

DANIEL KAHNEMAN'S COGNITIVE BIASES

Daniel Kahneman is a Nobel prize-winning psychologist and economist whose best-known research is in the fields of psychology of judgment, decision-making and behavioural economics. Kahneman argued that cognitive biases are like an optical illusion: people think as they see.

FACT AND INFORMATION BIAS (QUALIFICATIONS/COMPETENCY)

Knowledge may equal power, but more knowledge isn't always better. Information bias is when people get caught in the need to seek and validate information which doesn't lead to effective or affirmative action. There's a big difference between being an innovator and imitators: there are people who will gather ideas just to talk about them, whilst there are others who will gather ideas and then apply them into meaningful action.

THE PLACEBO EFFECT (THE SECRET & MANIFESTATIONS)

This bias is one which inadvertently brings about the effects we predicted would happen i.e. a self-fulfilling prophecy. As we know, the placebo effect stems from scientific experiments where patients were given a fake drug which they told would cure them and found that the positive mindset of believing they were receiving an effective drug alleviated many patient's symptoms. The problem is that this can happen both ways, depending on the negativity or positivity of our mindset: when we are biased towards our inefficiency, we'll fail because we won't try to disprove ourselves. We cannot expect things to happen to us in life just because we think good things and, in the same way, we shouldn't expect only bad things to come about because we think it so. We cannot manifest a reality: we can only make a reality.

OUTCOME BIAS (JUDGE, JURY & EXECUTIONER)

This is when people judge the soundness of a decision by its outcome rather than the process as to how the decision came about. An example of this would be someone getting away with driving drunk and believing the decision to drive drunk was sound because no one was hurt and they arrived home safely. The same goes for our relationships with others: we judge people for what they do and how they act without considering what they may have gone through which caused them to be the way that they are (and, therefore, have an ability to change)

PRO-INNOVATION BIAS (GREATNESS BOUND BY DEPENDENCY)

Being innovative is fantastic, but innovation can only take people so far. The problem that occurs with innovation bias is when proponents of an innovation overvalue its usefulness and undervalue its limitations. This shows itself in our relationships when being part of an initiative becomes more important than the initiative itself: people join movements, community groups or even political parties, but become bogged down and distracted with their status within the group rather than focus on what the group is supposed to accomplish and the reason why it was established in the first place.



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STEREOTYPING & GENERALISING (ALL INTENTIONS ARE GOOD)

Stereotyping is when a person lays expectations for a person (or group of people) to have certain qualities, thoughts and behaviours without knowing anything about them personally. Whilst stereotyping arguably has a psychological advantage for its use to categorise strangers as safe or dangerous (eg. a child can be taught to categorise a man they do not know as someone they shouldn't trust without their parent), the cultural divisions and socio-political climate has blurred this line thanks to skewed media portrayals and socio-cultural conditioning of who 'looks good' and who 'looks bad'. As adults, we cannot allow ourselves to accept socially indoctrinated or experienced concepts of what people are and who they will be based on a category they may fit on a surface level.

