



# Smart Choices: A Practical Guide to Making Better Decisions

*John S. Hammond , Howard Raiffa , Ralph L. Keeney*

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**Where should I live?**

**Is it time to switch careers?**

**What is the best course of action for me?**

Decisions shape our experiences, from choosing which job offer to accept, to buying the right car, to selecting a good accountant. How do we know which choice is the smart one? How can we be consistent and confident in our decisions? In this book from the three leading authorities on decision-making, readers learn how to approach all types of decisions with a simple set of skills developed by professors from Harvard, MIT, and the University of Southern California.

Combining solid research with common sense and practical experience, this user-friendly guide shows readers how to assess deep-seated objectives, create a comprehensive set of alternatives, determine likely consequences, make tradeoffs, and grapple with uncertainty. Not only will readers learn *how* to make decisions, they will learn how to make the *smartest* decisions. For anyone caught at a confusing crossroad—whether you're choosing between mutual funds or deciding where to retire—the *Smart Choices* program will improve your decision-making abilities immediately, and make your life more rewarding and fulfilling.

## Smart Choices: A Practical Guide to Making Better Decisions Details

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## From Reader Review Smart Choices: A Practical Guide to Making Better Decisions for online ebook

### Denis Vasilev says

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### Helen Lu says

I found this book at the right time. It is helpful for me in my decision making process.

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### Leona says

I thought the model was sound and there were some good examples of application. However, there were instances where it got overly repetitive and some of the theories could have been better outlined and simpler to understand. I had to read the chapter on trade-offs twice before it sunk in.

I doubt most readers will be able to finish the book, because it does get rather dry. I also agree with another reader's assessment that there should have been better research and case studies to substantiate their thought process. Fifty pages less would have made it more compelling. I subscribe to the "Less is More" theory.

Just my 2cents.

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### Mridul says

Read this book on kindle..some books are just not to be read on kindle..you can't do justice on that platform. Another reason, a book like this needs to be more interactive..it discusses all the right things on decision making but post reading you never felt like going back to it..suggest making notes when u r reading this one..best read in hard copy

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### Lori Grant says

A must-read book on decision making and problem solving, which are two critical competencies in business life.

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### Parcoast says

The concepts were still not groundbreaking, but the various methods they proposed for making tradeoff

decisions demonstrated a concrete way to deal with discrete factors in a decision. A lot of it still comes down to gut feeling, but by laying all of the data points out and making tradeoffs, it still feels good to have seemingly accounted for all of the known variables.

Phase 3: Stoic Completion. After the trade-off chapter I was back to the "just think really hard" style of answers and I had to force myself to finish it. I gulped it down like a handful of horse pill-sized vitamins.

Phase 4: Unconscious Application. So about a week after finishing the book, I found myself buying a car from a private party. I found myself analyzing my decision in terms of defining my real problem and stating my objectives before I rushed to solve what I felt was the immediate need. I found myself criticizing my limited efforts to collect data (is a Carfax report really necessary? Do I really need a mechanic to look at it?) I like to think that these were all common sense internal reminders, but the sheepish truth is that I WASN'T DOING MOST OF THEM. Bummer. I guess it is good I read it.

So while I do think this book had some value in the end, I can't bring myself to give it very many stars. Even if the content is useful, the delivery was somehow not compelling enough to make me start realizing the value of the information as I read it. It reminds me of the quote by Charlie 'Tremendous' Jones: "Five years from today, you will be the same person that you are today, except for the books you read and the people you meet." I guess that this is one of the books I read, and in a small way, I am changed [for the better.]

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### **?Pablito mix a.? :l :) says**

This book is most interesting in the world

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### **Erik Dewey says**

Good and logical process for making decisions. It focuses on generating the right question and then eliminating options. There are some examples in the book to help you understand the concepts and overall it works well in presenting its information.

The book did not contain any startling breakthroughs or quick fixes but it did present its methodology in an easy to understand process.

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### **Kelly says**

This text was required reading for a course titled "Decision Tools and Project Planning" in my Public Policy graduate studies program. It has many interesting points, and the author illustrated their techniques with storylines. I found it a fairly easy read, but some chapters were a bit daunting and difficult to understand, especially related to drawing out problems and the needed elements for making "smart choices". Without the illustrative narratives, it would have been challenging to understand their recommended actions. Ideally, the information should be clear without a short story to accompany it, but this is also a difficult subject to tackle so I appreciate the effort and care given by the authors.

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### **Nicholas says**

either

a.) cut out all the crap canned examples, stop saying the same thing over and over again, and republish this as a pamphlet, or

b.) amp up the math and the science, and get some real case studies in there.

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### **Pamela says**

Although I only read part of this book, I found it very helpful when I was faced with some important life changing decisions. I wasn't sure which direction to go and this book helped me to approach the situation and make the right choices for myself, and feel like I made the right choice.

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### **Tnoblelaw says**

If you are an analytical thinker who has trouble making decisions, read it, but be forewarned - very dry.

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### **Siva says**

Well, some might argue that the techniques provided in this book are basics and nothing phenomenal. But I disagree with them, since in most of the decision making process the techniques provided here are the fundamental things that we must do but we don't. And that leads everything haywire.

This is not like many books in genre, with "learning by examples" kind of thing. But this is actually a manual of steps that you can use to make smart choices. This is definitely a worthy investment.

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### **Scott Soefje says**

The book seemed to be a lot of common sense. I found a few things that would be useful, but mostly nothing that I had not already heard/read/seen somewhere else.

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### **Ali says**

This book is like a textbook, slightly hard to understand, one day i might come back to read these, to ensure i get grasp of everything!

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