

Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die by Chip Heath, Dan Heath

Book Review by Reed Business Information

Unabashedly inspired by Malcolm Gladwell's bestselling *The Tipping Point*, the brothers Heath, Chip a professor at Stanford's business school, Dan a teacher and textbook publisher offer an entertaining, practical guide to effective communication. Drawing extensively on psychosocial studies on memory, emotion and motivation, their study is couched in terms of "stickiness" that is, the art of making ideas unforgettable. They start by relating the gruesome urban legend about a man who succumbs to a barroom flirtation only to wake up in a tub of ice, victim of an organ-harvesting ring. What makes such stories memorable and ensures their spread around the globe?

The authors credit six key principles:

- Simplicity
- Unexpectedness
- Concreteness
- Credibility
- Emotions
- Stories

(The initial letters spell out "success" well, almost.)

They illustrate these principles with a host of stories, some familiar (Kennedy's stirring call to "land a man on the moon and return him safely to the earth" within a decade) and others very funny (Nora Ephron's anecdote of how her high school journalism teacher used a simple, embarrassing trick to teach her how not to "bury the lead"). Throughout the book, sidebars show how bland messages can be made intriguing. Fun to read and solidly researched, this book deserves a wide readership.