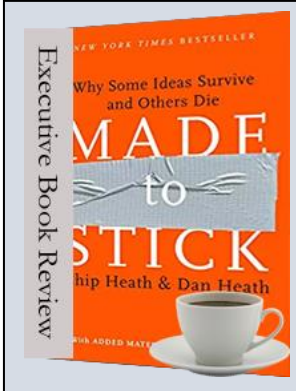




Book # 114  
Event # 215

## Made to Stick

by Dan and Chip Heath  
Reviewed by John Rugh



### About the Authors

Dan Heath and his brother Chip are co-authors of four New York Times bestsellers: **Made to Stick**, **Switch**, **Decisive**, and **The Power of Moments**. Their books have sold over 3 million copies worldwide and been translated into 33 languages. Dan is a Senior Fellow at Duke University's CASE center, which supports entrepreneurs who are fighting for social good. Chip is a professor at Stanford Graduate School of Business, teaching courses on business strategy and organizations.

### About the Book

**Made to Stick** unveils the anatomy of ideas that stick (that is, ideas that win attention, gain traction, get spread, etc.) and offers proven methods to make them stickier. A fast-paced tour of sticky idea success stories, and failures, this book offers an interesting and compelling value proposition: it promises to change the way you communicate.

### The Book's ONE THING

Sticky messages of all kinds, whether true or false, draw their power from the same six principles:

1. Simplicity
2. Unexpectedness
3. Concreteness
4. Credibility
5. Emotions
6. Stories

*"As we pored over hundreds of sticky ideas, we saw, over and over, the same six principles at work"* From Made to Stick

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*Need to grow top line revenue? Improve bottom-line profits? Build accountable and trusting teams? Improve cash flow? Develop leadership team members? Blue Sky Leadership Consulting works with small and mid-market organizations to leverage Strategic Thinking and Execution Planning. We encompass many of the principles in these books into our [7 Attributes of Agile Growth](#) methodology and development of your company's [Growth Roadmap](#). Contact us for a free consultation*



*“A lie can get halfway around the world before the truth can even get its boots on.”*

Mark Twain

*“The difference between the almost right word & the right word...it's the difference between the lightning bug and the lightning”* Mark Twain

Why should you care about this presentation? Simply put, you need the ability to make the ideas you communicate stick. We will be reviewing, analyzing and discussing proven methods that can help you develop this vital skill.

We are all in sales, even if we are not in Sales as our career. We need to get our ideas across. We need to make our ideas stick. We need to win people to our way of thinking, as parents, sales reps, co-workers, managers, etc.

As we go through this review, be thinking of how you can apply the concepts we discuss to make your ideas “sticky”.

### **Facts tell. Stories sell**

Stories are powerful. We remember stories. I remember in detail the fictional story by Jack London, “White Fang”. But there have been a lot of things I read more recently that have left me. Why is that? Because even though it is fictional and written over 100 years ago, White Fang is a powerful, compelling *story!*

Stories resonate and stick in our minds and hearts far more than mere facts. And stories are not just for entertainment. Storytelling applies to business. In marketing and advertising, use storytelling to your advantage: tell a story about how your product or service solved a specific problem for a specific customer and added value to their life. This is more powerful than saying how “it solved x problem”.

Urban legends stick, even when not true. Mr. Rogers – a former Navy SEAL who wore a sweater to cover the tattoos on his arms. Mr. Green Jeans from Captain Kangaroo was Ted Nugent’s dad, haha!

If you grew up in San Antonio, I have no doubt you have heard the legend of Donkey Lady.



## The Tale of the Stolen Kidney

Tell me if you have heard this one...

*A male business traveler accepts the offer of a free drink from a strange, yet alluring woman. Hours later, he awakens in an ice-filled bathtub and discovers one of his kidneys has been harvested by organ thieves.*

Whether a story is true or not, if we believe it, it can change our behavior. Believing the kidney story might keep guys from accepting drinks from strange women, not that I'm in the habit of doing that!

Urban legends are ideas (albeit false ones) that stick! You can hear it one time, and a few days later, you can tell it with a high degree of accuracy.

*“Contrast the Kidney Heist story with this passage, drawn from a paper distributed by a nonprofit organization: ‘Comprehensive community building naturally lends itself to a return-on-investment rationale that can be modeled, drawing on existing practice....a factor constraining the flow of resources to CCIs is that funders must often resort to targeting or categorical requirements in grant making to ensure accountability.’”* From Made To Stick

Anyone remember that and want to retell it without looking at your notes? I didn't think so! By the way, I ran that passage through the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Analyzer. It scored a grade of 16.2. For sticky messages, one of the key fundamentals in my work as a marketing copywriter and brand storyteller is to write at a basic grade level. If what I have written scores above 9<sup>th</sup> grade, I've failed and need to rewrite it.

Remember after reading and hearing this-write in a simple, basic, conversational fashion! I'm confident Chip and Dan agree...

*“Think of our two examples (the Kidney Heist story and the passage about nonprofit financial strategy) as two poles on a spectrum of memorability. Some ideas are inherently interesting, and some are inherently uninteresting.*

*It's the nature vs. nurture debate applied to ideas: Are ideas born interesting or made interesting? Well, this is a nurture book. So how do we nurture our ideas so they'll succeed in the world? ...Good ideas often have a hard time succeeding in the world. Yet the ridiculous Kidney Heist tale keeps circulating, with no resources whatsoever to support it.”*

*“Why? Is it simply because hijacked kidneys sell better than other topics? Or is it possible to make a true, worthwhile idea circulate as effectively as this false idea?”* From Made To Stick

## The Truth About Movie Popcorn

*“Art Silverman (of the Center for Science in the Public Interest-CSPI) stared at a bag of movie popcorn. He knew that the popcorn on his desk was unhealthy. Shockingly unhealthy. His job was to figure out a way to communicate this message to the unsuspecting moviegoers of America.... The USDA recommends no more than 20 grams of saturated fat each day. The typical bag of movie popcorn had 37 grams.”*

*“The challenge, Silverman realized, was that few people know what ‘37 grams of saturated fat’ means.... the phrase by itself was enough to cause most peoples’ eyes to glaze over. ‘Saturated fat has zero appeal’, Silverman says. ‘It’s dry. It’s academic. Who cares?’...The amount of fat in this popcorn was, in some sense, not rational. It was ludicrous. The CSPI needed a way to shape the message in a way that fully communicated this ludicrousness. Silverman came up with a solution.”*

*“CSPI called a press conference on September 27, 1992. Here’s the message it presented: ‘A medium-sized ‘butter’ popcorn at a typical neighborhood movie theater contains more artery-clogging saturated fat than a bacon-and-eggs breakfast, a Big Mac and fries for lunch, and a steak dinner with all the trimmings-combined!’”*

*“The folks at CSPI didn’t neglect the visuals-they laid out the full buffet of greasy food for the television cameras. An entire day’s worth of unhealthy eating displayed on a table. All that saturated fat-stuffed into a single bag of popcorn.”*

*“The story was an immediate sensation, featured on CBS, NBC, ABC, and CNN. It made the front pages of USA Today, the Los Angeles Times, and The Washington Post’s Style section. Leno and Letterman cracked jokes about fat-soaked popcorn, and headline writers trotted out some doozies: ‘Popcorn Gets an R Rating.’ ‘Lights, Action, Cholesterol’, and ‘Theater Popcorn is Double Feature of Fat’.*

*“The idea stuck. Moviegoers, repulsed by these findings, avoided popcorn in droves. Sales plunged. The service staff at movie houses grew accustomed to fielding questions about whether the popcorn was popped in the ‘bad’ oil. Soon after, most of the nation’s biggest theater chains, including United Artists, AMC, and Loews, announced that they would stop using coconut oil.” From Made To Stick*

This idea stuck. Big Time! Just like the Kidney Heist tale. Its success was remarkable because “too much saturated fat” is not generally thought of as an exciting, compelling, “sticky” topic.

The visual of the three fat-soaked meals helped immensely. Whether Art Silverman and his staff at CSPI knew it, they were following Dale Carnegie’s advice to “Dramatize Your Ideas”.

But...



What if they had no visual aids and merely said, “Don’t eat movie theater popcorn. It has almost twice the daily fat intake recommended by the USDA”? This approach would not be NEARLY as powerful, don’t you agree? Keep in mind this story occurred before the advent of the World Wide Web and social media. How much more powerful would it be today?

## Unexpected

*“The first problem of communication is getting people’s attention. Some communications have the authority to demand attention. Parents are good at this: “Bobby, look at me!” Most of the time though, we can’t command attention, we must attract it. That is the toughest challenge...The most basic way to get someone’s attention is this: Break a pattern...”*

*Humans adapt incredibly quickly to consistent patterns...Our brain is designed to be keenly aware of changes. Smart product designers are well aware of this tendency. They make sure that, when products require users to pay attention, something changes. Warning lights blink on and off because we would tune out a light that was constantly on... This chapter focuses on two essential questions: How do I get people’s attention? And, just as crucially, how do I keep it?”* From Made To Stick

Let’s discuss these two questions...

My thoughts: For the first question, talk about them, their wants, their needs, their problems, how you can help them. Make it relevant to them!

For the second question: In your message, do or say something unexpected. An example in a speech might be, after talking quietly, to shout a few words. If you have been talking non-stop, be quiet. If you have been standing in one place for a while, move around.

What are your thoughts?

A thought on notifications that demand attention: This book was published in 2007. Since then smartphones, texting, and social media have taken the world by storm. Texts and Facebook notifications, perhaps even more so if they are unexpected, demand attention. They “stick”. Notice how LinkedIn and Facebook notifications are red in color. This is done on purpose. Red has an attention-grabbing psychological impact.

## Emotional

*“Mother Teresa once said, ‘If I look at the mass, I will never act. If I look at the one, I will.’ In 2004, some researchers at Carnegie Mellon University decided to see whether most people act like Mother Teresa. They wanted to see how people respond to an opportunity to make a charitable contribution to an abstract cause versus a charitable contribution to a single person....It seems that most people have something in common with Mother Teresa. When it comes to our hearts, an individual trumps the masses.”* From Made To Stick



I shortened that passage. The longer version of it talked about how the Carnegie Mellon researchers, as part of their study, ran a fundraising campaign for a nonprofit called Save The Children. They divided participants in two groups. To the first group, they sent a letter with generalized statistics on poverty and disease. To the second group, they sent an emotion-packed letter telling the story of one child.

**\*\*\*Remember what we have been saying about the emotional power and memorability of *STORIES!!* And the forgettability of statistics.\*\*\***

The results? The second letter raised twice as much money. Why? The emotional appeal and focus on one child, not a nameless, faceless mass of humanity.

**Note this well:** Emotion drives action. People don't get emotional over statistics. People get emotional over stories about children.

Do you want to make your ideas stick? Incorporate a strong emotional component.

Think back to our talk about movie popcorn. Nobody gets emotional over "37 grams of saturated fat". People got emotional over the dramatic display image of how much fatty food it would take to equal that amount of saturated fat alongside the bag of popcorn. They get emotional over the thought that their actions might cause them to drop dead of a massive heart attack.

Another thought on "a specific one" vs. "an amorphous mass"-this doesn't just apply to non-profit fundraising. It can apply to your marketing and sales. A possible business example is a case study that highlights the success of a specific company.

Once again-understand this: People buy, make decisions, are influenced, based on emotion. They then attempt to use logic to justify this emotion-based decision.

## Credible

### An Igloo in the Sahara

Duodenal ulcers are almost never fatal, but they are very painful. It was long believed, falsely, that they were caused by surplus stomach acid. In the early 1980s, two researchers from Perth, Australia made the astonishing discovery that ulcers were caused by bacteria. This was a BIG DEAL for many millions of sufferers.

But there was a problem: the medical world did not believe the researchers. They thought it was obvious common sense that ulcers were caused by acid, because acid was so potent. They also did not believe the discovery because of the source.

One member of the two-man discovery team was a staff pathologist at a hospital, not a distinguished professor at an elite university. The other was a young internist-in-training, not even a full-fledged doctor yet.

*“It would be ludicrous to think that bacteria could survive in such an environment (stomach acid). It would be like stumbling across an igloo in the Sahara...the medical community expects important discoveries to come from PhDs at research universities or professors at large, world-class medical centers. Internists do not cure diseases that affect 10 percent of the world’s population....”*

*Marshall and Warren (the two researchers responsible for the discovery) could not even get their research paper accepted by a medical journal. When Marshall presented their findings at a professional conference, the scientists snickered. One of the researchers who heard one of his presentations commented that he ‘simply didn’t have the demeanor of a scientist.’”* From Made To Stick

Long story short, the two researchers were having trouble making their idea stick with the medical community at large. So...

*“By 1984, Marshall’s patience had run out. One morning, he skipped breakfast and asked his colleagues to meet him in the lab. While they watched in horror, he chugged a glass filled with about a billion *H. pylori* (the bacteria that causes ulcers). ‘It tasted like swamp water’, he said.*

*Within a few days, Marshall was experiencing pain, nausea and vomiting-the classic symptoms of gastritis, the early stage of an ulcer. Using an endoscope, his colleagues found that his stomach lining, previously pink and healthy, was now red and inflamed. Like a magician, Marshall then cured himself with a course of antibiotics and bismuth (the active ingredient in Pepto-Bismol)”. From Made To Stick*

*“Even after this dramatic demonstration, the battle wasn’t over. Other scientists quibbled with the demonstration...But Marshall’s demonstration gave a second win to supporters of the bacteria theory, and subsequent research amassed more and more evidence in its favor. In 1994, ten years later, the National Institute of Health finally endorsed the idea that antibiotics were the preferred treatment for ulcers.... In the fall of 2005, Marshall and Warren received the Nobel Prize in medicine for their work.”* From Made To Stick

*“These two men had a brilliant, Nobel-worthy, world-changing insight. So why did Marshall have to poison himself to get people to believe him?...If we’re trying to persuade a skeptical audience to believe a new message, the reality is that we’re fighting an uphill battle against a lifetime of personal learning and social relationships...How do we get people to believe our ideas?”*



*We've got to find a source of credibility to draw on. Sometimes the wellsprings are dry, as Barry Marshall discovered on his quest to cure the ulcer....in the end, what he did was draw on the audience's credibility-he essentially "modeled" a testable credential by gulping a glass of bacteria. The implicit challenge was: See for yourself-if you drink this gunk, you'll get an ulcer, just like I did." From Made To Stick*

A lesson here: If you want to get your ideas to stick, it just might help to put your money where your mouth is!!! Dramatize your ideas, as Dale Carnegie said.

### **Closing thoughts, comments, observations...**

I am a self-described "Persuasion Geek". I love this stuff. It's my business to harness the power of the written word to help my clients sell more of their products and services and build stronger brands. I study this idea of stickiness. I practice it. I think about it and how to do it better. So, this presentation has indeed been a thrill and a joy for me.

**Thank You!**





## A Retrospective of our last ten books ONE THING

The Customer Comes Second	Transform an organization's leadership model and culture to focus on putting the employees first, and the results that will be created will far exceed any forecasted budget projections.
Stillness is the Key	Chop wood, carry water. Let the wild horses run by.
The Method Method	Sustainable human-centered business is the key to thriving in today's reality, daring to do things not only differently but better, existing in between tensions, mashing them up for the greater good, bringing higher purpose based on culture and design.
The School of Greatness	Greatness is not reserved for an elite few, it is something inherent in each of us. It is cultivated from within. The masters of greatness became that way because they applied specific habits and tools to embrace and overcome adversity in their lives.
The Obstacle is the Way	Although we don't control external events, we can control ourselves and our responses to those events. Every obstacle poses an opportunity to improve our condition. We have the power to turn adversity into our advantage and revolutionize our lives!
Just Listen	Be more interested than interesting.
Titan: The Life of John D Rockefeller	We study the lives of famous people who have impacted the world in order to better understand our own impact on the world. Every human being is a complex enigma containing both beauty and darkness.
Reading Magic	Reading with a family whether family by blood, profession, or interests, leads to delight and food for thought, which presents a lot of goodness and positive growth for the entire community. Read continually... experience books, learn from books, share books!
The Power of TED	Shift happens when we break out of the default mode of victim and adopt the creator mode of being.
The Memo	Women of color and underrepresented groups are sometimes at a disadvantage in the workplace especially when it comes to securing high level positions. Become aware of your unconscious bias.



### Let's Pan for Some Gold

**What thought, or idea had the biggest impact on you today?**

**What is your ONE THING? What one specific action you will take TODAY from what was discussed?**



## Our Faculty, Our Sponsors, Our Cause



## Calendar of Events

San Antonio	San Antonio	Corpus	Houston	San Antonio	West Side
"1st Friday"	Wine & Cheese	2nd Tuesday	4th Thursday	"4th Friday"	3rd Wednesday
7:30AM	5:30 PM	5:30 PM	11:30AM	8:00 AM	12:00 Noon
Wittigs	Haworth   Smartworld	Wittigs   Haworth	Wittigs   Haworth	Alpha Home	American Sunrise Good Samaritan
<b>7-Feb</b>	<b>12-Feb</b>	<b>11-Feb</b>	<b>27-Feb</b>	<b>28-Feb</b>	<b>19-Feb</b>
John Rugh Made to Stick	Mark Wittig Occasional Magic	Mark Wittig Occasional Magic	Malcolm Coon Surrender Experiment	Malcolm Coon Surrender Experiment	Pat Whitty The Power of TED
<b>6-Mar</b>	<b>11-Mar</b>	<b>10-Mar</b>	<b>26-Mar</b>	<b>27-Mar</b>	<b>18-Mar</b>
Judy Zimmerman Work is Love Made Visible	Peter Braeuler Think & Grow Rich	Peter Braeuler Think & Grow Rich	Robyn Tresnak Talent ins Never Enough	Robyn Tresnak Talent ins Never Enough	Phil Bohlender
<b>3-Apr</b>	<b>8-Apr</b>	<b>14-Apr</b>	<b>23-Apr</b>	<b>24-Apr</b>	<b>15-Apr</b>
Marisa Ortiz	Robert Schmidt A Republic. If You Can Keep It	Robert Schmidt A Republic. If You Can Keep It	Pat Whitty Man's Search for Meaning	Pat Whitty Man's Search for Meaning	Robert Schmidt The Alchemist