



SYNOPSIS

This book argues that uncertainty is not really uncertainty at all but just demonstrates a lack of vision and willingness to think about the unthinkable – good and bad. The task of accepting that uncertainty is about exploring the possible, rather than the impossible has to be taken on board by strategists, policy developers, and political leaders, if we are to meet the challenges that an ever changing world is throwing at us. The term “unknown – unknowns” is ubiquitous, albeit the vast majority of future uncertain events do not fall into this category. However, it has been used to absolve decision makers from criticism post-event, whereas poor foresight is the prime culprit and that most future uncertainties are “known-unknowns” or “inevitable surprises”. This re-positioning of uncertainties can help mitigate the impact of such risks through better foresight aware contingency planning. The enemy is not uncertainty itself but our lack of imagination when trying to visualize the future – we need to transform our behaviour. To better understand uncertainty we have to deconstruct it and get to grips with its component parts. Three main questions are posed and practical approaches presented: What are the main structural components that make up the conditions under which uncertainty operates? What scenario lenses can be used when exploring uncertainty? What behavioural factors do we need to consider when analysing the human responses to uncertainty? Practitioners, having to deal with making better decisions under uncertainty, will find the book a useful guide.

Target Audience

Practitioners and decision makers in both private and public sectors and interdisciplinary Academics (Faculty and Students).

Published August 2022 by Springer

UNCERTAINTY DECONSTRUCTED

A Guidebook for Decision Support Practitioners

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About the Author

Bruce Garvey, (garvey@strategyforesight.org) provides specialist support for organisations faced with high levels of uncertainty and complexity, addressing problems and issues at a strategic level. His methods are generic to all organisational types and can be deployed where uncertainty and complexity abide. He has developed proprietary decision support software to help structure complex problems which has been licenced to a number of major international and national organisations. He has published papers, presented at conferences and run workshop based courses on his specialist area. Buttressing this specialist knowledge, he brings over 45 years' experience within the commercial arena, in staff and operational posts in the UK, Europe and the Middle East in major corporate and SME sectors. His international experience and varied sector background makes him particularly sensitive to a wide range of behavioural and cultural issues that organisations face in an increasingly global and fast changing environment. He has a PhD from Imperial College London, a MBA from The Bayes Business School (formerly Cass), a Post-Graduate Diploma in Economic Integration from Stockholm University, Sweden and a BSc (Hons) in Sociology from London University.