

Information Biases

There are 100s of biases that can effect your decision making abilities. Here are a few common ones to look out for.

1. Anchoring Bias

People are over-reliant on the first piece of information they hear. In a salary negotiation, whoever makes the first offer establishes a range of reasonable possibilities in each person's mind.

5. Bandwagon Effect

The probability of one person adopting a belief increases based on the number of people who hold that belief. This is a powerful form of groupthink and is the reason why meetings are often unproductive.

9. Ostrich Effect

The decision to ignore dangerous or negative information by "burying" your head in the sand. Research suggests that investors check the value of their stocks significantly less often during bad markets.

2. Availability Heuristic

People overestimate the importance of the information that is easily available to them. A person might argue that people are more likely to die in an accident than by stroke because the news reports so many accidents. (You are more likely to die from a stroke.)

6. Blind Spot Bias

Failing to recognize your own cognitive biases is a bias in itself. People notice cognitive and motivational biases in other more than themselves.

3. Confirmation Bias

We tend to listen only to information that confirms our preconceptions and we ignore conflicting information.

7. Choice-supportive bias

When you choose something, you tend to feel positive about it, even if that choice has flaws. Like how you think your dog is awesome -- even if it bites people every once in a while.

4. Clustering Illusion

This is the tendency to see patterns in random events. It is key to various gambling fallacies, like the idea that red is more or less likely to turn up in roulette after a string of reds.



8. Placebo Effect

When simply believing that something will have a certain effect on you causes it to have that effect. In medicine, people given fake pills often experience the same physiological effects as people given the real thing.

10. Overconfidence

Some of us are too confident about our abilities, and this causes us to take greater risks. Experts are more prone to this bias than lay people, since they are more convinced that they are right.



There are two ways to be fooled. One is to believe what isn't true; the other is to refuse to believe what is true.

-Søren Kierkegaard

HOW TO SPOT FAKE NEWS



CONSIDER THE SOURCE

Click away from the story to investigate the site, its mission and its contact info.



READ BEYOND

Headlines can be outrageous in an effort to get clicks. What's the whole story?



CHECK THE AUTHOR

Do a quick search on the author. Are they credible? Are they real?



SUPPORTING SOURCES?

Click on those links. Determine if the info given actually supports the story.



CHECK THE DATE

Reposting old news stories doesn't mean they're relevant to current events.



IS IT A JOKE?

If it is too outlandish, it might be satire. Research the site and author to be sure.



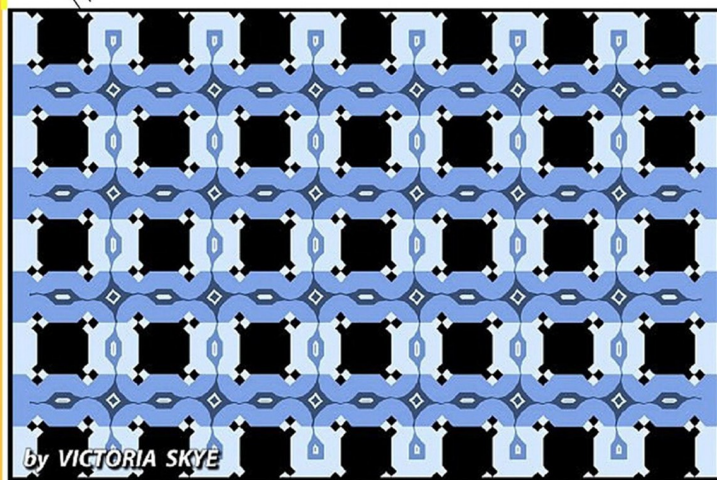
CHECK YOUR BIASES

Consider if your own beliefs could affect your judgement.



ASK THE EXPERTS

Ask a librarian, or consult a fact-checking site.



by VICTORIA SKYE

CAFE WALL ILLUSION

Do the horizontal bars look like they bend and are at an angle? Grab a ruler, because they don't bend. They are straight and in parallel rows. The alternating target patterns, rows, and colors all combine to trick your brain.

You can't believe everything you think!

KEEP YOUR BRAIN WORKING!

1 EXERCISE



Any kind that you can do will work: Walking, Weightlifting, Chair Aerobics. Dancing is an especially good form of Body & Brain exercise!



2 NEW SKILL

Learn a NEW skill. The important part is NEW. This is what helps create new neural connections in your brain. Do something that works your hands, mind, & challenges you.

The GOOD NEWS about learning a skill, instrument, or language is that you don't have to be good at it! The important part is to keep being curious. Keep learning new things.

3 MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

Learn music. Just listening to your favorite music has many brain and emotional benefits. Learning to read music is like learning a new language. Learning an instrument engages your mind & body connection to work it.

4 ANOTHER LANGUAGE



Learn another language. Studies are showing that people who are bilingual and use both language often, stave off dementia longer. Learn a language and find someone to talk to. (Being social is good for your overall health also.)

5 DIET

HEART HEALTHY = BRAIN HEALTHY!
Studies have show a heart healthy diet works in helping to prevent dementia. The DASH diet and the MEDITERRANEAN diet are show to lower heart risk. The two have been combined into the MIND diet.

THE MIND DIET



Confirmation Bias vs. Belief Perseverance

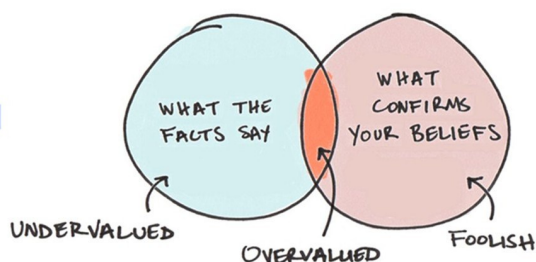
Definition: *not bothering to seek out information that contradicts your ideas*

Definition: *holding on to your ideas over time, and actively rejecting information that contradicts your ideas*

Benefits and downsides:
enables quick solutions, but misses finding out when first guesses are wrong

Benefits and downsides:
less internal mental conflict, but more social conflict

THE CONFIRMATION BIAS



Want to learn more?

Here are two entertaining TV series good for solid science and rational thought..

Brain Games - Nat Geo
Adam Ruins Everything - TruTV



Liked the Mind Games program?

Here are some good books for further study.

- The Hidden Brain - Shankar Vedantam
- Why People Believe Weird Things - Michael Shermer
- Quirkology - Richard Wiseman
- Paranormality - Richard Wiseman
- 101 Bets You Will Always Win - Richard Wiseman
- Captivology - Ben Parr
- Thinking, Fast and Slow by Daniel Kahneman
- The Skeptic's Guide To The Universe - Dr. Steven Novella
- Extraordinary Beliefs - Peter Lamont
- The Lottery - Shirley Jackson

A LITTLE ABOUT YOUR PRESENTER

Born on the Southwest side of Chicago, William Pack got his first job in a magic shop at the age of 11. He is an award winning magician and storyteller, Victorian séance re-enactor, former card cheat, ex-casino surveillance, occasional author, and historian. His natural comedy and astonishing sleight of hand has made him a popular choice for banquet and party entertainment. Available for Corporate and Private events.



♣ PROFESSIONAL
♦ MEMORABLE
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WILLIAM PACK
MORE THAN MAGIC