

# Force Overtime? Or Go for the Win?

February 07, 2018

On Jan. 16, 2016, with time expiring in the fourth quarter of a playoff game between the Green Bay Packers and the Arizona Cardinals, the Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers completed an improbable Hail Mary touchdown pass to bring the Packers within 1 point of the Cardinals.

The Packers then had a choice to make. They could kick an extra point, which would send the game into overtime. Or they could go for a 2-point conversion, which though more difficult would win the game.

Ultimately, the Packers chose to tie the game with an extra point. Then their fans watched in dismay as the Cardinals promptly scored a touchdown in overtime and won the game.

The Packers had fallen prey to a common fallacy: When facing decisions like this, people are often myopic, focusing too much on the possibility of an immediate loss. They avoid the risk of instant defeat, even when taking that risk offers the best path to victory.