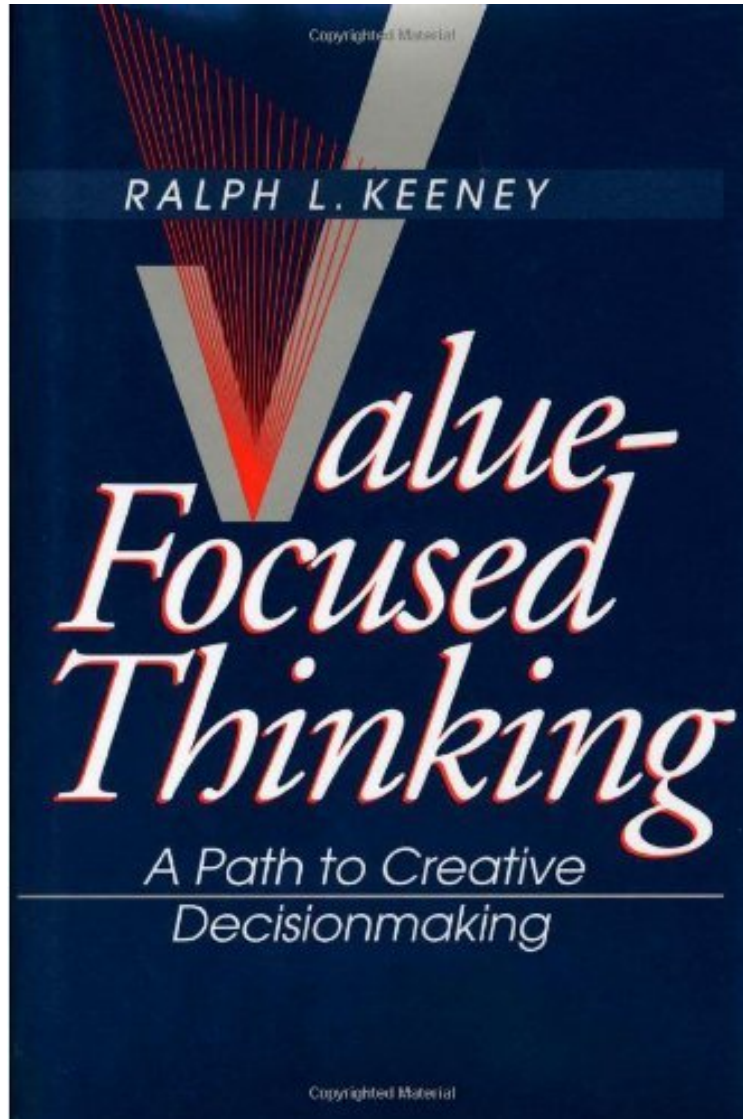


Value-Focused Thinking

Ralph L. KEENEY

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Ralph L. KEENEY : Value-Focused Thinking before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Value-Focused Thinking:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Customervery useful for having a insightful perception related to why and what the value work for!0 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Excellent ProductBy Algernon B. Corbettthe product exceed my expectations and arrived within the time frame anticipated. I would recommend this vendor for those interested in this type of product line,4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. A few valuable ideas, lots of dull partsBy Peter McCluskeyThis book argues for focusing on values (goals/objectives) when making decisions, as opposed to the more usual alternative-focused decisionmaking.The basic

idea seems good. Alternative-focused thinking draws our attention away from our values and discourages us from creatively generating new possibilities to choose from. It tends to have us frame decisions as responses to problems, which leads us to associate decisions with undesirable emotions, when we could view decisions as opportunities. A good deal of the book describes examples of good decisionmaking, but those rarely provide insight into how to avoid common mistakes or to do unusually well. Occasionally the book switches to some dull math, without clear explanations of what benefit the rigor provides. The book also includes good descriptions of how to measure the things that matter, but *How to Measure Anything* by Douglas Hubbard does that much better.

The standard way of thinking about decisions is backwards, says Ralph Keeney: people focus first on identifying alternatives rather than on articulating values. A problem arises and people react, placing the emphasis on mechanics and fixed choices instead of on the objectives that give decisionmaking its meaning. In this book, Keeney shows how recognizing and articulating fundamental values can lead to the identification of decision opportunities and the creation of better alternatives. The intent is to be proactive and to select more attractive decisions to ponder before attempting any solutions. Keeney describes specific procedures for articulating values by identifying and structuring objectives qualitatively, and he shows how to apply these procedures in various cases. He then explains how to quantify objectives using simple models of values. Such value analysis, Keeney demonstrates, can yield a full range of alternatives, thus converting decision problems into opportunities. This approach can be used to uncover hidden objectives, to direct the collection of information, to improve communication, to facilitate collective decisionmaking, and to guide strategic thinking. To illustrate these uses, Keeney shows how value-focused thinking works in many business contexts, such as designing an integrated circuit tester and managing a multibillion-dollar utility company; in government contexts, such as planning future NASA space missions and deciding how to transport nuclear waste to storage sites; and in personal contexts, such as choosing career moves and making wise health and safety decisions. An incisive, applicable contribution to the art and science of decisionmaking, *Value-Focused Thinking* will be extremely useful to anyone from consultants and managers to systems analysts and students.

[*Value-Focused Thinking*] is both an inspired and inspiring book. It is also a rarity among academic and business texts: it is a 'damn good read.' Keeney writes well, arguing his case clearly in the abstract and illustrating it through numerous interesting and pertinent examples. (Simon French *Journal of Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis*) Outstanding... Innovative thinking. (Decision Analysis Newsletter) *Value-Focused Thinking* clearly demonstrates the problems occurring in commercial and other organizations as a result of restricting decision choice to the available alternatives (alternative-focused thinking), rather than starting by considering what it is intended to achieve (value-focused thinking). (Observer) From the Back Cover In this book, Ralph Keeney turns standard decisionmaking methods on their heads. Rather than placing emphasis on mechanics and fixed solutions, Keeney argues, we should focus on the bottom-line objectives that give decisionmaking its meaning: it is through recognizing and articulating fundamental values that we can better identify decision opportunities- and thereby create better decision alternatives. About the Author Ralph L. Keeney is a private consultant in San Francisco, as well as Professor of Systems Management, Institute of Safety and Systems Management, University of Southern California. He is coauthor (with Howard Raiffa) of *Decisions with Multiple Objectives*, which was awarded the Lanchester Prize of the Operations Research Society of America.