

Judgment Impact Report

Why Decision Fatigue Persists in Organizations

The Structural Root Cause — and What RUMI OS Can Do About It

Published: March 2026 Workshop: IWD Event, March 2026 Worksheet Submissions: 26 respondents

Stevie Award Silver | February 2026

Executive Summary

This report examines the structural root causes of decision fatigue in organizational settings and presents RUMI OS — a decision design framework — as a practical response. Workshop data collected from 26 participants at an IWD-related event in March 2026 serves as the primary empirical basis.

Central Argument

Decision fatigue is not a matter of weak will or limited capability. It is the result of an absence of decision structure. When structure is designed, decisions become lighter.

Metric	Result
Participants who articulated their top decision criterion in a single session	73%
Participants who named a criterion they consciously set aside	65%
Participants who made conditional, structured decisions	85%

1. The Problem: Why Decisions Are Exhausting

Every day, employees across organizations face decisions. Promotion offers, transfers, compensation trade-offs, team direction — none of these are unusual. Yet most are approached from scratch, every time. What was learned from the last similar decision? What criteria were used? What was consciously set aside? These are rarely recorded, rarely structured, rarely carried forward.

Freedom Reduction Hypothesis

Decision fatigue is not caused by the volume of information or a lack of ability. It is caused by excessive degrees of freedom in the evaluation space. When the evaluation space is organized and degrees of freedom are reduced, decisions become lighter.

2. RUMI OS: Designing Decision Structure

RUMI OS (Operating System) is a framework that separates judgment from talent or intuition and treats it as a designable structure. It operates in two stages. RUMI stands for Resilient

Upgrading Minimalism Infrastructure — reflecting the philosophy of building decision structure that is lightweight, sustainable, and designed to strengthen over time.

Stage	Content	Effect
OS 1	Core Axes Clarification	Values, purpose, skills, and career vision are connected, separating axes that matter from those that do not. The degrees of freedom in the evaluation space are reduced by one level.
OS 2	Procedure Fixation	The sequence of applying judgment criteria is fixed, and the reasoning behind discarded options is preserved. Decisions accumulate as reusable structure.

When both stages are in place, Decision Minimalism becomes possible — not fewer decisions, but a structure that prevents exhaustion each time.

Decision Minimum Structure

The five elements used to structure decisions in this workshop. The full RUMI OS Decision Minimum Structure comprises six elements, with 'Target State' (What outcome are you aiming for?) as a distinct third element. In this workshop, the Target State element was intentionally omitted to reduce cognitive load in a live 10-minute exercise. Post-workshop analysis confirmed that the 6-element structure — as defined in White Paper v1 (2023) and White Paper v2 (March 2026) — provides greater conceptual completeness and reproducibility.

#	Element	The Question It Answers
1	Situational Context	What circumstances gave rise to this decision?
2	Non-Negotiable Constraints	What conditions cannot be changed?
3	Options Considered	What alternatives were on the table?
4	Top Priority Criterion	What ultimately mattered most?
5	Criteria Set Aside	What was consciously deprioritized?

Element 5 — Criteria Set Aside — is the most critical. Not what was chosen, but what was deliberately set aside reveals the true shape of a person's judgment. The absence of this element is one of the primary drivers of decision fatigue, as today's data confirms.

3. Evidence: IWD Workshop, March 2026

Item	Detail
Total attendees	65 (ages 20s–50s, primarily women, some men)
Worksheet respondents	26 (24 in-person + 2 online)
Session structure	Explanation 15 min / Individual work 10 min / Pair discussion 20 min / Share & Q&A 15 min (approx. 60 min total)
Individual work design	Choose a theme, make a decision in 10 seconds, then document the structure behind it

3.1 Top Priority Criterion: Cluster Analysis

Cluster	Count	%	Description
① Family & Relationships	13	50%	Family time, partner's location, children's school, elder care
② Growth & Experience	8	31%	Career breadth, new experiences, challenge, personal development
③ Health & Lifestyle	3	12%	Daily routine, health constraints (treated as non-negotiable)
④ Compensation & Conditions	2	8%	Ratio of workload to pay, numerical thresholds

Note: This event drew a primarily female audience in an IWD context. The distribution likely reflects participant demographics and life stage. Replication across different populations remains an open question.

3.2 The 'Set Aside' Criterion: Three Patterns

Pattern	Count	Representative Response
Guilt around setting things aside	5 (19%)	"Talking about what I set aside feels like making excuses."
Concept was new	3 (12%)	"What does 'set aside' even mean?"
Named it clearly	17 (65%)	Responses such as: "income increase," "career breadth," "others' opinions"

3.3 Conditional Decision Structure

85% of respondents (22 of 26) did not write simple yes/no decisions. They wrote conditional ones — attaching time horizons, financial thresholds, location requirements, or safety conditions. This shows that employees already carry decision structure internally. It simply has not been made explicit.

Condition Type	Example Response
Time horizon	"Until my child enters university, staying together as a family comes first."
Financial threshold	"If it were more than double my current salary, the answer might be different."
Location / Safety	"Only if it's an English-speaking country." / "Personal safety is non-negotiable."
Partner's preferences	"My partner wants to live abroad — that's what made me say yes."

4. Recommendations for Organizations

Recommendation	Detail
1. Stop treating decision fatigue as an individual problem	When employees struggle with promotion offers, transfers, or compensation decisions, the cause is rarely a lack of judgment. It is the absence of decision structure. Coaching individuals before designing that structure is treating the symptom.
2. Make 'setting things aside' part of the organizational vocabulary	31% of participants had never considered that choosing something necessarily means setting something else aside. When teams share a common language around this, the quality of decision dialogue changes fundamentally.

Recommendation	Detail
3. Treat decision records as organizational infrastructure	When individuals' decision structures are made shareable, decision-making stops being a matter of individual talent or memory. RUMI OS is a design framework for building that infrastructure at the team and organizational level.

5. Credibility and Foundation

5.1 Origins of the Framework

RUMI OS was developed from more than two decades of experience as an executive at top foreign financial institutions. It draws on direct experience in team management, organizational change, and diversity leadership. This is not a framework derived from theory — it was extracted from the practice of actual decisions under real conditions.

5.2 International Recognition

In February 2026, RUMI OS received a Stevie Award Silver — selected from over 1,500 nominations across 36 countries, alongside entries from IBM and Mastercard. Judges commented:

"Reframing decision-making from 'finding the right answer' to 'designing a process under uncertainty' is brilliant Thought Leadership."

"A highly original and culturally grounded leadership innovation that reframes judgment as a repeatable, design-based capability under uncertainty."

"The framework is conceptually strong and socially meaningful."

The consistent feedback from judges was a request for more quantitative data. The conceptual originality and structural rigor of the framework were not in question. This report represents one step in building that quantitative foundation.

5.3 Documented Outcomes (Self-Reported)

Category	Reported Outcomes
Career transitions	15% salary increase, 25% increase, 50% increase; return to full-time employment after a 7-year career break
Entrepreneurs	Multiple large contracts secured; revenue improvement through restructured sales strategy
Management & promotion	Management assessment attempts; title changes; behavioral shifts oriented toward senior roles

Note: All outcomes above are self-reported by program participants. Longitudinal tracking data is currently being compiled.

Closing

Decision fatigue accumulates quietly inside organizations. It rarely becomes a line item. It rarely becomes a training topic. Yet the data from this workshop is clear: 73% of participants who had never encountered this framework were able to articulate their top decision criterion within a single 60-minute session.

This does not mean they acquired a new skill. It means the structure was already there — and the framework gave it a place to land.

Design decision structure into your organization. That is what RUMI OS exists to do.

All data in this report was collected from voluntary, anonymous participant submissions. WOMEN IMPACT STUDIO will continue to build this evidence base through ongoing practice and longitudinal data collection.

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