



The Decision Professionals Network

Or?

The Academy of Decision Professionals

Or?

Should We Form a Distinct Profession

DAAG Discussions
Carl Spetzler

May 18, 2009

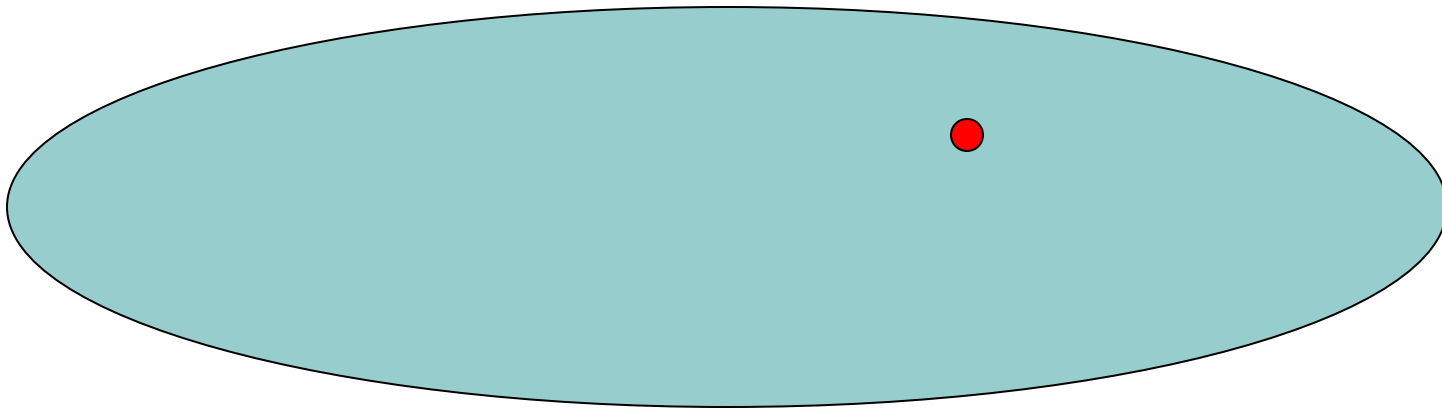
Agenda

- ➔ What and Why?
 - Who?
 - Professional CODE
 - Certification and Training
 - Appendix: DPN Status



Why build a real profession?

- The market of important decisions that could be significantly improved is huge.
- The share of market by decision professionals is very small indeed.



Why build it?

- The forums for practitioners – DAAG and INFORMS (practitioners' meetings) – can not serve today's professional needs for fast-moving online access to knowledge, connection among peers, and ability to promote the profession.
- The forums for academicians – DA Society of INFORMS, Society for Judgment and Decision Making – are not focused on the practitioners' needs.
- The DPN will support and collaborate with the existing associations.



Why build it?

- Some practitioners claim to know more than they actually do about DA, bringing the field a bad name.
- BDT is growing rapidly – we can build on that, but have to differentiate what we do.
- The DPN has the potential to provide significant benefits to decision professionals ...

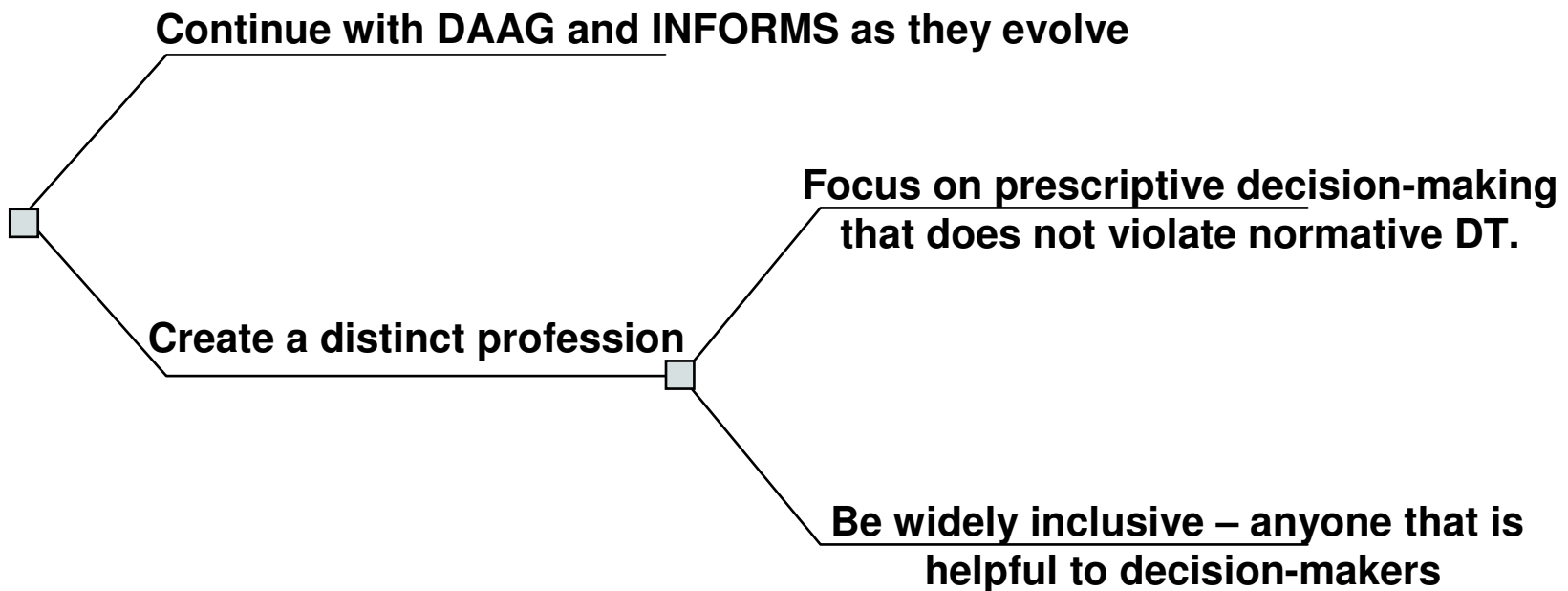


What do we want the DPN to be?

- A vibrant community of decision professionals
 - Insisting on professional excellence
 - Advancing and sharing their knowledge
 - Raising awareness of the field
 - Spreading DA by open-sourcing tools that are essential to its practice
 - Supporting educators by creating educational resources
 - Supporting new professionals



As I have considered this subject, I have concluded that we have two fundamental decisions.



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Who do we want as members?

- Primarily Practitioners – internal decision staffs and external consultants
 - At all stages of professional development
- The leading lights of DA in academia with an interest in application
- Students interested in becoming decision professionals
- Developers and providers of tools



Who do we want as members?

- Practitioners that commit to a professional code
 - Commitment to serve the true needs of Decision Makers
 - With quality and competence – don't fake it
 - Integrity
 - Commitment to enhance professional excellence and reputation
- Educators who imbue the professional ethics
- **what else?**



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According to Michael Davis at the Center for the Study of Ethics in the Professions:

A profession is a number of individuals in the same occupation voluntarily organized to earn a living by openly serving a moral ideal in a morally permissible way **beyond what law, market, morality, and public opinion would otherwise require.**

Core to developing a profession is agreement on a professional code.

Source: *Code Making: How Software Engineering Became a Profession.*
Michael Davis, Center for the Study of Ethics in the Professions, IIT, Chicago



Draft Code: As a member of the DPN, I can be trusted –

- to serve the true and legitimate needs of **Decision Makers**
- with the quality and competence needed for the situation, and
- the warranty that my services do not violate the norms of decision theory.
- by my **professional colleagues**
- to build and share my professional competence
- to respect the IP of others and acknowledge sources, and
- to promote and enhance the excellence of the profession.

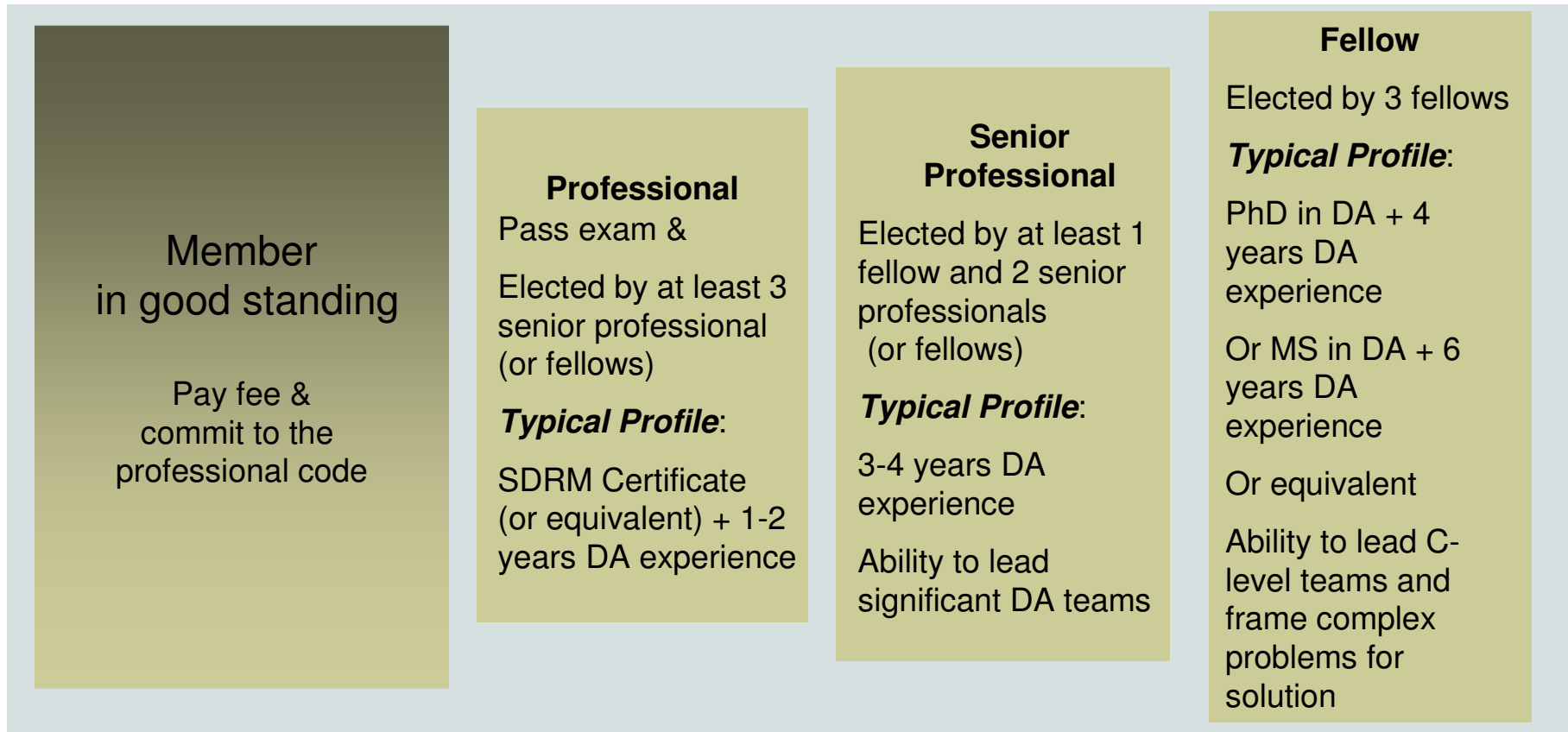


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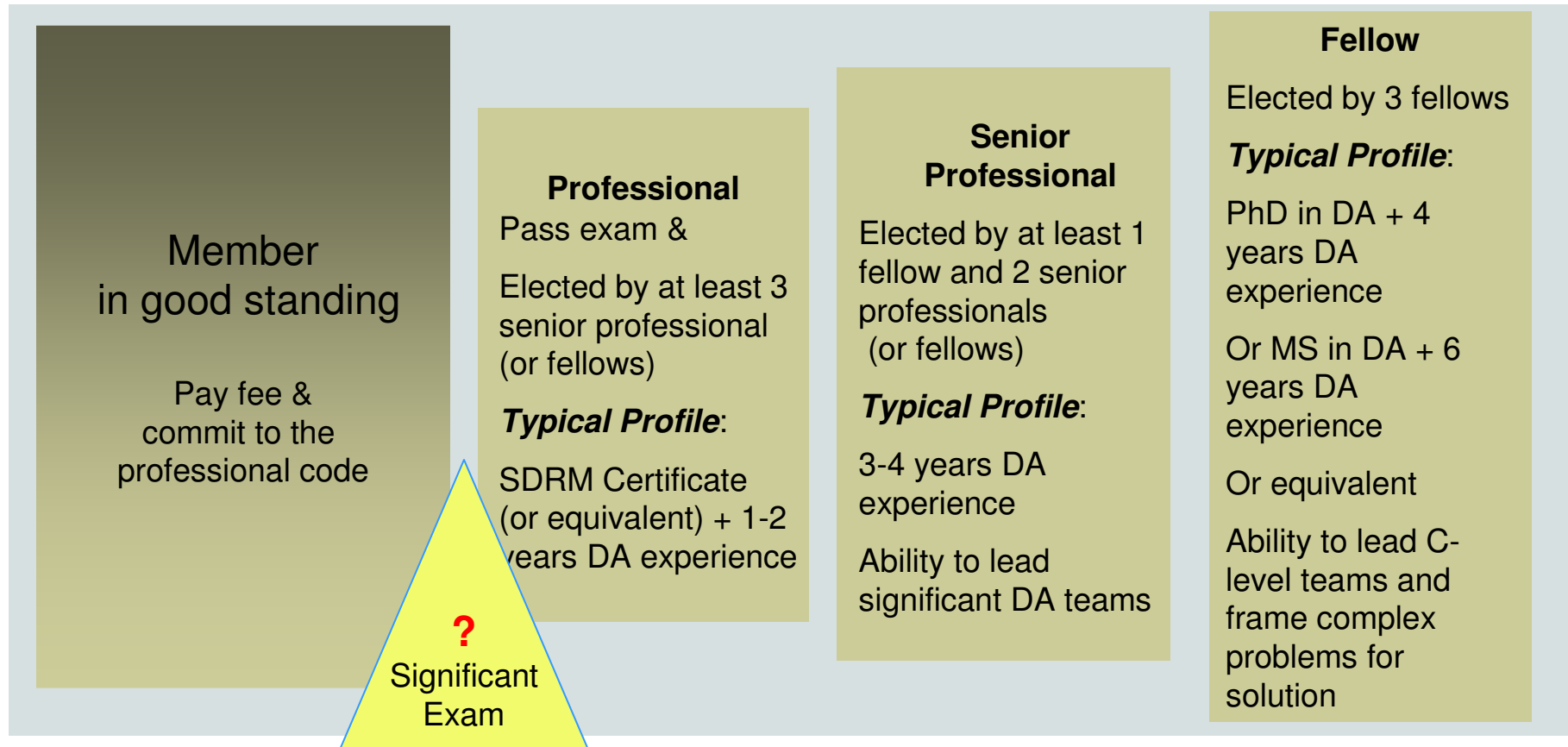
Members can become recognized at three levels of professional competence.



Most focus group participants favored using the network to certify professionals.



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Say you were certified as a professional, what name would be most attractive for such a certification?

- Institute of Decision Professionals – IDP
- Decision Professionals Institute – DPI
- Decision Professional Network – DPN
- Academy of Decision Professionals – ADP
-



Questions:

- Proceed with forming a distinct profession? _____
- Require accepting the norms of DT _____
- Accreditation _____
- Exam for entering professional _____
- Role of DAAG, INFORMS, etc.

- Preferred Name _____



How to Participate

- Join the DPN group on LinkedIn
 - <http://www.linkedin.com/groupRegistration?gid=1677967>
- Participate in our prospective-member survey
 - http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=l065dTt_2b2Rnrn1KtootpDQ_3d_3d
- Select a council to be part of:
 - Publicizing and Promoting the Profession
 - Best Practices - Decision Projects
 - Best Practice - Modeling Forum
 - Community and Membership Development
 - Portal (Website) Development
 - Certification Council



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The Decision Professionals Network

Forming an Online Community of Decision Professionals

**Presented at the INFORMS
Practitioners Conference**

April 27, 2009

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- ➔ What is it? Why are we doing it?
 - Membership
 - What we learned from the focus groups
 - Business model – status and plans
 - How to participate



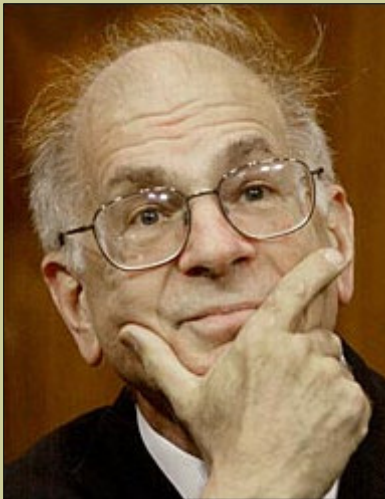
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 - Insisting on professional excellence
 - Supporting new professionals



Why build it?

- Prominent decision scientists believe DA is not used.



“We were real believers in decision analysis 30 years ago, and now we must admit that decision analysis hasn’t held up.”

– Daniel Kahneman
Nobel Laureate in Economics
Behavioral Decision Scientist
Interviewed in *Strategy + Business*



Why build it?

- The success of BDT (Behavioral Decision Theory) is seen as detracting from DA.



“... instead of strengthening the case of classic DA, decision psychology can as easily be interpreted as casting serious doubts on the behavioral validity of the premises underlying the normative edifice.”

– Paul Schoemaker, Executive Chairman
Decision Strategies International
Adjunct Professor, Wharton



Why build it?

- Employers discourage students.



“When I switched my Phd program from EE to decision analysis, everyone at ARAMCO thought I was crazy.”

– Ibrahim Almojel, PhD Student
Decision & Risk Analysis
Stanford University



Why build it?

- Academicians in adjacent fields are unaware.



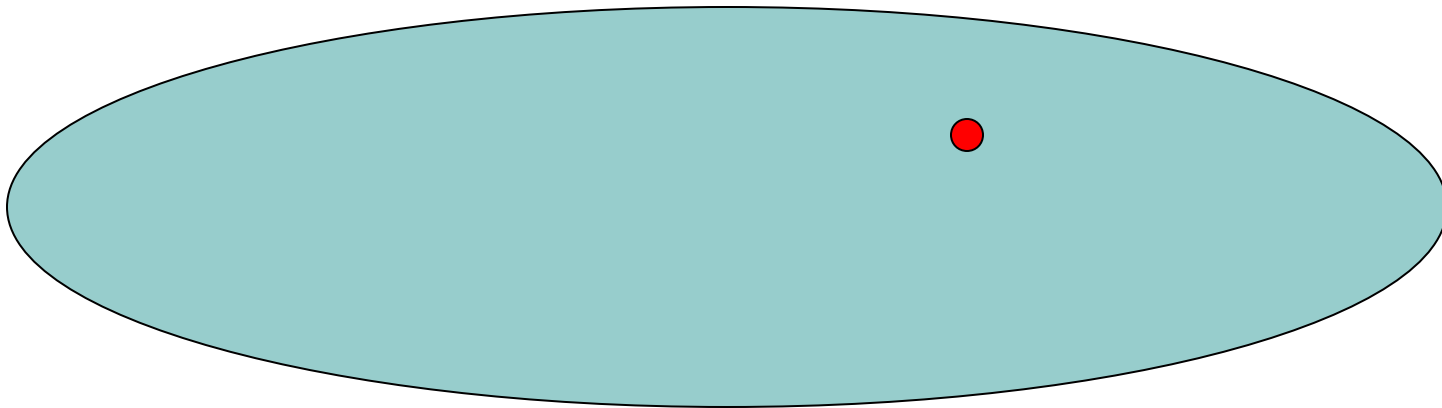
“My economics professor told a packed audience that ‘decision analysis is too complicated’ and does not make sense. When I probed further, it seemed he had misunderstood decision analysis (studied at MIT).”

– Somik Raha, PhD Student
Decision & Risk Analysis
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- The DPN has the potential to provide significant benefits to decision professionals ...



The potential benefits are many

- Greater awareness of the profession
- Reputation and excellence of the profession
- Networking in a community of professionals
- On demand resources for practitioners
- Stimulating discussion and shared learning
- News and calendar of events
- Marketplace for jobs and project assignments
- Career ladder and educational resources
- Tools, tool evaluations and user forums
- A place to contribute to the profession and mentor future practitioners



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- What is it? Why are we doing it?

➔ Membership

- What we learned from the focus groups
- Business model – status and plans
- How to participate



Who do we want as members?

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Membership requirements are simple:

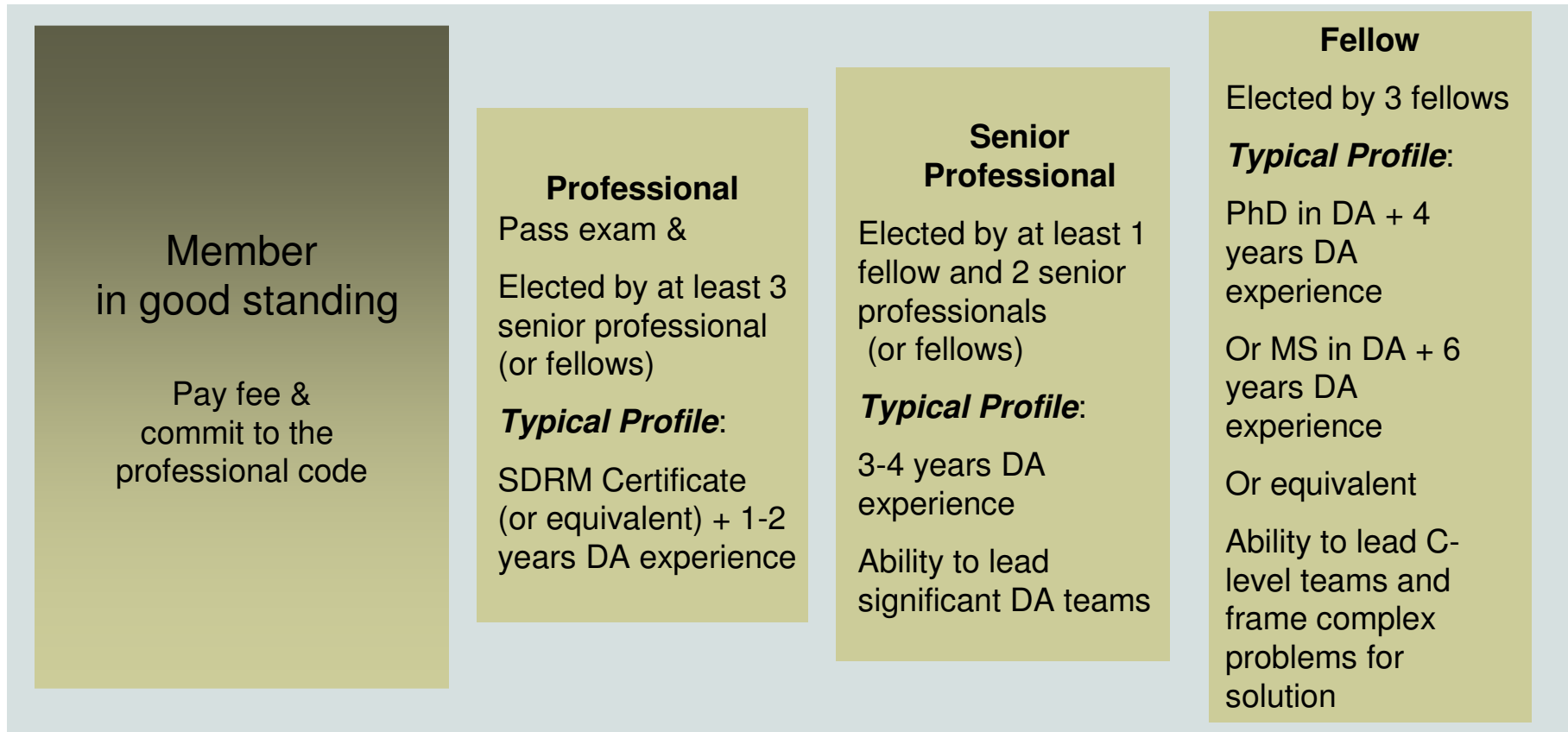
- Pay the membership fee
- Conduct consistent with the professional code

In addition, members can contribute in a number of ways:

- Time: Participate in administrative and organizational functions
- Talent: Contribute content that has value to other practitioners. Serve in editorial and review roles.
- Treasure: Make a charter member contribution and/or promote institutional membership in your organization.



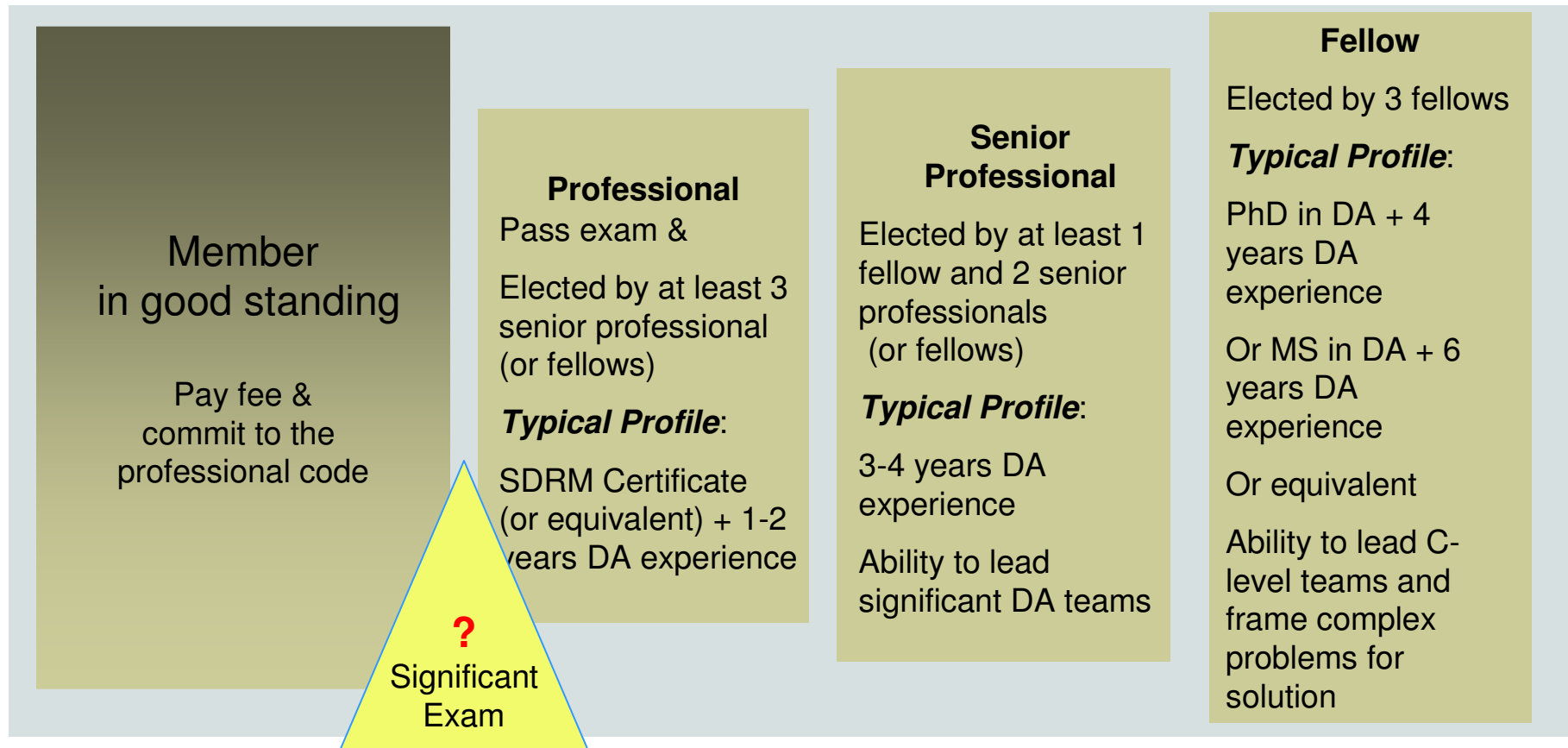
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Individual member fee:

- **Active Practitioner:** Member Fee of \$150/year after a \$30 discount for DAS membership.
- **Retired or inactive Member** – 50% of active practitioner
- **Educator** – 50% of active practitioner
- **Student member** – free membership for full-time students
- **Charter Members**
 - Participate in **the design and roll-out** of the DPN.
 - Designated as charter members in the directory.
 - Make a one-time \$350 charter member contribution to defray start-up investment. (In addition to first year membership fee – for a total \$500 for the first year)
 - Limit the number of charter members



Sponsorship by organizations:

- Sponsors are an organizational entity
 - Corporations, internal consulting units, business units, or decision staff organizations
 - Consulting firms
 - Vendor to the DPN community
 - Academic Department
- Sponsor fee – \$5,000/year
 - Employees of the Sponsor Organization receive a discount on their membership fee
 - Additional Benefits:
 - Listed as sponsor in the DPN
 - Free job listings, etc.
 - One advertisement on the
- **Charter Sponsors** make an investment of 5,000 to \$20,000, depending on size.



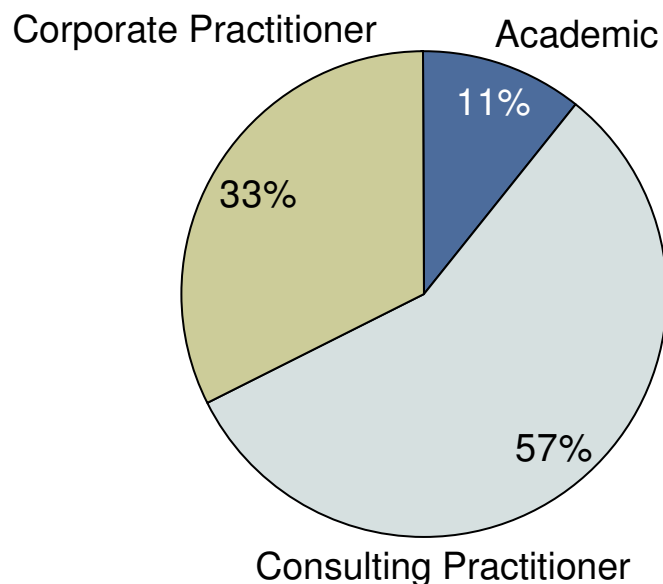
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In January, we completed the last of eight preliminary DPN focus groups.

- 92 professionals took part over December and January.
 - Initial emailing to 150 professionals
 - With each focus group, we requested the names of additional people who should be included in the start-up phase.
 - Total database now is more than 300
- Participation from corporate practitioners and decision support groups at
 - Abbott, APT Pharmaceuticals, Baxter Intl, Bayer HealthCare, Boeing CAG, BMS, Canadian Pacific, Chevron, ConocoPhillips, Exelon, General Motors Research Labs, Inspire Pharmaceuticals, JP Morgan, KeyBanc Capital Markets, Thomson Reuters, T-Mobile, and Unilever.
- Consultants representing 36 consulting entities or solo consulting practitioners.
- 83% completed a follow-up survey.



What the focus groups revealed

- The interest and enthusiasm for the DPN is great.
- Overall, the highest-ranked benefits are to:
 - Assure the **excellence and reputation** of the profession
 - **Network** within a community of professionals
- In addition, the **corporate practitioner community** ranked the opportunity to participate in stimulating discussion and shared learning very high.
- Participants encouraged us to develop DPN as a **professional community and network**, not just a website.



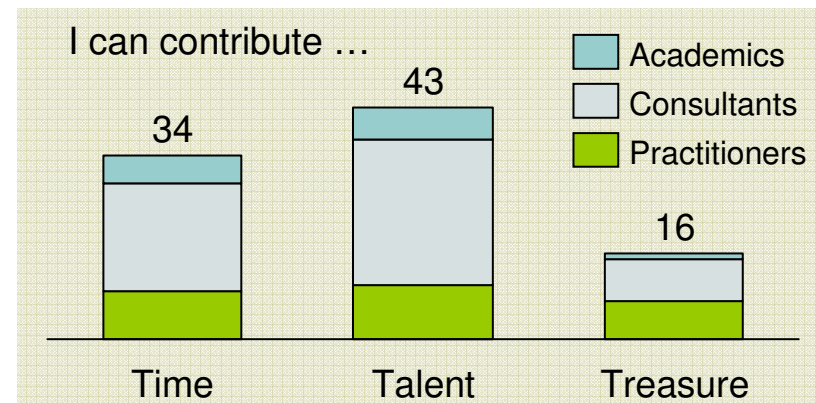
Potential benefits (ranked)

Overall Rank	Potential Benefit	Rank		
		Academics	Consulting Practitioners	Corporate Practitioners
1	Reputation and excellence of the profession	1 ←	1 ←	5 (tie)
2	Networking in a community of professionals	3	2 (tie)	1 ←
3	Greater awareness of the profession	2	2 (tie)	7
4	Stimulating discussion and shared learning	4 (tie)	5	2
5	On demand resources for practitioners	4 (tie)	6	4
6	Tools, tool evaluations and user forums	7	7	3
7	A place to contribute to the profession and mentor future practitioners	4 (tie)	4	5 (tie)
8	Career ladder and educational resources	9	8	8
9	Marketplace for jobs and project assignments	8	9 (tie)	9 (tie)
10	News and calendar of events	10	9 (tie)	9 (tie)
Also Mentioned:		Sharing of ideas between practitioners (internal/external)		
Establishing standards for decision professionals		Quality control on what is out there		
Capturing achievements via publications and publicity		Development as a peer production of the profession		
Place for people to learn more about the profession		Examining the foundations applied to practice		



Participants encouraged us to think beyond the website.

- “It’s not just the features; it’s the movement.”
- “My experience with internal DA sites has shown me how important it is to **engage the community**. People need to be encouraged to frequently log in and participate.”
- “We need to view the network as a group of people and the website as simply the thing that helps the people network.”
- The willingness to actively participate seems high.




We are likely to have a good group of volunteers.

Importance of this initiative to the profession

		1 Extremely Important	2 Somewhat Important	3 Neutral	4 Somewhat unimportant	5 Not at all important
My personal level of enthusiasm	1 Extremely enthusiastic	15	3			
	2 Somewhat enthusiastic	8	33			
	3 Neither enthusiastic nor unenthusiastic	4	3	1		
	4 Somewhat unenthusiastic		2			
	5 Not at all enthusiastic		1			

Note: This question was not explicitly asked of the Jan. 12 group.

 Not active in the profession



What kind of content on the website?

- Content of the greatest benefit to practitioners/members
- Practical stuff, like: Good examples of decision dashboards, agendas and tips for holding intensive decision workshops, recommendations for soft skills, etc.
- Online forums – webinars, workshops, discussion groups
- Evaluations and tips on software and tools
- Professional career ladder and certification requirements
- Whatever you want most? ...
 - On demand, just-in-time resources
 - Scheduled events
 - News and communications
 - Training and workshops
 - Other?



Who owns the content?

- The copyright owner does.
- The owner can use the Creative Commons license to require attribution:
 - Keep it truly open source, or
 - Restrict modification, or
 - Restrict usage (non-commercial or commercial)
- Use GNU General Public License (GPL) or other open-source licenses to provide software tools to the community



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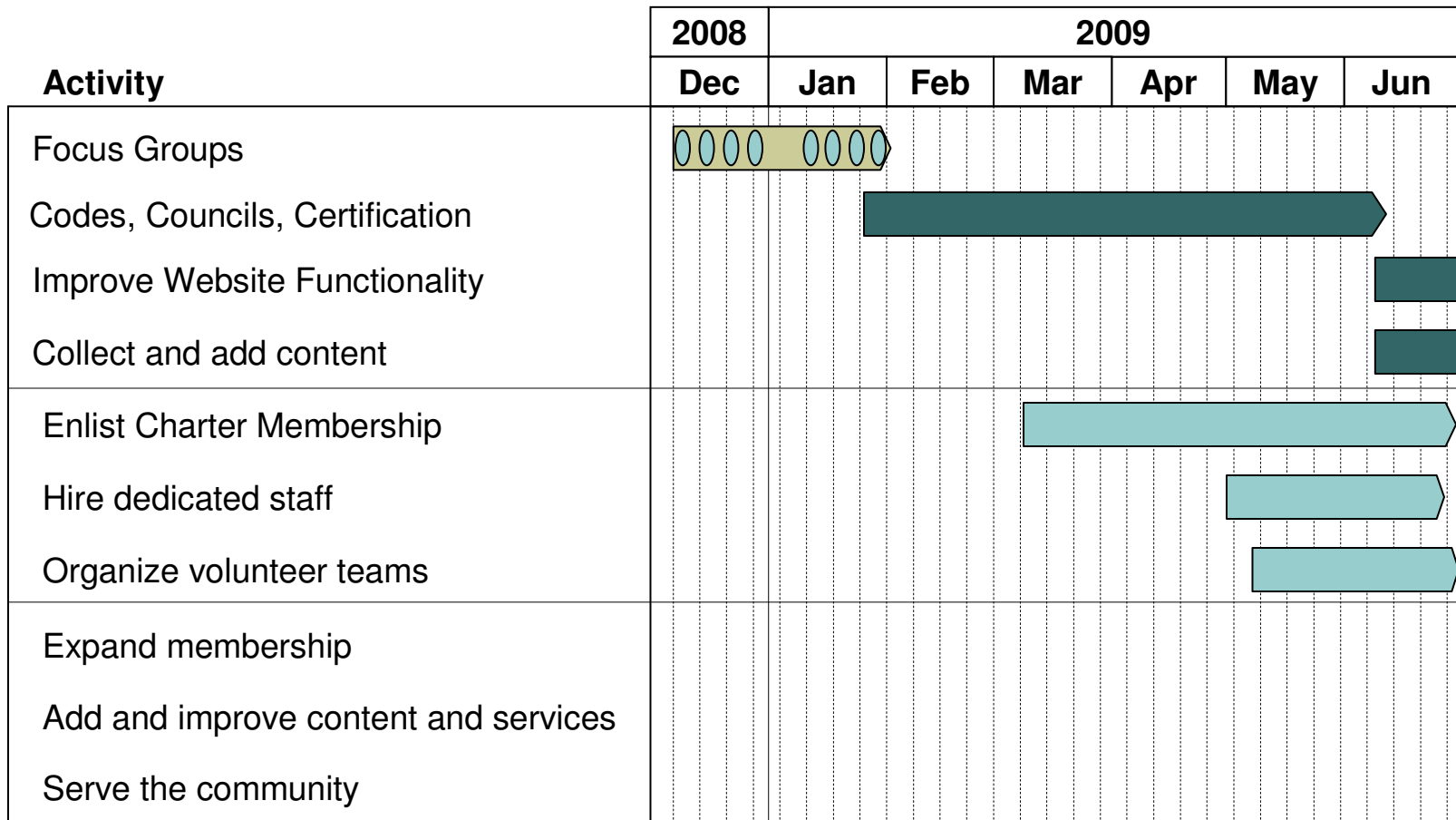


Approach and timing

Activity	2008	2009					
	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Focus Groups							
Improve Website Functionality							
Collect and add content							
Enlist Charter Membership							
Hire dedicated staff							
Organize volunteer teams							
Expand membership							
Add and improve content and services							
Serve the community							



Revised approach and timing



Financial and business model

- Keep it simple and lean
- Leverage volunteer resources
- Estimated revenue needed – 100K to 250K/year to recover costs
 - 1-2 staff equivalent plus overhead and systems enhancement
 - Sources:
 - Individual member fees
 - Corporate member fees
 - Advertising
 - Possibly listing fees – job listings, etc.
- All funds to be reinvested in value to the profession



Membership rollout plan.

Supported by nearly everyone.

- Start with leaders in the field:
 - Invitation only
 - Recruit likely fellows and senior professionals as charter members
 - Invite anyone that a charter member thinks should be invited during the start-up (charter) phase
 - Elect fellows and senior professionals
- Then open it up to anyone that wants to be a member.



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Say you were certified by the XXX, what name would be most attractive for such a certification?

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- Decision Professionals Institute – DPI
- Decision Professional Network – DPN
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