



***Made to Stick* by Chip and Dan Heath**

Think you might want to read this book?

Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die combines the research of two brothers, Chip and Dan Heath, who each study message delivery methods but from different perspectives. Chip, a professor at Stanford University, researches the longevity of “bad ideas” and Dan, co-founder of Thinkwell, a start-up publishing company, works with his team to determine the best ways to teach difficult subjects. Taken from the perspective of what makes an idea stick, this book analyzes and presents effective delivery methods to increase the retention of concepts or ideas. The Heath brothers use real-world examples and a somewhat informal tone to assist their readers in applying the six principles of “stickiness” (**S**imple, **U**nexpected, **C**oncrete, **C**redible, **E**motional, **S**taories: **SUCCESS**) necessary for effective concept retention. Using the principles and strategies outlined in *Made to Stick* allows us to celebrate our current methods that enhance students’ learning and retention to strengthen the way we teach.

What would Socrates ask?

- Should the goal of all learning be retention?
- What makes a concept I teach “sticky”?
- Why is it difficult to make ideas stick?
- Are sticky ideas applicable to all types of message formats (lesson plans, blogs, manuscripts, etc.)?
- What do you believe is true about teaching, related to sticky ideas?
- Does audience play a role in idea retention and delivery?

Statistics

- “In an average one-minute speech, the typical student uses 2.5 statistics. Only one student in ten tells a story...When students are asked to recall the speeches, 63% remember the stories. Only five percent remember any individual statistic.”

Concepts

- For an idea to stick, you have to make the audience: 1. **Pay attention**, 2. **Understand and remember it**, 3. **Agree/Believe**, 4. **Care**, 5. **Be able to act on it**. After a review of hundreds of “sticky” ideas, the same six principles were apparent.
 - **Pay attention:** Unexpectedness - Generate interest and curiosity in the idea in a manner that violates people’s expectations and opens gaps in their knowledge, without filling the gap.
 - “Surprise gets your attention...Interest keeps your attention.”
 - **Understand and remember it:** Concreteness - Make the idea clear so the idea will mean the same thing to everyone in your audience.
 - Abstraction makes ideas harder to understand, thus harder to remember.

- Example:
 - 1. Read the list below, spending five to ten seconds on each one. As you move down the list, you will notice “it feels different to remember different kinds of things.”
 - Remember the capital of Kansas.
 - Remember the first line of “Hey Jude” (or some other song that you know well).
 - Remember the Mona Lisa.
 - Remember the house where you grew up.
 - Remember the definition of “truth.”
 - Remember the definition of “watermelon.”
 - The more concrete the memory, the more connections you have to that memory, making it stick.
- **Agree/Believe:** Credibility - Sticky ideas “carry their own credentials”, allowing people to test out the idea for themselves (“try before you buy”).
 - “We believe because our parents or our friends believe.”
- **Care:** Emotions - The audience needs to feel something.
 - When people care, they are more likely to take action.
- **Be able to act on it:** Stories - Tell stories to multiply the experience of the audience.
 - “Stories illustrate causal relationships that people hadn’t recognized before and highlight unexpected, resourceful ways in which people have solved problems.”

Quotes from the author

- “By ‘stick,’ we mean that your ideas are understood and remembered, and have a lasting impact - they change your audience’s opinions or behavior.”
- “Core messages help people avoid bad choices by reminding them of what’s important.”
- “Naturally sticky ideas are stuffed full of concrete words and images...”
- “...the difference between an expert and a novice is the ability to think abstractly.
- “Statistics are rarely meaningful in and of themselves. Statistics will, and should, almost always be used to illustrate a relationship. It’s more important for people to remember the relationship than the number.”
- “The most basic way to make people care is to form an association between something they don’t yet care about and something they do care about.”
- “Stories can almost single-handedly defeat the Curse of Knowledge.”

Organizations/schools working on answers

- [NYU](#)

Gateways to further learning

- [Storytelling Strategies](#)
- [Why You Need to Use Storytelling for Learning](#)

Referenced books with the potential to impact leading and learning

Author(s) Last Name	Title
Gladwell	The Tipping Point
Berger	Contagious: Why Things Catch On
Willingham	Why Don't Students Like School
Sutton	Weird Ideas that Work

The applicability of this book to education is



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