Decision Making

The decision-making process in which we make our decisions about certain situations is a very extensive and complicated subject on which there are many studies and disagreements. Many different theories and phases have been created to facilitate a better overview of the thought processes of the human brain. However, as we can already imagine, it is far from easy to define such phases as each has individual thought processes and patterns.

A decision is, in simple terms, the choice of one of several options. All decisions are made based on the importance of the circumstances. We make decisions based on what we expect to get the most out of it. Thus, decisions are made not only rationally but also emotionally. Let's look at a very rough and simplified situation to make it more straightforward.

Let's assume that we have spontaneously been given a day off by our employer and a friend has asked us for help. We are faced with choosing whether we want to use our available time for our project, which we want to present to our employer and expect a salary increase, or whether we want to help our friend move. If our well-being is more important to us than our own income, we decide to help with the move. On the other hand, if our income seems more important to us, we will choose to spend time on our project.

Research in decision psychology has established that people by no means behave exclusively in terms of cost-benefit considerations. Since many models of rationality do not realistically reflect actual decision-making behavior, a person's decision-making behavior can be understood as a process in which rationality occurs only to a limited extent.

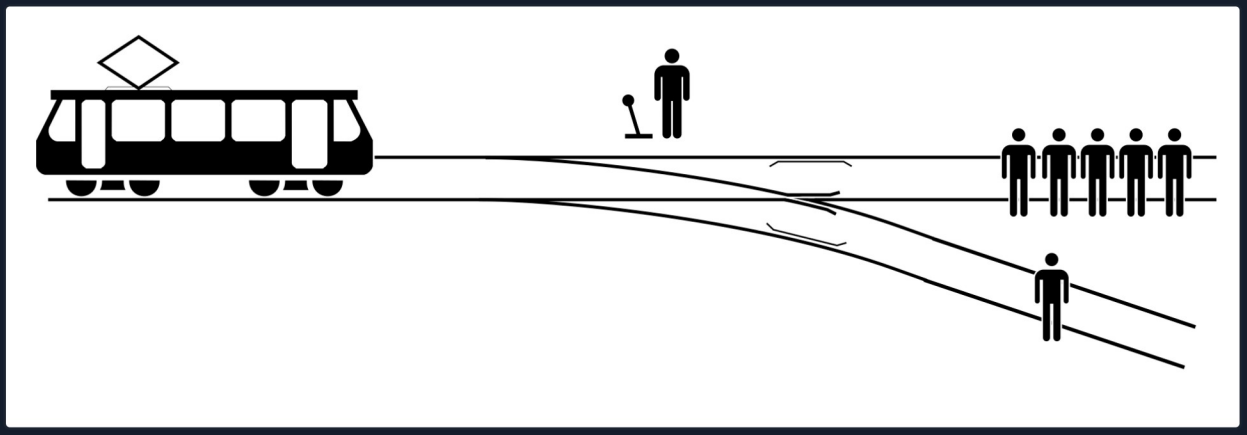
Let us look at a well-known example, the so-called Trolley Problem.

The Trolley Problem

The Trolley Problem is a thought experiment in which three different scenarios have occupied many philosophers, psychologists, and legal scholars for decades, and one of them is described as follows:

"A train speeds unbraked toward a group of five-track workers. The switchman might divert the train to a siding where only one person is working. Should he sacrifice one person to save five others?"

Try to decide for yourself while trying to figure out how that decision came about.



70,000 people in 42 countries were surveyed, and the survey results were published in an article in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

The Social and Personality Psychology Compass researchers criticized that scenario because it is too extreme. If we stay in this situation, the decision will be pretty tricky. The researchers finally said that the example is too extreme because people cannot be

situation, the decision will be pretty tricky. The researchers finally said that the example is too extreme because people cannot be expected to make such decisions, and it is basically "impossible" to make a correct decision. This statement has many different reasons.

1. it is an enormous psychological burden before, during, and after the decision for the respective person.
2. the persons representing this statement do not see a solution for this situation.
3. and many other reasons based on personal experience.

This situation in which we have to decide is much more similar to the mathematics problem from the Way of Thinking section than it appears at first glance.

- `20 * ________ + ________ = 65535`

Because here we have at first sight only two options:

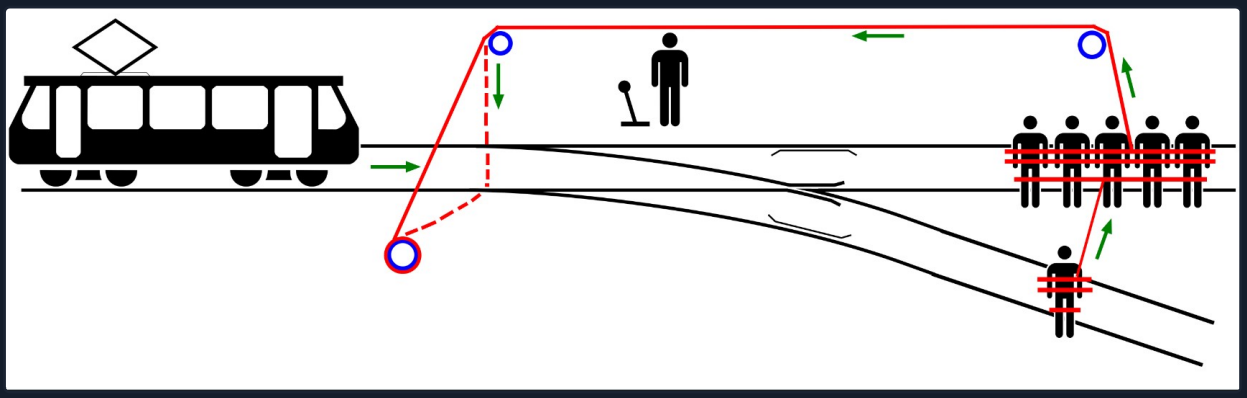
1. either we switch tracks, and the train runs over one person
2. or we do nothing, and five people are run over by the train.

In our math example, we must decide where to place the smallest number to make it as easy as possible.

1. either we place it on the first open digit
2. or we place it on the second.

In both cases, the procedure changes, but the result remains the same. So in the math exercise, the result is 65,535, and in the trolley problem, someone is run over.

Let's consider the following solution to the trolley problem:



The red lines represent ropes, and the blue circles represent pillars that we have placed. The first thing that comes to mind is:

- "But we are not allowed to place pillars" or.
- "We are only allowed to press the switch."

However, the fact is that no one has told us whether we are allowed to move or not. We set our limitations ourselves, not by others. It is the same as if a stranger on the street were to tell us that we are suddenly not allowed to move while walking. Except for the fact that we will look at the person strangely, we will still walk (unlikely - but that is another topic).

If we learn to set these limits based on facts, our decisions will be much easier and, above all, much more effective.

If we take a closer look at the trolley problem, the first questions arise:

- How far away is the train?
- How fast is the train going?

- How much time do we have to try to save everyone?
- How can we save everyone?
- What tools do we have at our disposal?

If we take a closer look, we will see that these factors are not given at all. They are missing, just like in the math problem. However, just as in the mathematics problem, no one has said that we must not change the circumstances (arithmetic operators) for this. Because any additional factor can change the decision entirely. An additional example of this would be if all the people on the tracks are conscious, we could save them all by warning them to get off the tracks as quickly as possible.

If we go to the extreme and say that the train will arrive in 10 seconds, it does not mean we have to choose one of the options given to us. However, the absolute extreme solution would be to flip the switch while the train passes over it. This is called "double-tracking" and will likely derail the train, passing the people.

We need to know the factors and assess the consequences to make a decision. The more factors we know, the more precise the decision we will be able to make for our goal.

If someone tells us that something is impossible, this person cannot possibly know all the factors with which we are connected. Just because the person believes that they see no solution for a task or goal, it only means that the person does not see a solution or a way to achieve the goal. Many people accept this, but they transfer this attitude to themselves, which leads to the fact that the desired goal or even the attempt is already given up. As a result, people fail before they even try.

If we do not know what to do in one situation or another, the reason is usually that we have not gathered enough facts to make a good decision. However, once we have gathered enough data, we can better calculate what result we will achieve in the end, and based on the facts we have gathered, we open up possibilities and paths we can take.

Finally, this means that no one will ever be able to question your success if you:

Decide (`Decision Making`) on the goal defined in detail (`The Goal`) that you really want to achieve from your heart (`Willingness`), and that will make you happy consciously and subconsciously (`The Brain`).

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