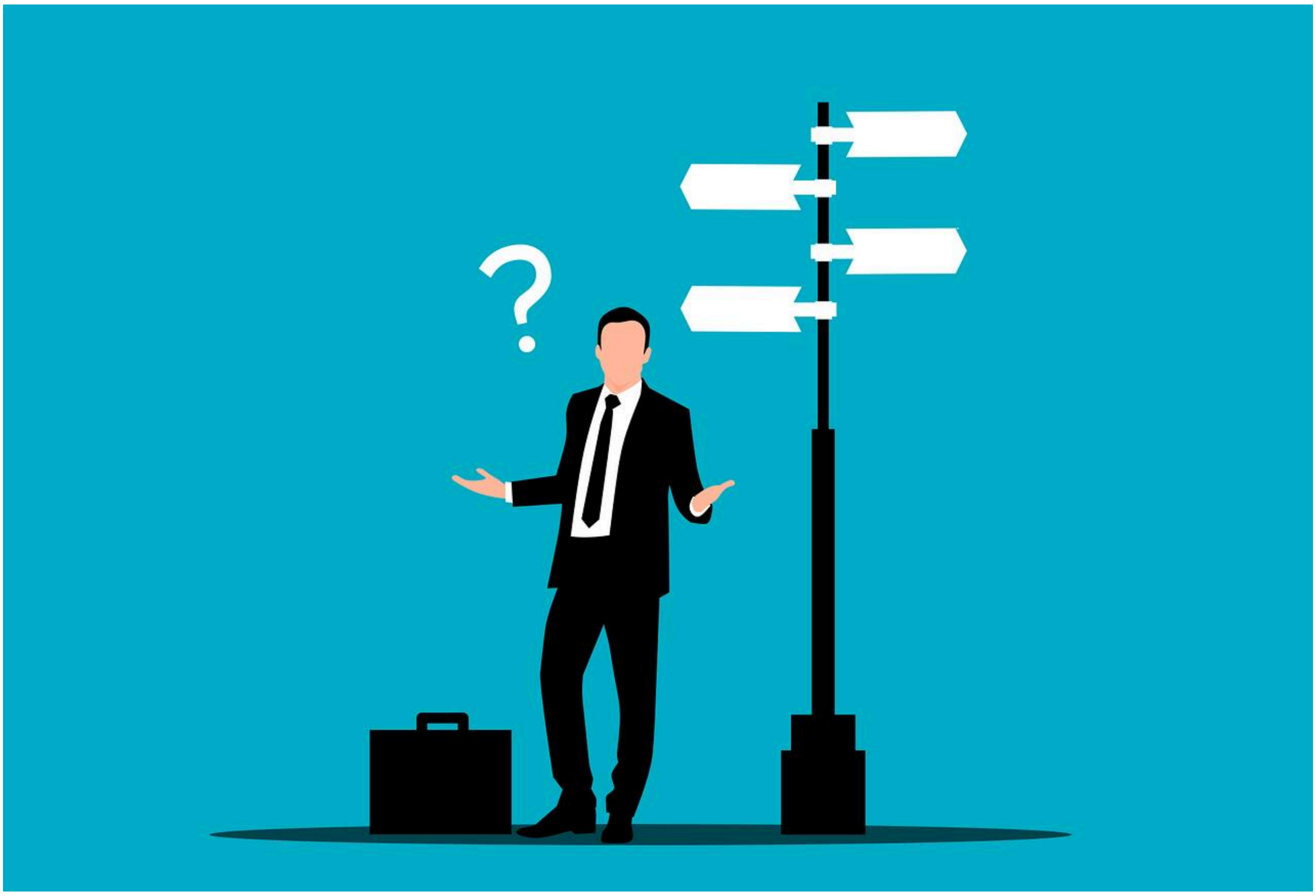
Taking the Confusion Out of Choosing

This article suggests the steps to take to exercise choice wisely. We need to learn how to counteract the limits on our cognitive abilities and resources, so that we obtain the most benefit from choice with the least effort -- for ourselves as well as for the consumers and employees we serve.



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Today we have to confront more choices than ever -- decisions for which we have no script.

This article is based on innovative research by the author on choice, which formed the basis of her award-winning book, *The Art of Choosing*. She suggests the steps to take to exercise choice wisely. We need to learn how to counteract the limits on our cognitive abilities and resources, so that we obtain the most benefit from choice with the least effort -- for ourselves as well as for the consumers and employees we serve. The goal is not to manipulate people but to design more helpful forms of choice. Ultimately, it requires becoming a more effective leader who exercises choice judiciously and responsibly.

Tools and Frameworks

"More Is Less" summarizes research by the author, from jam to retirement funds, showing that sometimes choice is not all it's cracked up to be.

"Solving the Multiple Choice Problem" lists 7 tips for making choice less mind-boggling.

Examples Cited

Draeger's, Vanguard Group, Citibank, Fidelity Research, McKinsey, Procter & Gamble, Head & Shoulders, Golden Cat Corporation, Amazon, Zagat, Best Cellars, Wegman's, Audi

Research Basis

Drawn from numerous research projects by the author, material from her book on the subject, *The Art of Choosing*, and her appearance at the European Conference of the Association for Consumer Research held at IESE Business School.

About the Author

Sheena Iyengar is the inaugural S.T. Lee Professor of Business in the Management Division at Columbia Business School and the Director of the Global Leadership Matrix initiative.