SWAY
A DECISION-MAKING TRAINING FOR YOUR TEAM

GARY S THOMPSON
SWAY: THE IRRESISTIBLE PULL OF IRRATIONAL BEHAVIOR

By Ori Brafman and Rom Brafman
Broadway Press, New York
2008
The Tenerife airport disaster was a fatal runway collision between two Boeing 747s on Sunday, March 27, 1977, at Los Rodeos Airport on the Spanish island of Tenerife. The crash killed 584 people, making it the deadliest accident in aviation history.
LOSS AVERSION

COMMITMENT BIAS

VALUE ATTRIBUTION

DIAGNOSIS BIAS

INITIATOR BIAS

EXPERT HALO

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LOSS AVERSION

A TENDENCY TO OVERREACT TO PERCEIVED LOSSES.
THE GREATER THE LOSS, THE MORE WILLING WE ARE TO TAKE ON RISK TO CORRECT
COMMITMENT BIAS

STICKING WITH A STRATEGY OR COURSE OF ACTION SOLELY DUE TO PRIOR INVESTMENT.
VALUE ATTRIBUTION

A TENDENCY TO IMBUE SOMEONE/SOMETHING WITH CERTAIN QUALITIES BASED ON PERCEIVED VALUES, RATHER THAN OBJECTIVE DATA.
EXPERT HALO

THE IDEA THAT THE "EXPERT" OR GROUP OF "EXPERTS" WILL NOT MAKE MISTAKES. THIS LIMITS THE ACCEPTANCE OF NEW OR VITAL DATA.

*NOT A PART OF THE SWAY TEXT
DIAGNOSIS BIAS

ONCE WE COMMIT TO A COURSE OF THINKING, IT CAN PERPETUATE ITSELF. OUR INTERPRETATION OF SUBSEQUENT INFORMATION CAN BE DRAMATICALLY ALTERED.
INITIATOR BIAS

IN GROUP DECISION MAKING WE CAN OFTEN TAKE
ON ONE OF FOUR ROLES:

• INITIATOR
• BLOCKER
• OBSERVER
• SUPPORTER
THE EXERCISE

Purpose is to incorporate an understanding of these biases into current practices.

• Reflect

• Establish shared terminology

• Communicate
**SWAY: USUAL SUSPECTS**

Separate the document and place the examples in a hat, bag or box. Pass out to groups of 6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loss Aversion</th>
<th>A tendency to overreact to perceived losses. The greater the loss, the more willing we are to take on risks to correct.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commitment Bias</td>
<td>Sticking with a strategy or course of action easily due to prior investment. Statements heard include, “Well, we have always done it this way.” or “That is not what we do.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Value Attribution</td>
<td>A tendency to imbue someone/something with certain qualities based on perceived values, rather than objective data.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diagnosis Bias - Familiarity</td>
<td>Once we commit to a course of thinking, it can perpetuate itself. Our interpretation of subsequent information can be dramatically altered.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initiator Bias</td>
<td>In a group decision-making, we often take on one of four roles. Initiator - Offers up an idea. Blocker - offers counterpoint to idea. Observer - watches and reports out what is going on. Supporter - swings group one way or another by picking the initiator or blocker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert Halo</td>
<td>The idea that the “expert” or group of “experts” will not make mistakes. This limits the acceptance of new or vital data.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
PRACTICE

- Grab from the Bag.
- Match the bias to an example from your own experience.
- Share verbally with the entire group.
- Plan how you can mitigate the influence of these biases as they occur.
ONGOING PRACTICE...REQUIRED

- Use an example to guide debriefs
- Use to review human factors in incident reports and discussions.
- What other discussions can you have?
IF WE KNOW WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR...
THANK YOU!

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RESOURCES
