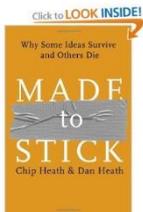


Are You Communicating Confusion or Clarity?

6 Principles That Can Change Your Life from [Made to Stick](#) by Chip and Dan Heath

From: Susan Bock, CEO (Chief Everything Officer!)

Just when it seems we have mastered the communication mystery, when we believe we are clearly communicating, boom – reality sets in. It is not pretty. Communication is the key to success in business, our personal lives and perhaps most importantly, in the relationship with ourselves. If we don't clearly communicate, we're doomed. This isn't just about the external dialog we have with others. The clarity of the internal dialog that guides our every thought and action is where it all begins.



Whether it's creating a marketing message, a compelling sales offer, negotiating, or having a conversation with friends, family and colleagues, the most effective communicator wins. Are you a winner? Here are 6 suggestions from [Made to Stick](#) by Chip and Dan Heath.

#1. Simplicity – how do we strip down an idea to its core?

We must be masters of exclusion. Saying something short is not the mission -- sound bites are not the ideal. Proverbs are the ideal. We must create ideas that are both simple and profound. *The golden rule is the also the model of simplicity: a one-sentence statement so profound that an individual could spend a lifetime working to follow it.*

#2 Unexpectedness -- how do we get ourselves and others to pay attention?

We need to violate people's expectations. We need to be counterintuitive. We can use surprise -- an emotion whose function is to increase alertness and cause. For our ideas to endure, we must generate interest and curiosity. *We can engage curiosity by systematically opening gaps in their knowledge -- and then filling those gaps.*

#3. Concreteness -- how do we make our ideas clear?

We must explain our ideas in the terms of human actions, in terms of sensory information. This is where so much business communication goes awry. Mission statements, synergies, strategies, visions -- they are often ambiguous to the point of being meaningless. Naturally sticky ideas are full of concrete images -- ice filled bathtubs, apples with razors, because our brains are wired to remember concrete data. *Speaking concretely is the only way to ensure that our idea will mean the same thing to everyone in the audience.*

#4. Credibility -- how do we make people believe our ideas?

How do we make ourselves believe our ideas? When the former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop talked about a public health issue, most people accept his ideas without skepticism. In most day-to-day situations we don't enjoy this authority. We need ways to help people test their ideas for themselves -- a try before you buy. When we're trying to build a case for something, most of us instinctively grasp for hard numbers. However, in many cases this is exactly the wrong approach. In the U.S. presidential debate in 1980 between Ronald Reagan and Jimmy Carter, Reagan could have cited innumerable statistics demonstrating the sluggishness of the economy. Instead, he asked a simple question that allowed voters to test for themselves: "before you vote, ask yourself if you are better off today than you were four years ago."

An interesting side note: The same question was asked in the 2012 election...perhaps some things haven't changed all that much in 32 years!

#5. Emotions -- how do you get people to care about your ideas?

We make them feel something. Sometimes the hard part is finding the right emotion to harness. For instance, it's difficult to get teenagers to quit smoking by instilling in them the fear of the consequences, but it's easier to get them to quit by tapping into their resentment of the duplicity of big tobacco companies.

#6. Stories -- how do we get people to act on our ideas?

We tell stories. Firefighters naturally swap stories after every fire, and by doing so they multiply their experience; after years of hearing stories, they have a richer, more complete mental catalogue of critical situations they might confront during a fire. Research shows that mentally rehearsing a situation helps us perform better when we encounter that situation. Similarly, hearing stories acts as a kind of mental flight simulator, preparing us to respond more quickly and effectively.

SUSAN BOCK

COACH AUTHOR SPEAKER

These are the six principles of successful ideas. To summarize, here's the checklist you'll find in ***Made to Stick*** for creating a successful idea:

A **S**imple **U**nexpected **C**oncrete **C**redentialed **E**mootional **S**tory.

S. -- U. -- C. -- C. -- E. -- S.

No special expertise is needed to apply these principles. That doesn't mean that using these principles is easy. So why does communication get in our way? Sadly, there is a villain in the story. The villain is a natural psychological tendency that consistently confounds our ability to create ideas using these principles. It's called the curse of knowledge.

There is so much more to this book – something for the solo-preneur to the mega-company.

A special thank you to my editor, who consistently provides me with encouragement, inspiration, and opportunity to laugh at myself.



I've shown 1,000's of women how to let go of what is holding them hostage and step into their purpose, power and potential. Would you like to learn more? Check out my Coaching packages and 'On Purpose' Power Products at www.SusanBock.com

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