

# ScEI CLUB THEORY CORNER

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## Sensemaking Theory

### BACKGROUND

**Sensemaking Theory** (Weick, 1995) describes how individuals interpret and act upon complex, ambiguous situations by constructing meaning through interaction and reflection.

The theory emphasizes that understanding often emerges retrospectively and incrementally, especially in dynamic environments. In medical education, sensemaking helps learners navigate clinical uncertainty, ethical dilemmas, and evolving patient scenarios by encouraging reflection-in-action and adaptive reasoning.

Sensemaking theory has been studied extensively across topics such as leadership, communication, team debriefs, personal identity formation, and ethical decision making, among others.

### FURTHER READING

Etmanski B, Hamstra SJ, Varpio L. The sensemaking narratives of scientists working in health professions education scholarship units: The Canadian experience. *Perspect Med Educ* 2020; 9: 157-165.

Olajire A, Benton M. Narratives, sensemaking, and didactic relationships in longitudinal integrated clerkship education. *J Med Educ & Curric Dev* 2024; 11: 1-6.

Weick KE. Sensemaking in organizations. *Scand J Manag* 1997; 13: 113-116.

Weick KE, Sutcliffe KM, Obstfeld D. Organizing and the process of sensemaking. *Org Science* 2005; 16: 409-421.

