> Inspire clear, confident business conversations.

The New
Decision Making Playbook

How to make better business decisions in a world of data

tableau
A Salesforce Company

YouGov®

Contents

Executive Summary

Why are you reading this?

Because you realise that things have changed. You're living that change every day - so, rather than talking about it, we'll show you how to deal with it. We'll use practical, simple tips from leaders that are using data and systems to make faster, smarter, more innovative decisions. All backed up by the latest YouGov survey into how business conversations have evolved across Europe through the pandemic.

Who's it for?

You and other leaders who realise the pandemic ripped up the rulebook and need to lead their organisation into a more secure future.

The critical importance of data.

Professor Ivo Vlaev, Professor of Behavioural Science at Warwick Business School
Academic advisor for the research

"Business communication has radically evolved over the last few decades and the last 18 months have catalysed further innovation in how we communicate.

The pandemic has spotlighted the critical importance of data not just to business leaders, but to everyone. The way that data has been used to reveal insights that have saved lives and livelihoods has been phenomenal, resulting in widespread recognition that data should be a key driver when making decisions.

While investing in new data analysis tools and training will go a long way, establishing a true culture of having data-driven conversations must come from the top. Until employees see executives making decisions with data and telling corporate stories supported by hard statistics, nobody can expect the wider business to follow. A data culture is not created by simply giving employees access to data – the C-suite must lead by example too."

Professor Vlaev develops leading research into human decision making and the behavioural impact of effective communication. He co-authored a report published by the UK Cabinet Office, advising local and national policymakers on how to effectively use behavioural insights in their policy setting. He has helped public and private organisations develop and apply lessons from behavioural science.

Covid wasn't just a crisis, it was a catalyst.

Let's be clear, the pandemic was a devastating global event. It changed everything for everyone. Affected lives. Devastated some businesses. And changed others forever.

It meant that decisions had to be taken quickly.
Which meant less time for conjecture.
Less time for endless meetings.
More intensity. Longer days. More screen time.

It meant bringing new people into the decision making process.

And it meant data stepped up to the plate - from tracking infection rates to supporting supply chains.

But here's the thing - it's not going to change back. So, as a leader, you need to have the right skills to create the right conversations in this new decision making environment.

You're clearer now than ever before on your priorities, on what really matters. Now, you just need to hold that certainty and continue to act on it.

59%
of leaders believe the pandemic has had a positive impact on business conversations by helping prioritise meetings that have the highest value.

Source: YouGov

52%
of leaders have said meetings are more efficient and productive as a result of the pandemic.

Source: YouGov

37%
of business leaders say they are using more data than before the pandemic, but over half (51%) say their data usage is about the same.

Source: YouGov

Chapter 1

Is that your experience talking - or just a bias?

Is that your experience talking - or just a bias?

Experience is an amazing thing. It's also a dangerous thing. Because experience is the petri dish for bias. And whether we like to admit it or not, we all suffer from bias.

Cognitive bias, for example, affects us all. We're all programmed to take little mental shortcuts and in some situations those little shortcuts can impair our judgement.

But bias can be overcome by empathy. Indeed, one of the hallmarks of good leadership is a high level of emotional intelligence or emotional quotient (EQ). Whether you're aware of it or not, you don't rise to the position you're in without it. That means the ability to get out of your own head and into that of your customers. So congratulations on your high EQ, the bad news is that it's no longer enough.

Understanding people is one thing. Knowing the facts so you can help them is something else. Especially when faced with a situation that you've never experienced before.

That's why we need to start with data. Use it to create the foundations for great decision making, because that parks the bias.

66%

of leaders surveyed believe that data helps minimise the influence of personal opinions or egos in a business conversation.

Source: YouGov

"The majority of leaders agree that data helps to reduce uncertainty, keep people focused, build trust, be listened to, and that it accelerates decision making."

Professor Ivo Vlaev
Behavioural Science, Warwick Business School

⚡ DO THIS

How to banish your bias

1. Clearly identify the need, then decide the criteria important to solve the problem.

2. Get all the information you need, gather it in a single source of truth.

3. List all the solutions and the risks and pay attention to how you react, look out for your bias.

4. Weigh the evidence. Notice how uncomfortable some of the options make you feel - that could be your bias again.

5. Choose a path. Ask yourself if your opinion is factually true - re-examine the evidence.

6. Develop a plan and a team, then listen to their opinions.

7. Double check. Consider the results of the process and analyse the risk and the reward.

Chapter 2
The day of the deck is done.
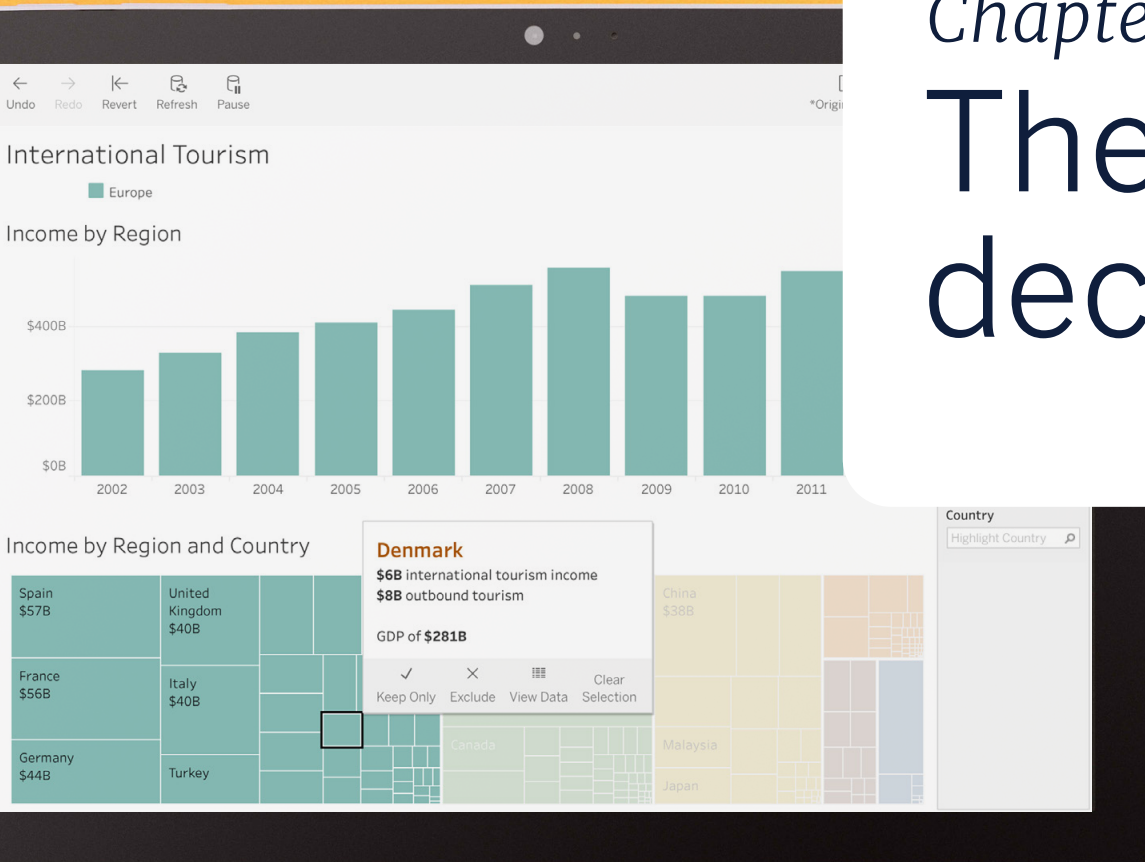
The day of the deck is done.

Brevity. It's a wonderful thing. There may have been a time when a 150 page deck felt like you'd accomplished something. Now, it feels like you're hiding something.

The purpose of all those glorious decks and spreadsheets is to try and get some information across. To inspire, maybe even to excite, colleagues.

These days, what excites people is getting the point across quickly and clearly. Inspiration comes from sharing and uncovering insights that drive the dialogue.

The way to do that?

Simple. Clear. Understandable data.
Presented in a simple, clear, understandable way - because a visual is always a shorter route to understanding.

In other words: show, don't tell.

BENEFITS OF VISUALISING DATA IN MEETINGS:

— Shorten meeting times by **24%**

— Provide **43% greater effectiveness** in persuading audiences

— Bring about **21% more consensus** in decision-making

— Improve problem-solving by **19%**

AMA (American Management Association)

"Too much badly presented data is creating confusion, which can lead to decision paralysis. Users need the right tools to simplify and summarise data. If data is not presented to users in an easy to understand way, they will lose trust in it and stop acting upon it".

Professor Ivo Vlaev
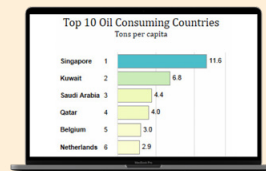Behavioural Science, Warwick Business School

⚡ DO THIS

Learn to create data-informed presentations that make a difference.

To show trends over time use line charts, area charts, and bar charts.

A bar chart encodes quantitative values as length on the same baseline, making them easy to compare.

Running a simple correlation analysis is a great place to start in identifying relationships between measures.

Orient your views for legibility, if a view has long labels that only fit vertically, try rotating the view.
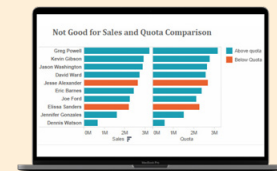
Bullet charts combine a bar chart with reference lines to create a great visual comparison between actual and target numbers.

Instead of stacking many measures and dimensions into one condensed view, break them down to small multiples.
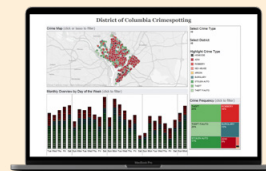
Use interactive views only when it is necessary.

Highlights let you quickly show relationships between values in a specific area or category – even across multiple views.

Filters are great ways to enable multi-level data exploration and user driven data analysis.

Find out more Here

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Chapter 3

None of us is as smart as all of us.

None of us is as smart as all of us.

Every business on the planet is full of bright, creative, problem solving geniuses. But the problem some businesses have is that they don't make the space to hear those voices.

It's self evident that the more you're open to ideas from everyone, the more likely you're going to uncover inspiration. Or even some real truths about your customers.

You can call it empowerment. Call it listening to diverse voices. Call it the democratisation of the decision making process. It doesn't really matter. They key thing is that you're using your most valuable resource (that's your people, not your IT system) in a way that makes sure you get the most out of it.

By all means listen to the usual suspects, but make sure you regularly cast the net a whole lot wider as well. Create a single source of truth - where everyone can contribute and everybody is working off the same body of data.

60%
of executives believe the pandemic has had a positive impact on business conversations by making it easier to have more people join conversations.

Source: YouGov

79%
of leaders across Europe said a quality business conversation needs different perspectives and the input of various stakeholders.

Source: YouGov

⚡ DO THIS

Create a single source of truth

1. Know who you're solving for.

2. Dive deep to understand the root causes of the data issues.

3. Start small - then go big.

Castor took on Covid with Tableau

Combined data of

200+

studies across
16 countries

Castor's research EDC is free for all Covid-19 projects. Sharing the data of ICU, medium care units, wards, outcomes, and complications with researchers and clinicians allowed everybody to come together with a shared mission. Ultimately this is helping to reduce hospital crowding, protect staff, and prioritise patients that need to be hospitalised.

FIND OUT MORE HERE

Chapter 4
Better working means better work.

![tableau logo]

Better working means better work.

The strange thing about the pandemic and the enforced change in the way we work is that it made most people more, not less, productive.

Meetings were shorter, started on time and actually accomplished what they set out to. We had fewer of them. We didn't do huge information dumps, we concentrated on what was important. Our time seemed more precious and we treated it accordingly.

So why would we go back to the way things were?

We need to continue to have better conversations. Share better information. Create clearer outcomes.

Try telling everyone that you want to reduce complexity, meeting times and decrease wasted effort. You won't find anybody who thinks it's the wrong thing to do.

"Even without technical expertise, the different members of the project (product manager, team manager, etc.) are able to carry out their own analyses with complete autonomy."

Ahmed Zaidi
Reporting Team Manager, Engie

⚡ DO THIS

Do this:

1. Collect data from each person.

2. Interpret the data together.

3. Agree on a collective, relevant goal.

4. Set milestones and monitor progress.

5. Regularly debrief as a group.

FIND OUT MORE HERE

Energising a data culture

Tableau is working with leading French supplier of natural gas and green electricity, Engie, to revolutionise their data reporting. Since its introduction Tableau has enabled a reduction in visualisation development from three months to just two weeks. This has been augmented by a drive to strengthen adoption through hackathons, a DataViz Day and a data oriented hotline. Today nearly 400 employees use Tableau every day. You can read more **here.**

Chapter 5

Decisions need a new OS.

Decisions need a new OS.

As a leader you're obviously in the business of great decision making. But you need to be honest with yourself about how you get there.

It doesn't just happen.

You need to create the right environment, circumstances and opportunity for it to happen. In short, great decision making needs its own operating system.

The good news is that you're its hard drive.

Leaders set the tone their people sync to. Change what they think you expect and you'll change the way that your conversations happen. Embrace data driven decision making and they'll do the same. Embrace randomised 'I have a hunch' decision making and, yes, your people will do that too.

So, channel your inner Steve Jobs and start creating your own operating system for how you want to prep, run and capture outcomes from those critical business conversations.

77%
of leaders rated hard data and numbers as important factors in quality business conversations.

Source: YouGov

66%
of leaders ranked the insights derived from data and how they generate an actionable insight for the business, as one of the most important factors when using data in decision making.

Source: YouGov

⚡ DO THIS

Build a data culture in four steps

1. Understand your business needs and where data can help.

2. Build the data sources to address the real questions.

3. Use engaging data assets to create use cases.

4. Let everybody access the data.

FIND OUT MORE HERE

How BMW reinvented the wheel

60+

data sources consolidated to create 360° data transparency

With so many data sources and databases, it was complicated for the team at BMW to collate and analyse data. Since introducing Tableau they've streamlined their process - with data being available on the spot during meetings. That's changing the dynamic and helping to drive long lasting cultural change across the whole organisation. Read more **here.**

tableau

Top 5 **Customers** (left) and **Products** (right) by **Sales** (Profit on colour)

North			$692K
North			
Central			
South			

Customer		Product	
Claudia Bergmann		Small Boxes	$16K
Susan Gilcrest		Postal Boxes with Lids	$9K
Monica Federle			
...nes Galang			
...nderson			

Chapter 6

Mind the gaps (they're everywhere!)

Mind the gaps (they're everywhere!)

There's a reason the world has fallen in love with data. It's not that we're in love with vast lines of figures, it's because when it's combined with data visualisation it allows us to see the woods from the trees.

Data does more than tell us what we can see. It lets us see where the gaps are. It shows us what we may have been missing all the way along.

Those gaps may be things that we need to get a little more clarity on, understand a little better before making a judgement, or they may be things that we need to find resources for immediately. They may even be blindspots that can hide potential disasters. And while hindsight might be a wonderful thing, it's much better to be able to spot and fix things before they break.

You can't get clarity from a massive spreadsheet, but you can get it by visualising your data.

95%

of business leaders think it is important that departments across their entire organisation are able to access data to aid their decision making.

Source: YouGov

⚡ DO THIS

Take the Tableau Blueprint Assessment

Hopefully you're on board with the need to be more data driven. The Blueprint assessment is a great place to start. It will give you an idea of where you're at and personalised, actionable recommendations on what to do next.

TAKE THE ASSESSMENT

### How Henkel cleaned up their act

20%

decrease in energy consumption across Laundry & Home Care supply chain.

€4m

energy and cost savings identified with Tableau.

Accurate data leads to accurate decisions. For chemical and consumer goods giant Henkel, a clear view of its supply chain produced energy and cost savings of over €4 million. Tableau gave employees the power to answer their own data questions instantly. You can read more **here.**
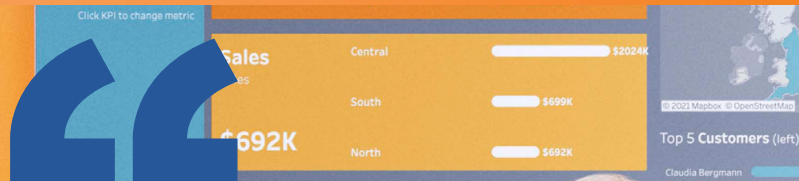
Chapter 7
Non-fiction is the new best seller.

Non-fiction is the new best seller.

Storytelling, it's a lovely thing. But only in the right context and if the story has more than just a grain of truth to it. Look, we know the whole idea of storytelling is a great way of setting context. But when it comes to business, we like a few hard data points too.

Everyone wants the truth and the facts underpinning any business decision. After that, if we feel the need to tell the story of what the data has shown us then, yup, we're all for that.

But, as a leader, you need to be able to see the data, draw insights from it and create the rallying cry for your whole organisation. That is always going to be a whole lot more powerful than attempting to pull them together through merely telling the story.

Get that right, and we'll all live happily ever after.

+50%

of business leaders believe the ability to understand insights from data is one of the most important skills for driving quality business conversations, but only **18%** believe storytelling is important.

Source: YouGov

⚡ DO THIS

Bring it to life through visualisation, not stories

1. Move from static PDFs or spreadsheets to interactive data visualisation.

2. Real time reporting helps deliver the facts not the fiction.

3. If it has to be stories - then learn from others' experience.

See how DataOrbis brings data to life for clients with interactive reporting and visual analytics.

FIND OUT MORE

So what happens next?

Amazing things. Honestly. Things like this:

1. You'll become more empathetic as a leader. You'll recognise your own biases and how to circumnavigate them.

2. You'll change your meetings forever. They won't be lectures, they won't be one sided presentations—they'll be conversations that are worth having.

3. You'll embrace different perspectives, wherever they come from. You'll be amazed how much knowledge is floating around your business. Your employee retention rates will be the envy of your peers too.

4. Your meetings will be shorter. Your decisions faster and more logical. You won't have to spend eighteen hours a day sifting through things to try and make sense of them.

5. You'll have a set of simple operating principles that everyone sticks to. Your teams will speak a common language and each meeting will be based on fact, not opinion.

6. You'll revel in clarity because you'll know what information you have at your disposal. And those unknown unknowns? Yeah, they won't exist any more.

7. Your vision will be backed up by facts not stories; helping everyone buy into the job to be done.

And that's it. Seven simple steps towards a new decision making playbook. You can always find out more by dropping us a line and it's well worth joining the **Data Leaders Collaborative**, where you can connect with, and learn from, other data-minded leaders.

![Tableau logo]

Create the environment for better decision making

Yes we're a data company. But we also deliver the tools, context and advice to help you take control of your own data and create your rulebook for better decision making.

A single source of truth
Tableau helps you bring data together from across the business. Making conversations on point and holistic.

Data driven decisions
No hunches, no bias, just clear data to base your decisions on.

Clearer outcomes
Because the data is shared with everyone, every conversation will move you towards a decision that is finely tuned.

Intuitive to use
We've democratised data. Our dashboards are easy to create and use—so the whole organisation will get on board.

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