

Decision Processes Colloquia

Monday, December 11, 2017

Where: 250 JMHH

When: 12:00 – 1:15 pm

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Facilitating Decision Making through Attribute Matching

ABSTRACT:

Current research (and perhaps one's intuition) suggests that people find discomfort and difficulty making lose-lose decisions, decisions with no desirable outcome possible. My work suggests that by matching a salient attribute of a decision's frame with that of its options (e.g., valence: a negatively framed question with negative outcomes), much of this lost utility can be recovered. My co-authors and I demonstrate that this idea of attribute matching can increase decision confidence, satisfaction, and perceived consensus, due to an increase in how easy the decision feels to make. Consistent with a misattribution account, when participants are alerted to this external source of ease, the effect disappears. Furthermore, we show that this effect is not limited to extremely valenced outcomes, valence as the attribute being matched at all, or purely binary decisions. I conclude with a discussion of related psychological constructs as well as potential downstream consequences.