Reading / EN

A better number needs a recognizable standard.

Distinguishing fit to a goal, weighting, and actual improvement.

A better number needs a recognizable standard.

Two stipulated alternatives change rank as soon as one criterion is weighted more heavily. The reading explains what claim a calculation supports and what responsibility it does not assume.

Two alternatives and a goal

In a stipulated numerical example, two properties are described on a scale from zero to one. The target value for both is one. Alternative A reaches 0,9 and 0,4. Alternative B reaches 0,6 and 0,8. The numbers deliberately denote neither people nor any measured property. They serve only to make an assessment rule transparent.

The two squared distances from the goal are added as the deviation. A receives $0{,}1^2 + 0{,}6^2 = 0{,}37$. B receives $0{,}4^2 + 0{,}2^2 = 0{,}20$. Under this rule, B is the better-fitting alternative. The rule also stipulates that both properties initially count equally.

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A different weight changes the decision

Now the first property counts fourfold. A receives $4 \times 0{,}01 + 0{,}36 = 0{,}40$. B receives $4 \times 0{,}16 + 0{,}04 = 0{,}68$. Under this framework, A is preferred. No property has changed. The same stipulated properties have been assessed differently.

The change in ranking can be followed arithmetically. It does not reveal what weighting would be appropriate in a real decision. That would first require an explanation of which properties are meant, how they are recorded, who is affected, and what reasons support their different weights.

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An index adopts the framework

A nonnegative total deviation J can be transformed into an index through $B = 1 / (1 + J)$. For finite J, B is greater than zero and at most one. A smaller deviation produces a larger index. The conversion does not change the underlying selection of data,

goals, and weights.

The value is therefore not a probability that a decision is correct. An index of one confirms only that the positively weighted partial costs vanish. An overlooked property can still be problematic. A well-fitting value can also indicate the successful fulfillment of a poorly justified goal.

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Three reasons for a better report

A new assessment can improve because the observed situation has changed. It can change because relationships in the model are assessed differently. It can likewise change because a goal or weight has shifted. All three changes can be justified. They should remain recognizable as different changes.

Drift decomposition separates these groups through specified calculation steps. Their sum gives the overall change, while the individual contributions can depend on the order. The calculation is an accounting of model assessments. Without additional investigation, it supplies no causal allocation of what has happened in the world.

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A good initial value does not yet show recovery

Two stipulated dynamics can have the same initial value and then follow different courses. If a deviation is multiplied by 0,6 at each step, it decreases. If it is multiplied by 1,2, it grows. An index using only the same initial state does not distinguish these courses at the first instant.

Fit to a goal and dynamic stability are therefore examined separately. A small temporal difference is not automatically recovery, either. Perhaps an unfavorable situation is merely progressing slowly. Statements about sustainability need a period, an admissible range, and specified disturbances. A single good index does not contain that examination.

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Examine the calculation and its justification

For an exercise of your own, choose two fictional alternatives and two clearly named criteria. Write

down the scale, goal, and weights used before comparing. Then change only one weight. Note whether the ranking changes and what reason might justify such a change.

Some boundaries should additionally be examined individually in a decision. An overall value can offset a deterioration in one place with a gain elsewhere. Whether such an offset is permissible at all is a question for the justified framework. Addition alone does not answer it.

The exercise separates two tasks: calculating correctly and assessing with justification. A calculation error is checked by recalculation. An unsuitable goal is changed with justification. A violated boundary does not become invisible through a better overall result. Calculation supports judgment where its subject and scope remain recognizable.

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Questions

What property might be missing from your overall number?

Would a plausible different weighting prefer the same alternative?

Has the situation changed, or only its assessment?

About this edition

A reading edition based on AdL, collected edition 2.0 of 14 October 2026, chapters 32, 35, and 37–38, and Mathematische Grundlegung v2.0, sections 4–7. The numerical example with two normalized quantities is new. It illustrates dependence on weighting and is not an empirical comparison. The temporal change term of the older foundations is not adopted as evidence of stability.

Adds a completely reproducible example with two alternatives.

Explains the index as relative fit to a goal, distinct from probability, stability, and justice.

Presents changes in state, relationship model, and standard as different sources of a new assessment.

An independent adaptation of selected passages with new examples and context. This is not a complete reprint of the source texts. Examples are fictional; ADL interpretations are editorial applications. External sources do not establish ADL's effectiveness.

Sources

AdL Architektur des Lebens · überarbeitete

Gesamtausgabe 2.0

First work, chapters 32, 35, and 37–38.

ADL Mathematische Grundlegung · Version 2.0

Sections 4–7 on framework stipulation, deviation function, and drift decomposition; later conceptual clarifications in collected edition 2.0.