

## **MADE TO STICK – Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die**

### **A book review by Mary Sullivan**

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The dust cover of *Made to Stick* itself is memorable. Co-author Chip Heath says he had to fight with his publisher (Random House) to make the bright orange cover look like it has a piece of duct tape stuck across it. The tape image is slightly raised, with a realistic look and feel. And it makes a clear and memorable point.



Nominally, *Made to Stick* is a book about ideas, but at its core it is a book about communication. The book is for all who want their ideas to be remembered and acted upon, so it will be especially valuable to KickStart Accelerator readers: sales people and marketers.

Chip Heath and his co-author brother, Dan Heath, spent several years researching ideas that stick in people's minds, and they have analyzed what makes certain ideas memorable and actionable. They have turned their findings into a simple, memorable acronym:

**S**implicity  
**U**nexpectedness  
**C**oncreteness  
**C**redibility  
**E**motions  
**S**tories

Yes, without the last "S". Unexpected, no?

The book's chapters explain each of the six principles and give examples of messages that work and those that don't. Each chapter is loaded with examples, including familiar ones such as urban legends and advertising slogans. And each chapter contains an Idea Clinic, an illustrative case study, showing an idea that a group or individual wants to communicate. In the clinic you will see different messages and examine why one of them "sticks".

A particularly handy feature of the book is an Easy Reference Guide at the end. No need to take notes as you read. It's all neatly summed up in the Guide.

The Heaths say that the reason why some good ideas don't stick is the "curse of knowledge". Too often, people communicating about an idea know so much about the topic that they forget how little their audience knows. "Once we know something, it is hard to imagine what it was like not to know it."

From the cover to the last page of the book, *Made to Stick* practices what it preaches. It is:

- Simple (the core message is compact),
- Unexpected (e.g., duct tape cover and Easy Reference Guide),
- Concrete (provides examples and case studies),

- Credible (gives many of the examples are familiar to readers),
- Emotion-based (appeals to our self-interest), and it's packed with
- Stories (because, of course, that's what we remember later).

*Made to Stick* is easy to read and hard to forget.