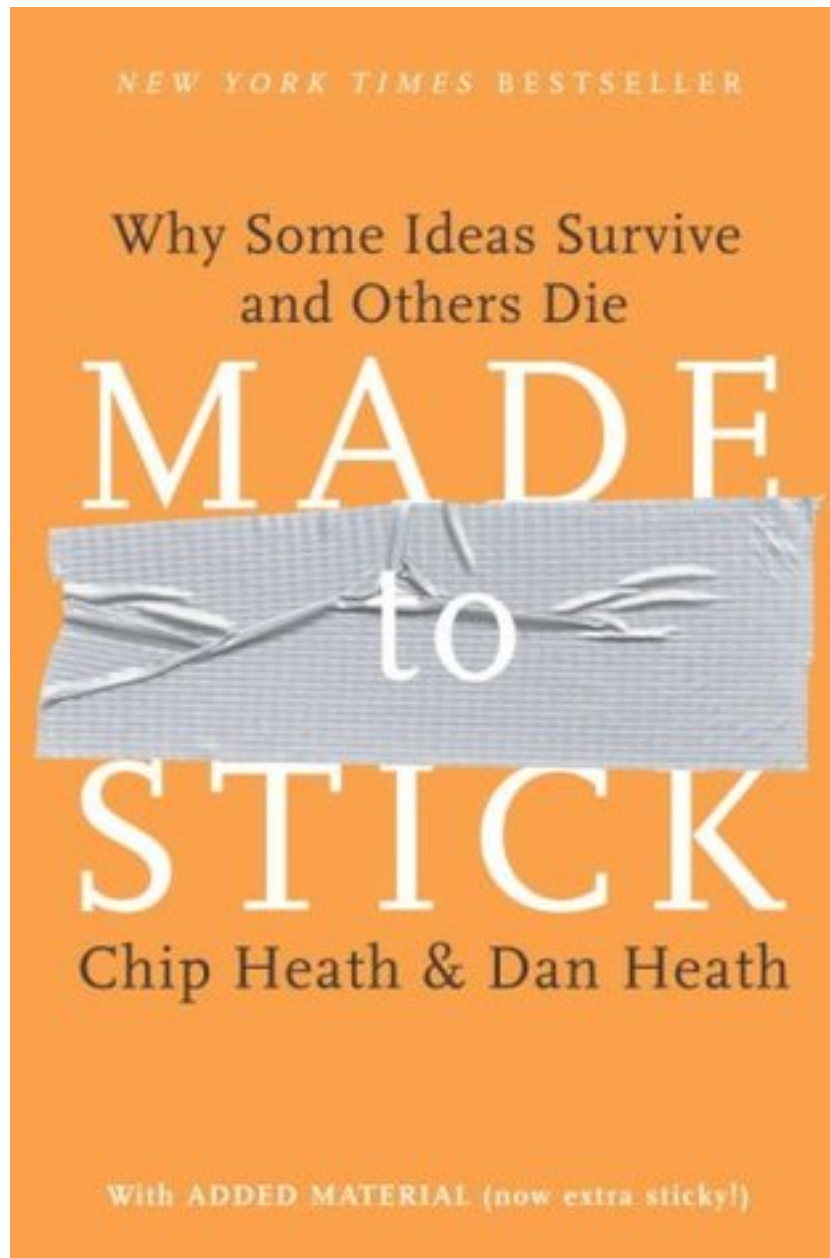


Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die Book PDF Download



By:
Chip Heath

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Trevor

I came upon this book in a convoluted fashion. It was nearly recommended to me in a round about sort of way by Richard, a GoodReads friend, when he pointed to a review of

by someone else on GoodReads who is some sort of expert in the field (although, I have to admit I'm still not totally sure which field that is). The expert felt Gladwell was a little too simplistic. I enjoyed Gladwell's books very much and so was keen to see what made them seem too simplistic to someone "in the field" and

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This is a very interesting book. There is no question that this book would be very useful if you are a teacher or a journalist " it shows how stories are better than lists of facts and statistics and shows how structuring your message around concrete examples that are directly relevant to the needs of your audience is going to make your audience much more interested in what you have to say. This all sounds far too familiar and far too simple " but actually, the book is remarkably good at breathing new life into these near clichés. The problem is that everyone knows things like KISS

(Keep It Simple Stupid) but no one ever bothers following this advice, mostly because it is given as abstract advice (some idiot talking about the KISS Principle) rather than in good, clear examples in ways that are designed to make the lesson stick.

Many of the stories in this book I had heard before, in fact, many more of the stories in this book than in any of Gladwell's books, but they are told not so much to get you to drop your jaw in surprise, which does seem to be Gladwell's gift even when I don't agree with him, but rather to instruct,

The clever thing they do in the book is to use lots of stories from not-for-profit organisations that are seeking to get their message across – stories not just about people making money – and how these organisations have been –creative– in attracting the attention of their potential audience. The point that is made over and over again is that it really has nothing to do with being creative, it is about knowing what the rules are that make a good story – a story that is directed at illuminating your key message.

That is another thing that I learned in this book – that there should be one message, not three, that if you have three main messages no one will remember any of your –messages–.

At the start of this book I was worried that it might turn out to be a –standard American Self-help book– as it did have that kind of smell about it. But it redeemed itself nicely. The advice is the kind of advice one can never hear too frequently about the benefits of keeping a message simple and direct. It is not about dumbing down the message, it is about making the message clear. And there is a hell of a difference between those two.

Sundeeep

: When marketing anything, keep these six concepts in mind if you want your message to stick: Simple, Unexpected, Concrete, Credible, Emotional, Stories; yes, my friends, that spells SUCCESS. If it sounds like too much work, these two concepts also work: Free, Sex (noooo, that's not in the book –but it works I tell you!).

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Si. It's a quick, fun read full of interesting anecdotes and examples that make the book's message more *concrete* (a-hem). If you're never going to pick it up, at least read a breakdown of the six principles on the book's website.

One(ish)-liners for each of the six principles:

- * Simplicity - boil it all down to the core message you want people to walk away with. the one thing they should know/do. the key takeaway. the essence of your point. the singular (okay, I'll stop).
- * Unexpectedness - generate interest and curiosity by being counter-intuitive or using surprise/some other technique. Oh, and you should send me money (see? that's called "surprise").
- * Concreteness - explain ideas "in terms of human actions, in terms of sensory information"; people think in pictures, so paint a picture. For example, I'm sitting at my desk in my room typing this on my Dell laptop, sipping water and eating green curry chicken over rice. If you make it to the end of this post, I bet you'll remember what I ate, but you won't remember all six principles.
- * Credibility - it's only what is said because of who says it; make sense? If you can't get a spokesperson (Oprah), be vividly detailed; "sticky ideas have to carry their own credentials".
- * Emotions - get people to care about your idea by evoking a feeling around your idea, and keep in mind that "we are wired to feel things for people, not for abstraction." You make me happy by reading this blog post. (Don't you feel happier knowing that, mom?)

Mark Dickson

Perhaps it was because this book came highly recommended from a reliable source, but I was greatly disappointed. This book was a redundant snooze. The ultimate test, I suppose, is whether the ideas from this book do, in fact, stick. It suffices to say that "enjoyability" is NOT on the list of what makes an idea stick.

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what makes an idea stick.

It's quite clear that the authors are doing their utmost to follow their own advice. That this makes the book almost unreadably repetitive is possibly an argument against the book's worth. On the other hand, if the ideas in the book stay with you, then their premise that beating you over the skull with a blunt object is the best way to make ideas stick may be both accurate and demonstrable.

Don't get me wrong. I wanted to like this book. It just read so much like a boring textbook for college freshmen that it was often hard to stomach.

Of course, this could just be a mismatched audience gripe. If you're a clueless corporate advertising wannabe, this book will probably be right up your alley. Or if you're teaching a course on advertising or communication, your students might get something out of it.

If you're actually into what makes ideas stick, why not pick something a little more rigorous, perhaps on memetics. I recommend Susan Blackmore's "Meme Machines" or Richard Brodie's "Virus of the Mind". For the more philosophically inclined, Dan Dennett's "Darwin's Dangerous Idea" might also be a lot of fun.

Kevan

Update #2: Yep. Still recommending it. I

Update #1, at the halfway point: five stars already.

I want to read this book twice, at least. This will directly change how I write, present, think, create and make things. I know I need to keep experimenting to make my communication more memorable, more meaningful, and I'll be playing with many of the techniques described here.

A few key points that I want to experiment with in my own work:

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A few key points that I want to experiment with in my own work:

"If you've asked somebody to remember three things, you've asked them to remember nothing." I need to simplify messages to ONE key element. (I will use this when writing Voice & Tone guidelines for clients)