

Weick's Seven Properties of Sensemaking

1. Grounded in Identity

Sensemaking begins with a sense of who we are. Our identities shape what we notice and how we interpret events.

2. Retrospective

We make sense of events by looking backward. Meaning is often constructed after the fact.

3. Enactive of Sensible Environments

We enact or create part of the environment we then interpret. Our actions shape the context we try to make sense of.

4. Social

Sensemaking is a social process, even when done individually. It involves shared meanings, communication, and collective interpretation.

5. Ongoing

Sensemaking never stops. It is a continuous process influenced by new events, changes, and interpretations.

6. Focused on Extracted Cues

People focus on certain pieces of information or cues to make sense of complex situations. These cues become the basis for meaning-making.

7. Driven by Plausibility Rather Than Accuracy

Sensemaking aims for plausibility - what seems reasonable and coherent - not necessarily what is objectively accurate.

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Factors That Disrupt Sensemaking in Crisis

- Loss of identity or role clarity
- Breakdown in communication
- Absence of shared goals or mental models
- Overload of ambiguous or contradictory information
- Time pressure and lack of reflection
- Emotional stress and fear responses
- Leadership inconsistency or unpredictability
- Fragmentation of social structures or trust