

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE DECISION SCIENCES INSTITUTE

#### I. WHAT IS THE DECISION SCIENCES INSTITUTE?

**Decision Sciences** is the union of the quantitative and behavioral approaches to managerial decision making encompassing all of the functional areas of business. The Decision Sciences Institute is a multidisciplinary association of professionals committed to the understanding and improvement of decision making in organizations, and to the development of scholar-teachers in the decision sciences. The Institute provides an international forum for the exchange of research in the decision sciences across disciplines, seeks to promote and integrate theoretical and applied research, and is an outlet for the publication and dissemination of current thinking in the decision sciences.

The purposes of the Institute are to enrich the study of decision processes in both traditional and emerging areas of study as well as through the integration of these disciplines; to develop theoretical bases for the planning, design and implementation of decision systems; and to foster the improvement of educational programs in the decision sciences. This is accomplished through a commitment to quality in:

#### **Research**

- A focus on the integration of research in the art and science of managerial decision making across traditional functional academic disciplines
- An international forum for presentation and discussion of research
- A forum for research of a theoretical and applied nature

#### **Teaching**

- A forum for presentation and discussion of innovative teaching
- A forum for examining the most recent application of computers to instruction
- Recognition of teaching excellence and curriculum innovation

### **Professional Practice**

- An exchange of ideas between leading professional practitioners and educators
- A focus on decision making and decision systems

The special niche of the Institute consists of a particular *focus*, one principal *constituency*, and a unique *approach* to issues. The particular focus is on the development of the art and science of decision making and the application of formal decision processes. Academics in schools of business, management, or accountancy are the principal constituency. Through a unique multidisciplinary approach to decision issues, the Institute seeks to be the “one organization where specialists in diverse areas (academics and practitioners) can come together for the study of decision making and decision systems which cut across functional areas”.

We accomplish this by: 1) being a comprehensive multidisciplinary association, and 2) maintaining a social climate at our meetings that encourages the multidisciplinary exchange of ideas in an open and supportive environment while helping build lasting professional and social relationships.

The Decision Sciences Institute draws its members from educators, researchers, managers, students, consultants, and others with an interest in organizational decision making.

Member specialty areas include:

Functional areas such as information systems, finance, marketing, management, accounting, manufacturing/service management and decision support processes;

Institutional areas such as health care, public administration and protection, water and resource management, and higher education;

Methodological areas such as management science, operations research, quantitative analysis, and statistics;

Issues-oriented areas such as education, teaching, current technology and international business.

## II. MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS OF THE DECISION SCIENCES INSTITUTE

### MISSION STATEMENT

The Decision Sciences Institute is a multidisciplinary, international association dedicated to advancing knowledge and improving instruction in all business and related disciplines. (02-4)  
To pursue this mission, the Institute will facilitate the development and dissemination of knowledge in the diverse disciplines of the decision sciences through publication, conferences, and other services. (97-4)

### VISION STATEMENT

To be the premier professional organization of choice for business scholars. (97-4)

(While the Institute may be the principal organization for some, many view the leading organization in the respective disciplines as their primary professional organization. However, through a commitment to quality in research, teaching, and professional practice, we seek to achieve our long-term vision.)

## III. THE GOALS OF THE INSTITUTE

The Board of Directors reviewed the 2005-06 Development Committee's ranking of the Institute's primary goals in January 2006. The Executive Committee further reviewed and slightly revised the ranked goals and developed sub-goals in March of 2006, resulting in the Executive Committee's recommendation to the Board in April of 2006 that the Board pursue and focus on the following goals this year. These goals represent the Board's Strategic Plan for evaluation and/or implementation in 2006-07:

- Goal 1: Continue to improve communication between the Institute and its members.
- Goal 2: Enhance the value of membership in the Institute.

These goals are pursued through the following actions:

1. Seek as members noteworthy, highly visible individuals from all constituent disciplines and geographic areas and elicit their active support in:
  - a. Informing other academicians/practitioners who are interested in their disciplines/areas of the nature and function of the Institute,
  - b. Identifying timely decision topics/areas where the expertise of the membership should be focused,
  - c. Developing programs/tracks for the annual and regional meetings that will attract participants from their disciplines/areas who will then be encouraged to become members.

2. Foster multidisciplinary research and exchanges of ideas by:
  - a. Encouraging sessions within the separate disciplinary tracks that focus on the interdisciplinary aspects of decision issues,
  - b. Planning topical issue tracks on significant issues that can benefit from the attention of our multidisciplinary decision expertise.
3. Exploit our multidisciplinary nature and organizational flexibility to provide new and evolving interest areas a professional organizational home by:
  - a. Being sensitive to trends and reaching out to new interest groups,
  - b. Offering topic sessions in evolving interest areas.
4. Place high priority on members' professional development and encourage high quality papers and presentations.
5. Utilize the wisdom and expertise of distinguished members, such as past presidents, past editors, and Fellows, by asking them to share in the above four undertakings by assuming direct responsibility for one or more of the above four strategies.
6. Tailor our appeal to the various elements of our constituency and concentrate promotions on the unique advantages of membership to specific constituencies by:
  - a. Customizing promotions, e.g., the membership brochure, to emphasize the special benefits of membership for each discipline or potential membership group, while at the same time,
  - b. Reflecting a clear sense of focus as a multidisciplinary organization.
7. Systematically develop and maintain means to identify and pursue prospective new members including:
  - a. Nonmembers who submit articles to Decision Sciences, and Decision Sciences Journal of Innovative Education.
  - b. Regional meeting attendees who are not national members,
  - c. All imminent Ph.D. graduates in related disciplines,
  - d. Nonmember faculty at constituent schools.

8. Cultivate the support of Deans and Department Chairs by:
  - a. Educating them on the quality of our activities and services,
  - b. Acknowledging the significance of their support and their faculty's participation in the Institute,
  - c. Soliciting their inputs on how the Institute might better serve the needs of their schools.
9. Provide the leading Job Placement Service for our constituency.
10. Emphasize the importance of identifying, recognizing, and recruiting doctoral students and graduates as a vital input resource for the Institute.
11. Actively involve the regions in members recruitment and retention by:
  - a. Constituting a national member services committee, compromised, in part, of regional member services coordinators,
  - b. Identifying and energizing the Institute's representatives at all appropriate colleges/universities within each region under the coordination of the regional member services vice president and their colleague participants.
12. Investigate non-traditional services of interest to the Institute's members (i.e., life insurance programs, international study tours).
13. Encourage the membership and involvement of practitioners.
14. Develop an international presence by:
  - a. Including broad-based, internationally attended, major topic sessions at annual meetings,
  - b. Encouraging regions to reach out to neighboring international areas and nurture measured, quality expansion,
  - c. Obtaining as members renowned academics in related fields from major industrial nations and use their counsel as to how best to grow in their area.

#### IV. STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The following procedures involve the Board of Directors, Executive Committee/Strategic Planning Committee, and Development Committee in an annual process to establish/review long-range strategic goals, and to identify potential threats and opportunities related to

attaining those goals. The Board of Directors takes action on strategic planning recommendations at its April meeting (as opposed to its January meeting), allowing time for significant involvement of the Executive Committee in strategic planning.

April	The Board of Directors appoints new members to the Development Committee. (Approximately 1/3 of the committee is newly appointed each year.) Appointments are made to ensure that the committee membership includes individuals with expertise and interest in strategic planning.
May-Oct	The Development Committee identifies new opportunities and potential threats to achieving the Institute's stated goals, and assesses progress toward meeting long-range plans adopted by the Board of Directors.
Nov-Dec	The Development Committee finalizes its strategic planning recommendations during and after its scheduled meeting at the Institute's Annual Meeting.
Dec-Jan	The Development Committee finalizes its strategic planning recommendations by no later than December 15 to the Executive Committee and Board for review in January.
March	The Executive Committee/Strategic Planning Committee holds a half-day meeting to discuss the strategic planning recommendations from the Development Committee, and to formalize its recommendations to the full Board.
April	The Board of Directors takes action based on recommendations from the Executive Committee/Strategic Planning Committee. The Board is responsible for maintaining a long-range plan containing strategic goals for the Institute over a five year planning horizon. (98-1)

## V. HISTORY AND ACTIVITIES OF THE DECISION SCIENCES INSTITUTE

History of the Institute. University faculty members from throughout the country, addressing the problems and opportunities of teaching and research in the decision sciences, found the need for dialogue, for an academic job marketplace, and for an organization to encourage multidisciplinary communication. It was for these reasons that the Institute was created. After an exchange of correspondence, a small group of faculty members representing a national cross-section of schools met in Atlanta on November 1, 1968, to establish an independent national non-profit educational organization. Initially, the Institute was established to serve faculty members through their schools of business administration and to provide a framework for interfunctional cooperation and dialogue.

In October of 1969, 100 charter members met in New Orleans to hold the first annual meeting. The annual meeting now draws approximately 1,500 participants who are

interested in active dialogue in the now well established discipline. In addition to approximately 800 library subscribers, membership has grown steadily to over 3,500. The journal Decision Sciences, first published 1970, is now a recognized publication among practitioners and academicians.

Activities of the Institute. To achieve its goals, the Institute sponsors a wide range of activities. Among these are the following:

Annual Meeting. The Institute holds an annual meeting in November at which members and guests participate in invited and competitive sessions and workshops. Approximately 1,500 professionals share ideas and insights on theoretical and applied issues. Recognition is made of exceptional contributions to the decision sciences. An instructional innovation award is presented as are awards for outstanding doctoral dissertations in the decision sciences, case studies and best papers submitted for annual meeting presentation. Distinguished speakers are invited for regular and invited sessions. Participants are drawn from the United States, Canada and numerous other countries. At the meeting, all attendees receive a copy of the conference proceedings in which publication is determined by a system of referees. Articles for presentation at the annual meeting are submitted the first of April (effective in 2003).

Professional Development Seminars. Consistent with its commitment to improving the quality of education in the decision sciences, the Institute sponsors a continuing series of seminars devoted to this topic in conjunction with the annual meeting. Among these are the New Faculty Development Consortium, the MBA, Ph.D., and the Undergraduate Programs.

Doctoral Student Consortium. Outstanding doctoral students throughout the nation are brought together with distinguished decision science scholars for one day during the annual meeting. The doctoral student consortium provides a unique opportunity for these selected scholars and students to interact and challenge one another.

Job Placement. Job placement services are offered 12 months a year but are most apparent at the national and regional annual meetings when special facilities are established to aid in position search activities. In addition, the Institute operates an on-line placement database for the use of all members and schools registered with the placement service.

National Honorary Society. Alpha Iota Delta is the national honorary in the decision sciences and has many student chapters on campuses around the country. Besides identifying and encouraging outstanding students (both undergraduate and graduate) in the decision sciences, the honorary also co-sponsors the annual instructional innovation award.

News Publication. The Institute publishes an informative news publication, Decision Line, five times a year with regional news reports, columns on teaching, book reviews, placement activities, and many items of interest to the membership.

Journals. The Institute publishes the scholarly quarterly journal, Decision Sciences. The editorial philosophy of the journal is that articles focus on managerial decision making in public or private organizations. This in turn implies the application of behavioral, economic, or quantitative methods of analysis.

In 2000, the Institute established a publication entitled Decision Sciences Journal of Innovative Education, dedicated to the dissemination of leading edge ideas on pedagogy in the decision sciences. The purpose of the journal is to 1) serve as an information source and an outlet of high quality articles for faculty members interested in teaching and learning in the decision sciences, and 2) enhance the status of pedagogical scholarship in business-related fields.

Organizational Structure of the Institute. The Institute is operated by a Board of Directors and a full-time professional staff. Its headquarters and the offices of the Executive Director are located in Atlanta, Georgia, at Georgia State University. A World Wide Web, computerized membership system, editorial and desktop publishing facilities, and Board, committee, and regional support are all part of the Home Office operations. The President and a Board of Directors, elected by the membership, with the help of a number of committees and coordinators make decisions for the Institute. Together they represent a broad cross-section of functional and geographical areas. The constitutionally mandated committees are: Publications Committee, Nominating Committee, Executive Committee, and Regional Activities Committee. The standing committees are: Case Studies Committee, Development Committee, Doctoral Student Affairs Committee, Fellows Committee, Information Technology Committee, Innovative Education Committee, Investment Advisory Committee, Member Services Committee, Programs and Meetings Committee, Strategic Planning Committee, and Committee on Strategic Planning for International Affairs. The Institute actively encourages participation in these committees.

In addition, seven regional subdivisions are operated in concert with the Institute. They are the Asia-Pacific, Mexico, Midwest, Northeast, Southeast, Southwest, and Western regions. Each has its own elected officers, and a regionally elected representative on the Institute's Board of Directors. Each also holds its own annual meeting and publishes a conference proceedings. Annual meetings of the regions are held in the spring or summer and allow for more immediate contact with the membership.

Membership Benefits. Membership in the Decision Sciences Institute includes an annual subscription to Decision Sciences, Decision Line, Decision Sciences Journal of Innovative Education, reduced registration fees for attending the annual meetings and the international meetings, access to the job placement services, and eligibility to vote in the annual election of officers.

Future of the Institute. As the Institute enters its thirty-seventh year, new opportunities for the international exchange of research are in progress. The Institute held its first international meeting in Brussels, Belgium in June of 1991, its second international meeting in Seoul, Korea in June of 1993, its third international meeting in Puebla, Mexico in June of 1995, its fourth international meeting in Sydney, Australia in July of 1997, its fifth international meeting in Athens, Greece in July of 1999, its sixth international meeting in Chihuahua, Mexico in July of 2001, its seventh international meeting in Shanghai, Peoples Republic of China in July of 2003, its eighth international meeting in Barcelona, Spain in July of 2005, its ninth international meeting in Bangkok, Thailand in July of 2007 and its tenth international meeting in Nancy, France in July of 2009. Service to members through

annual and regional meetings for professional interaction, encouragement of innovative education, and recognition of outstanding doctoral dissertations in the decision sciences continues. It is the desire of the Institute that individuals in industry, non-profit associations, and government will join forces with academicians through membership in the Institute and will help in further development of the discipline.