



Olivier Sibony

AUTHOR · BUSINESS SCHOOL PROFESSOR

Boards approve strategies that look rigorous on the deck and fail in the market. The same executives, looking at the same evidence, reach different conclusions on different days, and nobody notices. Most decision processes are built to confirm what senior leaders already believe, not to surface where their judgment is wrong.

Olivier Sibony helps senior leaders redesign the way strategic decisions get made, drawing on behavioural science to expose where bias and inconsistency quietly distort high-stakes calls.

Olivier Sibony's 2026 Biography

Why organisations work with Olivier Sibony

- He co-authored *Noise* with Daniel Kahneman and Cass Sunstein, which means a board hears the original behavioural science argument from one of the people who built it, not a secondhand interpretation.
- Twenty-five years at McKinsey, including running the Global Corporate Strategy Practice, gives him a working vocabulary for the actual decisions executive committees argue about: portfolio bets, M&A, market entry, capital allocation.
- His framework converts cognitive bias from an interesting concept into a procurement question: what does your decision architecture look like, and which specific traps does it fail to catch.
- He is one of a small group who can sit in a HEC Paris and Saïd Business School classroom and a CEO's strategy offsite in the same week, and translate without losing either audience.

Biography highlights

- Co-author of *Noise: A Flaw in Human Judgment* with Daniel Kahneman and Cass R. Sunstein, New York Times and Sunday Times bestseller
- Author of *You're About to Make a Terrible Mistake!*, winner of the 2019 Manpower Foundation Grand Prize for best management book
- Professor of Strategy at HEC Paris and Associate Fellow at Saïd Business School, University of Oxford
- Senior Partner at McKinsey & Company for 25 years, leading the firm's Corporate Strategy Practice globally
- Co-author with Daniel Kahneman and Dan Lovallo of "Before You Make That Big Decision," selected for HBR's *10 Must Reads on Making Smart Decisions*
- Knight in the French Legion of Honour and recipient of the Vernimmen Teaching Award at HEC Paris

AVAILABLE FOR

- Masterclass
- Panel Participation
- Speaking

OLIVIER'S SPEAKING THEMES

- Artificial Intelligence & Generative AI
- Behavioural Economics
- Business Strategy & Growth
- Executive Development
- Risk Management
- Scenario Planning & Strategic Foresight

LANGUAGES: English, French

Biography

Most strategic mistakes do not come from missing information. They come from the way executives process the information they already have.

Behavioural strategy is the discipline of catching those errors before they reach the board paper, and Olivier Sibony has spent two decades building the case for treating it as a serious management practice rather than a curiosity.

His credentials sit on both sides of the divide that usually separates academics from operators. He spent 25 years at McKinsey & Company, eventually as Senior Partner running the firm's Global Corporate Strategy Practice and a European leader of the Consumer sector. In 2015 he moved full time into teaching, joining HEC Paris as a Professor of Strategy and taking up an Associate Fellowship at Oxford's Saïd Business School.

The intellectual work shows up most clearly in the books. *Noise: A Flaw in Human Judgment*, co-authored with Daniel Kahneman and Cass R. Sunstein, became a New York Times and Sunday Times bestseller and reframed an entire category of judgment error that bias literature had ignored. *You're About to Make a Terrible Mistake!* won the Manpower Foundation Grand Prize and turned the academic case into 40 specific techniques executives can use. Earlier, his Harvard Business Review article with Kahneman and Dan Lovallo, "Before You Make That Big Decision," was selected for HBR's *10 Must Reads on Making Smart Decisions*.

What makes him useful in a room full of operators is the McKinsey vocabulary underneath the behavioural science. He talks about decision architecture the way other people talk about org design: as something you build deliberately, audit regularly, and rebuild when it stops catching the errors it was meant to catch.

Key speaking topics

- Behavioural strategy and decision quality
- Cognitive bias in executive judgment
- Noise and inconsistency in organisational decisions
- Decision architecture in senior teams
- Strategic choice under uncertainty
- Algorithms, AI, and the limits of human intuition
- Diversity and personnel decision-making

Ideal for

- CEOs, executive committees, and boards reviewing how major capital allocation and strategy decisions get made
- Chief Strategy Officers and corporate development teams running M&A, portfolio, and market-entry processes
- CHROs and senior HR leaders responsible for hiring, performance review, and promotion systems where noise quietly distorts outcomes
- Investment committees and risk leadership teams whose decisions repeat under uncertainty

Audience outcomes

- A clearer view of where their own decision processes are most exposed to bias and noise
- A vocabulary to challenge confident recommendations without

attacking the people making them

- Specific techniques for building dissent, structured disagreement, and pre-mortems into existing governance
- A framework for deciding when to trust judgment, when to trust data, and when to trust an algorithm
- A sharper sense of which decisions deserve the heaviest process and which do not

Olivier Sibony's 2026 talks & topics

How biases distort decision making, and what you can do about it

An interactive working session on the cognitive traps that derail strategic choice, built around real corporate cases.

Key takeaways:

- The nine recurring biases that show up in executive decisions
- Why individual debiasing fails and decision architecture works
- Concrete techniques senior teams can install inside existing governance

Noise, the other flaw in human judgment

The argument from the bestselling book: variability in judgment is as costly as bias, and almost no organisation measures it.

Key takeaways:

- The difference between bias and noise, and why the distinction matters
- Where noise typically hides in performance reviews, hiring, underwriting, and forecasting
- Practical noise audits leaders can commission inside their own organisations

Between AI and intuition: when to trust algorithms

A clear-eyed look at where machine judgment beats human judgment, where it does not, and how to build the right division of labour.

Key takeaways:

- The classes of decision where algorithms reliably outperform experts
 - The conditions under which expert intuition still earns its keep
 - How to design hybrid decision processes without abdicating accountability
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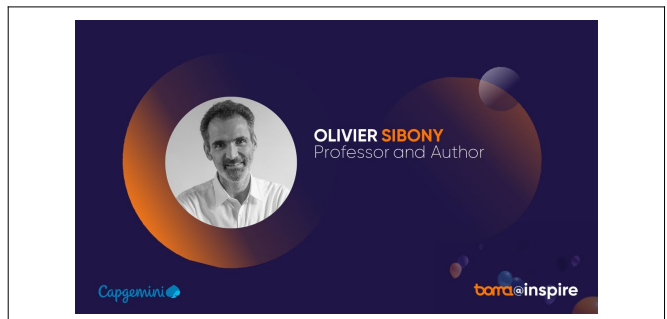
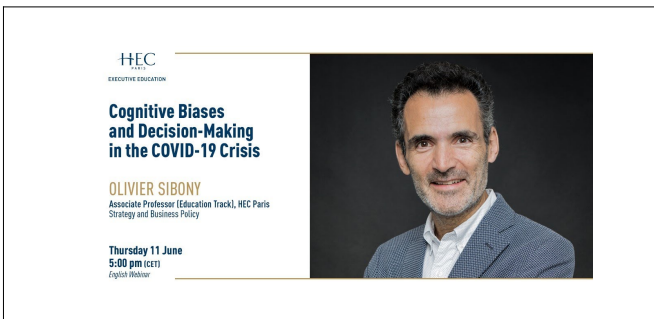
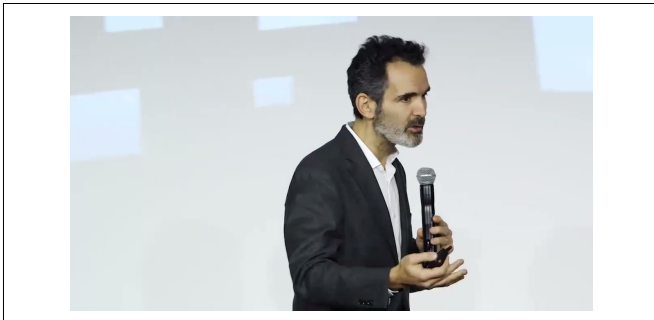
Strategic decisions under uncertainty

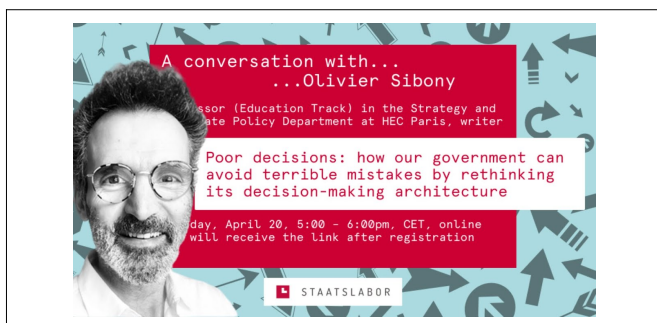
A working framework for making major commitments when the evidence is thin and the consequences are large.

Key takeaways:

- Why standard strategy processes often produce false confidence
- How to use scenarios and pre-mortems without theatre
- The role of structured dissent in serious capital decisions

Olivier Sibony's Videos





Olivier Sibony's 2026 speaking fees

Specific fees fall within the ranges shown. These are presented as a guide only and are subject to change without notice.

	EUR	GBP	USD
Home Country	€12000 to €40000	£10,001 - £35,000	\$15000 - \$50000
Asia Pacific	Please enquire	Please enquire	Please enquire
Europe	€12000 to €40000	£10,001 - £35,000	\$15000 - \$50000
Middle East & Africa	Please enquire	Please enquire	Please enquire
South America	Please enquire	Please enquire	Please enquire
United Kingdom	Please enquire	Please enquire	Please enquire
US East Coast	€12000 to €40000	£10,001 - £35,000	\$15000 - \$50000
US West Coast	€12000 to €40000	£10,001 - £35,000	\$15000 - \$50000
Virtual	Please enquire	Please enquire	Please enquire