Dance with Chance - Making luck work for you

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'Dance with Chance' is a neatly choreographed book about the role played by chance in life and the consequences of ignoring it. Written by three professors from three different business schools, the book presents a strong case for including chance in our day to day decision making. Once we include the 'chance' element in our decision making, the 'illusion of control' vanishes. Paradoxically, by giving up the 'illusion of control' we get a better 'control' on a decision-making situation. The authors discuss three areas of human activity where we confront decision-making under uncertainty. These are: Medicine, Money, and the Mundane.

The authors make a strong argument for taking a second opinion in medical situations because according to them Medicine is not an exact science and the treatment given at any time is based on the available knowledge at that time. The treatment may not be effective at all. Further, medical errors are abundant and surveys in United States indicate that medical errors are the third largest cause of deaths. No drug...
people who see life in terms of luck and asking them questions about luck, it is not surprising that one ends with answers in terms of luck.

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other aspects of positive or negative attitudes to life. Well, this is hardly a surprise. His concluding principles are: maximize chance opportunities, listen

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With human beings unable to deal with uncertainty, is it possible for computers to do a better job? Statistical and mathematical models have

been used for decision-making for over hundred years, especially by gamblers. The answer from the authors is a resounding ‘No’. Complex

mathematical and statistical models have failed to improve the performance of decisions that humans manage through intuition in many

cases. However, simple models with a few variables have shown a better performance than humans in certain decision-making situations.

For example: Simple thumb rules perform better than gut feel of the interviewer, when a company recruits new staff.

So where does that leave us when we need to take decisions that involve uncertainty? The authors propose a simple system. They classify

all decisions into two: Repetitive and unique. Each of these can be solved in four ways - blinking, thinking, sminking, and experts. These

routes are covered in detail in a single chapter with the preceding 11 chapters as the backdrop.

The first 12 chapters cover the entire content of decision-making under uncertainty and the problems of the ‘Illusion of control’. The last

chapter is about ‘Happiness’ and it really looks like it has been force fitted in to the book because the first chapter cites a survey that states

that ‘Happiness’ is what most people want. The core of the book can be picked up and assimilated without this last chapter.

The book is very readable without too many figures or statistical jargon. The experiments and surveys cited are presented in a simple but

elegant fashion. A reader can understand a lot about the ‘Illusion of control’ and the very understanding will help to identify situations where

the decision-making techniques suggested by the authors are applicable. The techniques are simple and fun to apply, but can reveal a
deeper understanding of the mind. The book is an excellent supplementary reading to the other books of this genre by Daniel Kahneman,

Nassim Nicholas Taleb, and Gigenrenzer.

Another area where chance plays a huge role is the stock market. It is a well-known secret that no one can predict the stock market

accurately and consistently over a long period of time. The so-called stock market experts remain experts on paper and are experts in

hindsight. In fact this topic has been dealt in considerable detail by Taleb in his ‘Fooled by Randomness’ and the authors of this book only

confirm what Taleb had written eloquently with more examples from their professional experience. Investors continue to listen to these

experts and take their advice. Why? Because, by using their advice the investors play safe with their ‘illusion of certainty’.

Dance with Chance has 115 ratings and 13 reviews. Carol said: ‘...in many circumstances, it’s best to dispel the illusion of control and dance instead

with...Â Great book on luck and chance, understanding how our minds work and the mistakes we make, with lots of theory as well as extremely practical

guidelines to make good use of this knowledge. Really well-written and engaging. Read and learn. Chance and luck are important parts of success.
The best way to capitalize on this phenomenon? Leave yourself open to uncertainty.Â As Professor of Decision Sciences Spyros Makridakis and his co-

authors explain in Dance With Chance, Making Luck Work For You, the first kind of uncertainty refers to those probabilities that are lawful and

measurable. For example, the more times you rehearse a presentation, the better it will be. Rehearsal does not guarantee a successful pitch, but there's

no denying that 'Happiness' is what most people want. The core of the book can be picked up and assimilated without this last chapter.

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