



## Deciding together, alone



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In this complex world we live in, most decisions require the involvement of multiple individuals. However, we must be aware of the fact that decisions are never made by a group, but always by individuals.

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The past couple of weeks have been rather hectic. Very busy, which is of course good, but a busyness that also had its drawbacks. We have been dealing with a couple of projects that had the label "problem" stamped all over them.

Critical projects with strict deadlines that required the involvement of several individuals, all with their own specialism, but whereby nobody had any experience or background with the complete "context" of the challenge we were dealing with.

It should have been a prime example of collaboration but, as we experienced, it was the fast lane to disaster.

Even the greatest specialist freezes when asked for a commitment for something that slightly reaches outside his/her expertise domain.

The net result is a standstill, lengthy discussions about details and conclusions that nobody agrees with.

It seems to be a "feature" of our race.

Accidentally, or not, we then read this post by Andrew McAfee on the HBR blog: '[The Surprising Benefits of Solitude](#)'.

An interesting post indeed and somewhere, the reassuring feeling that our past experience is not really an exception but rather the standard rule.

Unfortunately.

We are quite sure that there must have been times where simple gestures were sufficient for the group to clearly understand the upcoming danger or challenge at hand and get to action. Otherwise, they wouldn't have survived as a group and, most likely, our race wouldn't exist anymore.

But somewhere along the path of our evolution, we seem to have lost that basic skill of simple, fast decision-making.

So, now we need consultants to guide our decisions and get the blame when things don't work out as planned.

The comforting feeling of being liked.




Tags: [collaboration](#), [business interaction management \(BIM\)](#)



## About Marc Buyens

Marc Buyens is analyst, management consultant and owner of Xpragma. He started Xpragma in 1999 after a 20+ years career in the IT sector. Today, he provides advice, training and mentoring services focusing on the intersection of technological evolution, organisational change and business strategy: a messy world of unfulfilled promises.

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