Delegating Decisions: Recruiting Others to Make Difficult Choices

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Past research suggests that people often walk away from choices with many options empty-handed. Yet choosing or walking away are not people’s only options: they often have the option of asking others to choose for them. We show that people delegate difficult choices to others, and delegation mitigates some of the negative effects of choice overload. We show that people are more likely to delegate choices between many options versus few, and the feeling of difficulty underlies this tendency. Additionally, providing the option to delegate reverses the tendency to walk away empty-handed from choices between many options.