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A1 Summary

Technical Communication

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Q1

Managerial approach towards biases

The silly ways the human brain can work can hinder people from anticipating the situation correctly, thus hindering them from making sound decisions. Merely the knowledge of different biases that affect decision-making is not sufficient. Thus an executive's actions may fail to overcome employee bias. Behavioral economics can be a solution. We can't change the human brain, so it's better to change the decision-making context for better results. Managers can also use it. Managers can adopt the choice architecture, which "refers to the way in which people's decisions can be influenced by how choices are presented to them." Identifying the flawed thinking of humans can help managers. There is an excellent example from Seinfeld, in which a man could fool his manager into thinking that he works very hard, thus taking advantage of input bias. Therefore knowledge of these biases can be helpful for managers. Recently Ryan Buell and Mike Norton showed how operational transparency could improve user satisfaction. For that, they performed an experiment in which users rated the system showing details of each step more than the one which showed nothing, even though the latter was working faster and both had the

same output. We also have default bias in which a person simply selects the default options. Companies used the knowledge of this bias to increase the enrollment of their employees in retirement pension schemes by making this option default. These examples show how the knowledge of these biases can affect organizations. But they can also use these to their advantage. A manager can identify different ways to improve behavior to benefit all parties involved. Two steps can be followed. The first is to determine the cause of the problem. A successful approach is being used by Microsoft to counter delays in product delivery time. Here the manager automatically increases the delivery time from the one suggested by the team members. Second, the manager can reconsider about the choice architecture. In some cases, one can be forced to question the decision-making process intentionally. Or sometimes, a new process can be created. These can improve the organizations by removing the biases.

The document presents the biases that can lead to bad decisions and shows how that can affect organizations. It also shows how the executives or managers can use the knowledge of these biases to their advantage and can help the organization to grow even more. Thus I have taken the title “Managerial approach toward biases.”

Q2

Extinction of Neanderthals

The neanderthals got extinct around 30 thousand years ago, around the same time modern humans appeared in Europe. The inaccuracy of the time of their extinction is due to uncertainty and limitations in carbon dating methods of skeletons found due to the production of atmospheric

radiocarbon around the same time. It is also possible that either the two species coexisted in Europe or assimilated into the modern human gene pool, but both theories are debated as little to no evidence has been found. More chances of neanderthals getting extinct have been found. Adaptations like making better clothing and shelter and improved hunting techniques and consumption of birds and fish, and staying in more socially big groups proved advantageous to modern humans, suggesting that humans may have won the competition easily. Another theory suggests climatic variations that occurred around 30k years ago might have led to such mass extinction of neanderthals along with the megafauna extinction, but another such incidence was also seen about 65k years ago, which did not lead to the extinction of Neanderthals. Also, the extinction took place in OIS3 when conditions were supposed to be stable. So it is possible that they did not go extinct due to a catastrophe, but it would've played a significant role in their disappearance. In conclusion, climatic changes and competition with modern humans might have led to the extinction of neanderthals around 30k years ago.

As the entire document discusses the various reason that might have led to the extinction of Neanderthals; thus the title is chosen to be “Extinction of Neanderthals.”