

Group Decisions

Psychology

Groupthink and polarisation — two ways groups decide worse than individuals.

Groupthink

- Illusion of invulnerability
- Self-censorship of doubts
- Pressure on dissenters
- Illusion of unanimity
- Mindguards filtering information
- Needs: cohesion, insulation, directive leader

Group polarisation

- Discussion makes views more extreme
- Not compromise toward the middle
- Driven by persuasive arguments and comparison
- Risky shift, or cautious shift

THE DIFFERENCE THAT MATTERS

Both are prevented by the same measures: a devil's advocate, independent sub-groups, and a leader who states no view first.

Janis analysed the Bay of Pigs and Cuban Missile Crisis — the same group, different procedures, opposite outcomes.