T-DODAR

Idea In Short

The T-DODAR decision-making framework is an enhanced version of the DODAR model, specifically designed for use in time-critical situations. The “T” stands for “Time,” emphasizing the importance of quickly assessing available time before proceeding with the decision-making process. T-DODAR expands to Time, Diagnose, Options, Decide, Assign, and Review. This structured approach helps pilots and other professionals in high-pressure environments to rapidly evaluate the urgency of a situation, identify the problem, generate potential solutions, make an informed decision, delegate tasks, and continuously monitor the outcome. By incorporating the time element upfront, T-DODAR ensures that decision-makers consider the critical factor of time constraints throughout the entire process, leading to more efficient and effective problem-solving in urgent scenarios.

In the high-stakes world of aviation, split-second decisions can mean the difference between life and death. To navigate complex situations effectively, pilots rely on structured decision-making models. One such framework that has gained prominence is T-DODAR, an acronym that stands for Time, Diagnose, Options, Decide, Assign, and Review. This systematic approach helps pilots methodically work through challenges, ensuring they consider all relevant factors before taking action, with a particular emphasis on the critical element of time.

Time

The first step in the T-DODAR model is to assess the available time for decision-making. This crucial initial stage requires pilots to swiftly evaluate how urgent the situation is and how much time they have to work through the subsequent steps. By accurately gauging the time pressure, pilots can adjust their decision-making process accordingly.

Diagnose

Once the time constraint is established, pilots must clearly define the problem at hand. This stage involves gathering all relevant information and articulating the issue they're facing. By accurately pinpointing the problem, pilots can focus their efforts on finding the most appropriate solution.

Options

With a clear understanding of the problem and time constraints, pilots generate a range of possible solutions. This brainstorming phase is critical, as it encourages creative thinking and helps ensure that no potential course of action is overlooked. The options generated should be feasible within the identified time frame.

Decide

After identifying various options, pilots must evaluate each one and select the most appropriate course of action. This decision is based on a careful assessment of the risks, benefits, and potential outcomes associated with each option, always keeping in mind the time constraints established in the first step.

Assign

Once a decision has been made, it's time to put the plan into action. This stage involves clear communication among crew members, delegation of tasks, and precise implementation of the chosen course of action. Each team member must understand their role and responsibilities in executing the plan within the given time frame.

Review

The final step in the T-DODAR model is ongoing evaluation. Pilots continuously assess the effectiveness of their chosen action and remain prepared to adjust their approach if necessary. This iterative process ensures that the response remains appropriate as the situation evolves, always considering the time element.

T-DODAR in Practice: Aviation Example

To illustrate the application of T-DODAR, consider a scenario where pilots encounter an

engine failure shortly after takeoff:

1. Time: Pilots quickly assess that they have only minutes to make a decision and act
2. Diagnose: They identify the issue as an engine failure based on instrument readings and aircraft behavior
3. Options: Generate possible actions, such as attempting to restart the engine, returning to the departure airport, or finding a suitable emergency landing site
4. Decide: Choose the most appropriate option based on altitude, terrain, and remaining engine performance
5. Assign: Implement the chosen action, with one pilot flying the aircraft and the other handling communications and checklists
6. Review: Continuously monitor the situation, assessing the effectiveness of the chosen action and adjusting if necessary

Summary

The T-DODAR decision-making framework, born from the high-stakes world of aviation, offers a structured and effective approach to problem-solving that can be invaluable in corporate settings, particularly in time-sensitive situations. By systematically working through each step - Time, Diagnose, Options, Decide, Assign, and Review - business leaders can make informed decisions that prioritize swift action while considering all critical factors.