

~~D2.3 Safe Behaviour and Decision Making~~ Evolution 101: Taking the 'Evolutionary Monkey' off our backs

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Firefighters are not 'baboons' (despite suggestions to the contrary!),' BUT: Decision errors are inevitable because of our evolutionary legacy. We need to recognise and work around our information processing limitations.

1. We make common errors in the way we think about the world

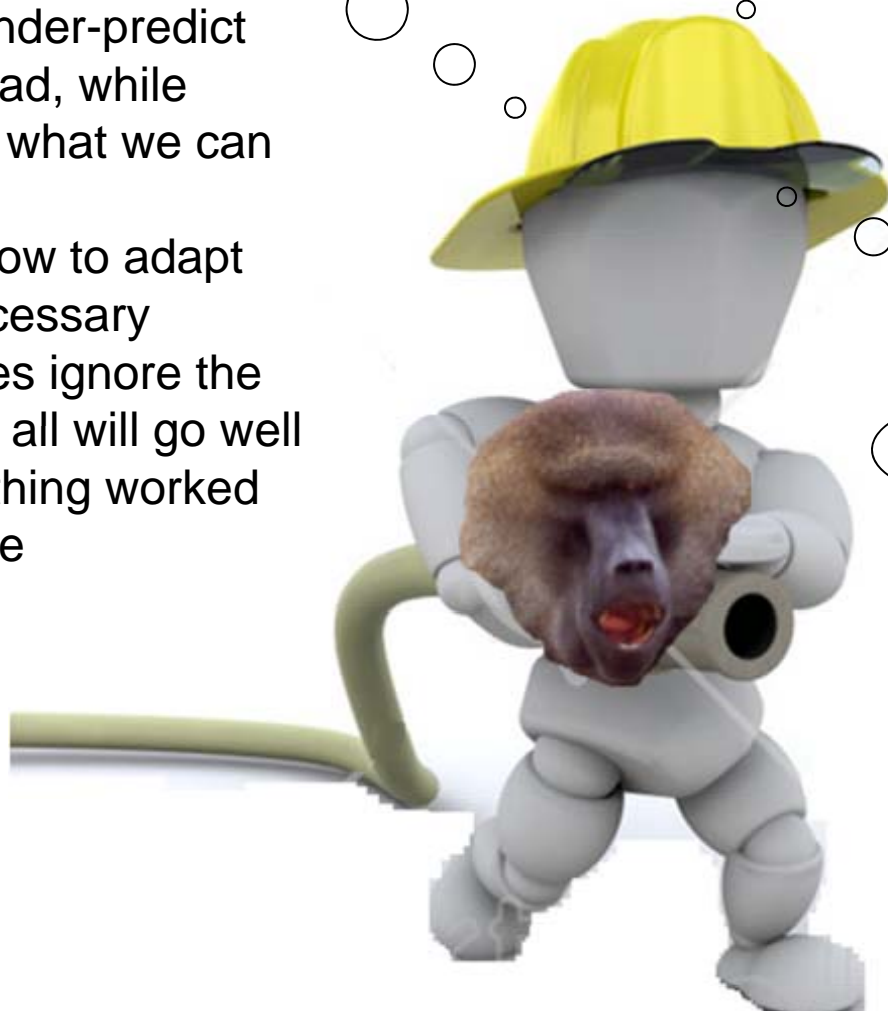
- **We** tend to under-predict rate of fire spread, while over-predicting what we can do about it
- **We** can be slow to adapt plans when necessary
- **We** sometimes ignore the worst and think all will go well because everything worked out o.k. last time

2. We take on more information than we can manage

- **We** tend to take on too much responsibility (i.e. micro-manage)
- **We** overestimate our ability to remember things both now and later on

3. We develop relationships that sometimes hinder us

- **We** look to those we trust for information (sometimes circumventing the chain of command)
- **We** feel more comfortable issuing commands to individuals or groups we are familiar with



What can agencies do to take this monkey off our backs?:

1. More training 'sensitive' to human factors issues
2. Changes to operational procedures and protocols
3. A 'no-blame' human factors element in near-hit accident investigations

