was based not on the facts (columns 2-3), but on the attributes and qualities attributed, interpreted by the respondents themselves,
- The attributes and qualities attributed, interpreted by the respondents themselves in reality could be completely opposite.

## *For example:*

- *If a person is young, he automatically is healthy, strong, and so on.*
- *If he is a soldier or an athlete, he is physically strong, organized and structured;*
- *If negative properties have been assigned, positive ones are hardly sought.*

- If we lack information or it is too less of it, we more often are linked to base our decisions not on the evidence or facts or to look for more information in suitable and valid in this case resources, but *more often base our decisions on our stereotypes, knowledge or would like to make interpretations and generalizations that not always are true.*
- This once again confirm the importance of information in decision-making process.



Thank you for your attention.

Questions....

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