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MANAGEMENT

Make The Winning Calls

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Companies reach goals one decision at a time. Make better judgment calls and you'll reach objectives faster. Some

- **Move it.** Key information is often holed up in a firm's silos, says Michael McGrath, author of the forthcoming book *Decision Making*. Data don't reach those who make the critical calls.

He cites an example: An accounting system processes customer returns. There's a growing pattern of returns. That decision about the product — yet the pattern isn't shared with key decision makers.

- **Don't ignore.** Even when it's known, "critical information is (often) disregarded," McGrath said. "This was one of the Challenger decision to launch." The result was the shuttle's explosion in January 1986.

- **Expose.** Often information is hidden. Reason? It's harmful to a unit, department or group.

Solution: Have key workers on your information-management team comb the firm's databases for key data. For everyone responsible.

- **Sort.** Critical data are often "lost in an excess of information," McGrath said. "Sometimes information critical to a decision is buried in critical data and cannot be (rooted out). It then gets ignored by the person making the decision or the person providing the decision."

- **Skip utopia.** Often companies avoid decisions because they can't make the perfect call. Decision makers put the decision off, hoping somehow the (right) answer will come to them," McGrath said.

No decision is ever flawless. Move on the information you have.

- **Forget the ramrod.** Some decisions are made too quickly — so critics won't have time to mount opposition. Resolutions are reached.

- **Step up.** Most leaps forward are fueled by a clear decision that garners commitment. Several studies have compared managers who advanced quickly vs. those who were passed over for promotions. Brian Tracy cites some in "The 11 Unbreakable Laws of Business Success."

"Researchers found that the one distinguishing behavior of the more rapidly promoted managers is they were more decisive than they did," Tracy said.