



HOW TO EFFICIENTLY SOLVE RC



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WHEN TO THINK AND WHEN TO SLEEP

Researchers argue that the brain stem comprising the medulla oblongata, the pons and the mid brain is better at handling a large amount of information. On the other hand, the Cerebral Cortex that is responsible for rational decision making is better at applying very strict, mathematical rules on fewer variables involving well-defined parameters. Consequently, researchers agree that it is better to “sleep on” certain complex decision rather than burn midnight oil to arrive at rationale solution. They believe that in these situations, rationality comes on the way of making a rational decision and that the brain stem is better equipped to handle them than the Cerebral Cortex, arguing that it’s better to leave such decisions on unconscious thought process – thinking without paying attention. There are decisions where, the researchers believe, *conscious* thought outperforms unconscious thought. For example, when a decision requires application of very strict, mathematical rules, conscious thought is beneficial.

Several experiments that incorporated several combinations of plethora of specifications revealed the workings of the brain stem and the Cerebral cortex. In one such experiment, the participants were asked to choose a car from 10 leading brands of automobiles. The researchers gave them just four parameters to consider for their choice - mileage, cost, reliability, and re-sale value, asking them to take instantaneous decision. The participants came up with the second-to-none decision in this scenario, proving that the conscious mind was super-efficient in processing limited amount of data. Keeping all the other conditions fixed the researchers this time asked the participants to sleep on the choice and declare their decision later. The resulting choices that participants made were not as optimal.

In another set of similar experiments, the researchers were baffled by the appalling choices that the test group made when they conducted the same experiment with 10 leading brands, but doubled the parameters, adding such features to consider as brand appeal, durability, safety, and off-road capability. The researchers argued that Cerebral cortex could not make sense of the expanded information set that led to poor decision making. However, the decisions made by another test group that was allowed to sleep on the decision before declaring their choice were much more worthy, even though not as good as the decision produced by the conscious mind that processed fewer parameters. This led the researchers to conclude that our unconscious mind can process larger amounts of information — as long as we give it time to do so. Another suitable situation, according to researchers, to employ the goal-dependent, deliberative process in the absence of conscious attention is when we are low on energy or easily distracted at the time when we are faced with a complex decision to make. Similarly, when in high spirits, it may be better to invoke the conscious mind to arrive at a much more optimal solution.

Main Point: Power of conscious and unconscious mind

QUESTIONS

1. The reason why the author has written this passage is that he wants to:
 - A. argue that functions of Cerebral cortex only can lead to such important and complex decisions as buying a home or selecting a school.
 - B. compare and contrast the functions of brain stem and Cerebral Cortex to show the benefits of one over the other in making complex decision.
 - C. debate that all important decisions must be taken from Cerebral Cortex as it leads to rational decisions in complex situations.
 - D. summarize through examples which situations are conducive for conscious minds and when to employ brain stem to make optimal decisions of complex nature.
 - E. Prove that sleeping on a complex decision is the best way to arrive at the optimal decision in complex situations.

2. According to the passage, when one is in an environment where one can get easily distracted one should:
 - A. Put the conscious mind to rest and let the subconscious mind take over
 - B. If faced with a complex decision; one should sleep over the decision rather than employ conscious decision making
 - C. Not make any decisions that could have a major financial or economic impact
 - D. Ensure that one is not low on energy
 - E. Not expect the unconscious mind to work as efficiently as when one is in high spirits.

3. What does the author mean by “in high spirits”?
 - A. In the influence of alcohol
 - B. Happy to be faced with a daunting situation.
 - C. Teeming with positive energy to face a tough decision
 - D. Ready with creative ideas to tackle almost every situation.
 - E. Fresh and energetic.

4. What can be deduced by “rationality comes on the way of making a rational decision”?
 - A. Conscious efforts do not necessarily yield best results.
 - B. Thinking with attention always results in the best judgment.
 - C. Rational people always prefer sleeping on a decision to make important choices.

- D. Unconscious mind cannot be dependent upon for making optimal choices.
- E. There is no place for rationality when unconscious mind starts working.

SOLUTION: Q#1

The reason why the author has written this passage is that he wants to:

<u>Paragraph</u>	<u>My Paragraph Summary</u>
<p>Researchers argue that the brain stem comprising the medulla oblongata, the pons and the mid brain is better at handling a large amount of information. On the other hand, the Cerebral Cortex that is responsible for rational decision making is better at applying very strict, mathematical rules on fewer variables involving well-defined parameters. Consequently, researchers agree that it is better to “sleep on” certain complex decision rather than burn midnight oil to arrive at rationale solution. They believe that in these situations, rationality comes on the way of making a rational decision and that the brain stem is better equipped to handle them than the Cerebral Cortex, arguing that it’s better to leave such decisions on unconscious thought process – thinking without paying attention. There are decisions where, the researchers believe, <i>conscious</i> thought outperforms unconscious thought. For example, when a decision requires application of very strict, mathematical rules, conscious thought is beneficial.</p>	<p>Conscious mind helps in arriving at decision that requires application of strict rules on limited parameters. On the contrary, unconscious mind leads to best decisions when there is large amount of information.</p>
<p>Several experiments that incorporated several combinations of plethora of specifications revealed the workings of the brain stem and the Cerebral cortex. In one such experiment, the participants were asked to choose a car from 10 leading brands of automobiles. The researchers gave them just four parameters to consider for their choice - mileage, cost, reliability, and resale value, asking them to take instantaneous decision. The participants came up with the second-to-none decision in this scenario,</p>	<p>Experiment 1- Conscious mind yielded the best result when participants were given four parameters for consideration to choose a car from 10 brands. Experiment 2 – The decision was not that optimal when they left the decision on the unconscious mind.</p>

<p>proving that the conscious mind was super-efficient in processing limited amount of data. Keeping all the other conditions fixed the researchers this time asked the participants to sleep on the choice and declare their decision later. The resulting choices that participants made were not as optimal.</p>	
<p>In another set of similar experiments, the researchers were baffled by the appalling choices that the test group made when they conducted the same experiment with 10 leading brands, but doubled the parameters, adding such features to consider as brand appeal, durability, safety, and off-road capability. The researchers argued that Cerebral cortex could not make sense of the expanded information set that led to poor decision making. However, the decisions made by another test group that was allowed to sleep on the decision before declaring their choice were much more worthy, even though not as good as the decision produced by the conscious mind that processed fewer parameters. This led the researchers to conclude that our unconscious mind can process larger amounts of information — as long as we give it time to do so. Another suitable situation, according to researchers, to employ the goal-dependent, deliberative process in the absence of conscious attention is when we are low on energy or easily distracted at the time when we are faced with a complex decision to make. Similarly, when in high spirits, it may be better to invoke the conscious mind to arrive at a much more optimal solution.</p>	<p>Experiment 1 – The conscious mind made poor decision when the parameters were doubled. Experiment 2 – When with double parameters, the participants relied on their unconscious mind, their decision was better than the one taken with conscious mind.</p>

Answer choices	Explanation
A. argue that functions of Cerebral cortex only can lead to such important and complex decisions as buying a home or selecting a school.	Inconsistent: The author does not mention anywhere in the passage that only conscious mind can take important and complex decisions. Even unconscious mind is capable of doing so.
B. compare and contrast the functions of brain stem and Cerebral Cortex to show the benefits of one over the other in making complex decision.	Out of Scope: The author through examples talks about the ability of the conscious and unconscious minds. He does not even talk about the functions of these two minds. Also, he does not say that one is better than the other.
C. debate that all important decisions must be taken from Cerebral Cortex as it leads to rational decisions in complex situations.	Inconsistent: There is no debate of any sort in the passage. The author talks about the abilities of both the conscious and the unconscious minds equally.
D. summarize through examples which situations are conducive for conscious minds and when to employ brain stem to make optimal decisions of complex nature.	Correct. From the paragraph summaries we know that the experiments are the examples through which the author proved that conscious mind takes best decision when given less parameters and the unconscious mind does the same when given more parameters.
E. prove that sleeping on a complex decision is the best way to arrive at the optimal decision in complex situations.	Partial Scope: The author also talks about the functions of the conscious mind while making important decisions but the author talks much more than that. This choice only covers partial scope, does not talk about scenarios where the conscious mind is favored.

PRE-THINK – Presenting experiments, the author says that conscious mind can take the best decision of complex nature if decision making requires application of strict rules on limited parameters. If larger amount of information is needed to be processed, then the unconscious mind takes the optimal decision.

PRE-THINK - *The author recommends that when faced with a complex decision we use the unconscious mind when we are easily distracted.*

SOLUTION: Q#2

According to the passage, when one is in an environment where one can get easily distracted one should

This is a specific question. Note the word distraction is used at the end of the passage. Hence let's read that section to do the pre-thinking.

*This led the researchers to conclude that our unconscious mind can process larger amounts of information — as long as we give it time to do so. Another suitable situation, according to researchers, to employ the goal-dependent, deliberative process in the absence of conscious attention is when we are low on energy or easily **distracted** at the time when we are faced with a complex decision to make.*

<u>Answer Choice</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
Put the subconscious mind to rest and let the Cerebral Cortex take over	Opposite: The author recommends the opposite.
Not make any decisions that could have a major financial or economic impact	Out of scope: The author does not mention anything about decisions that have major financial or economic impact.
Put the conscious mind to rest and let the subconscious mind take over	Close: The passage suggests this only when faced with a complex decision, not always.
Not expect the unconscious mind to work as efficiently as when one is in high spirits.	Inconsistent: situations of high energy are not related to the situations when one is easily

	distracted.
If faced with a complex decision, one should prefer using the unconscious mind.	Correct: The author recommends using the unconscious mind when faced with complex situation and in scenarios when one is easily distracted.

SOLUTION: Q#3

What does the author mean by “in high spirits”?

Relevant Portion - Another suitable situation, according to researchers, to employ the goal-dependent, deliberative process in the absence of conscious attention is when we are low on energy or easily distracted at the time when we are faced with a complex decision to make. Similarly, when in high spirits, it may be better to invoke the conscious mind to arrive at a much more optimal solution.

PRE-THINK - In the highlighted area, it is said that unconscious mind should be employed when low on energy. Hence, ‘in high spirits’ would mean in ‘fresh’ state of mind as then use of conscious mind is recommended.

Choice	Explanation
In the influence of alcohol.	Incorrect: This is not the intended meaning.
Happy to be faced with a daunting situation.	Incorrect: This is not the intended meaning.
Teeming with positive energy to face a tough decision.	Incorrect: This is not the intended meaning.
Ready with creative ideas to tackle almost every situation.	Incorrect: This is not the intended meaning.
Fresh and energetic.	Correct: This is the correct meaning because the author says that when tired, make use of unconscious mind, when energetic use conscious mind.

SOLUTION: Q#4

What can be deduced by “rationality comes on the way of making a rational decision”?

PRE-THINK - Putting conscious effort actually hinders taking the best decision in certain situations.

<u>Choices</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
Conscious efforts do not necessarily yield best results.	Correct: This indeed is the meaning of the phrase.
Thinking with attention always results in the best judgment.	Opposite: This phrase means just the opposite.
Rational people always prefer sleeping on a decision to make important choices.	Out of Scope: This is a generic phrase applicable for all & not a specific group.
Unconscious mind cannot be dependent upon for making optimal choices.	Opposite: The phrase does mean that unconscious mind helps in making optimal decision.
There is no place for rationality when unconscious mind starts working.	Out of Scope: This phrase has no causality about it.