

Notes from *Sidetracked: Why Our Decisions get Derailed and How We can Stick to the Plan*
by Francesca Gino

I. Forces from Within

- In situations where others' opinions are available to us on this right decision to make and these opinions are independent from one another, we are better off listening to others than ourselves.
- We often short ourselves on how competent and capable we are and that sidetracks decisions.
- Consider whether you pay more attention to advice that you paid for vs. free advice
- **When you are in the midst of making an important decision, try to carefully consider your emotional state. By taking your emotional temperature first, you can reflect on the causes of your feelings and whether they are being triggered by totally unrelated events.**
- Identify when you are too narrow of a focus. Zoom out – take a step back and ask yourself, “Why did I choose the information that I did?” “What info might I be missing?” “Why did I embark on this course of action and am I still on track?”

II. Forces from our Relationships

- Don't use your knowledge as a guide to the knowledge others have.
- If making a decision that involves others, analyze it from their perspective.
- You do this by asking questions about their views and opinions often.
- It is easy to get distracted by people who you have relationships with even if you don't know them that well or for that long.
- Always examine your links and similarities to those around you and consider whether these bonds may be influencing your decisions for the worse. Follow your own plans – not others.
- Make sure your networks include people who bring out the best in us. **Everyone needs a Cheerleader, Connector, Comedian, Teacher, and Therapist in their life.**
- **Similarly, avoid these 5 people: Gossiper, Complainer, Super-agreeable, Pessimist & Know-it-all.**
- Unfortunately, we compare ourselves to others way too much, and usually in areas that we are worse.
- When making hiring decisions, people tend to favor candidates who don't compete with their own strengths.

III. Forces from the Outside

- The way information is presented to us greatly influences our evaluations of others and our decisions.
- Don't let yourself become biased about the quality of something based solely on how much effort was put into the process.
- **Sadly, we only question poor decisions when we see that they have lead to negative outcomes.**
- It is important to judge by results, not time spent. For example, a teacher who may have taught many years, but how successful were the students who took the teacher's class?
- **Always, always consider the source when you receive information.**
- The way we frame information when we present it to others can substantially influence their decision making and judgment about that information. Think carefully about how to frame things when you propose ideas – what does the other person have to gain from your idea?
- **When trying to motivate others, people will expend greater effort if they perceive that the job is already started (like when I would do 2-3 of the homework problems as examples in class)**
- FOMO – the fear of missing out drives many of the decisions people make in their professional and personal lives.
- **If you break up challenges into parts – those who finish the first part will want to do the second part so they are not missing out.**
- Always remember that you have made the best decision with the information you had at the time – that is the problem with looking back – you have new information so it is not the same decision anymore
- **Realize that you are always Awesome no matter what decisions you make. You are enough.**