

# Book Review

## **BLINK – THE POWER OF THINKING WITHOUT THINKING**

By Malcolm Gladwell

Book Review Group 15

TEAM LEADER:

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# MALCOM GLADWELL



Born 3<sup>rd</sup> Sept, 1963 in  
Hampshire United Kingdom

Non fiction writer, Journalist,  
Cultural Commentator,  
Intellectual Adventurer

A staff writer with *The New  
Yorker magazine* since 1996

# NOTABLE WORKS

The Tipping Point

Blink : The Power of Thinking without Thinking

Outliers : The Story of Success

What the Dog Saw: and other adventures

How little things make a big difference

# AUTHOR'S STYLE

Unexpected implications of research in social science

Extensive use of academic work

Emphasis on works in sociology, psychology and socio psychology

# PURPOSE OF THE BOOK

Real world examples on snap decisions based on instincts

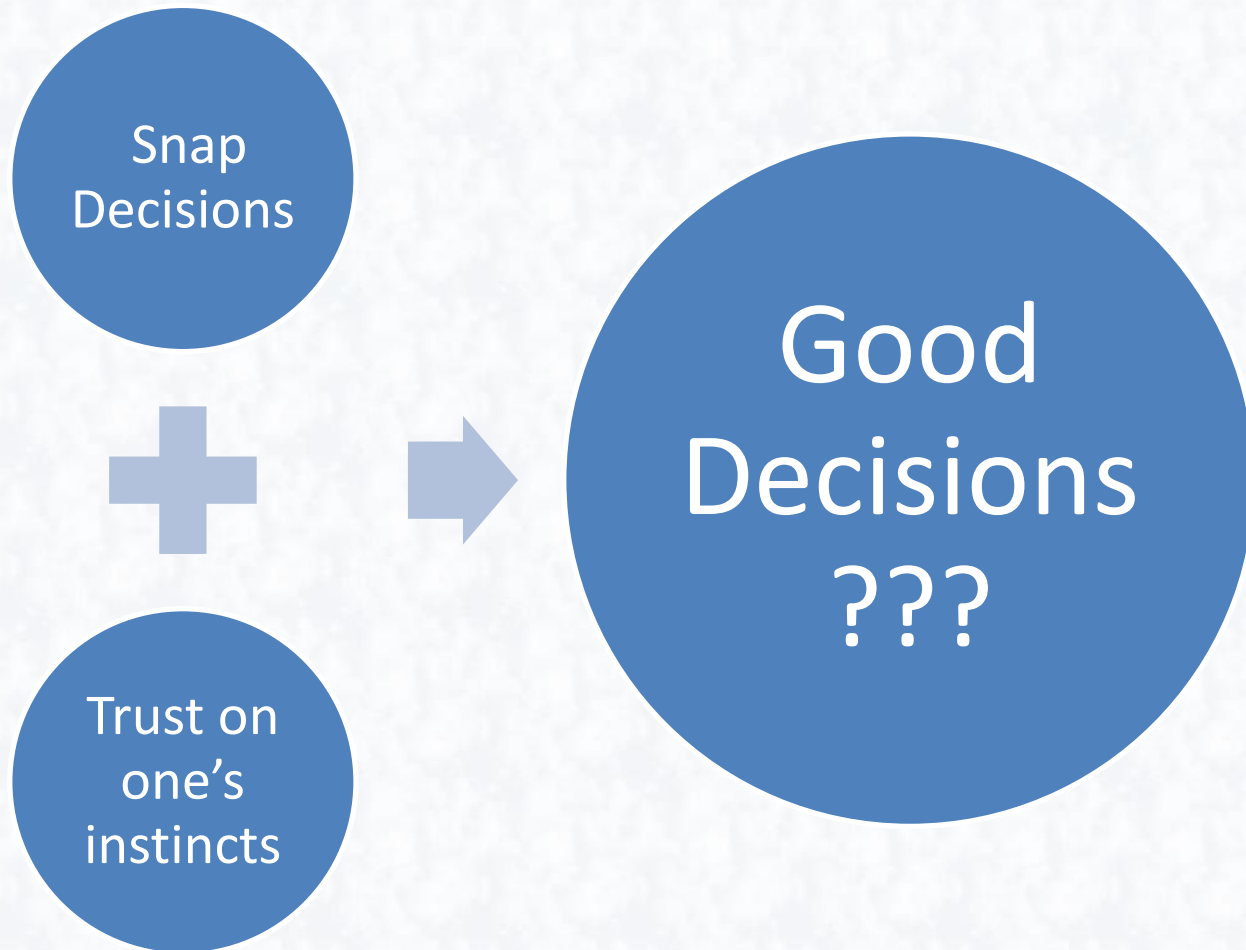


Importance of understanding one's instincts



Application of one's instincts in taking quick decisions and removing our biases

# What happens to research then ?





# Blink's Proposition...For a Different and Better World

Decisions made very quickly can be every bit as good as decisions made cautiously and deliberately

Our instincts fail us for specific and consistent set of reasons. These reasons can be identified and understood.

The power of knowing, in first two seconds, is not a gift given magically to a fortunate few. Its an ability that we all can cultivate ourselves.

# Learning to Blink

## Art of Thin Slicing

- Ability of our subconscious to find patterns in situations and behavior based on very narrow slices of experience
- Careful attention for two seconds can tell us an awful lot



# Thin Slicing Experiments

The Love Lab  
Experiment

Will marriage  
last for 15  
years ?

Nalini Ambady's  
Experiment

Which doctors  
are sued by  
patients ?

# LOCKED DOOR OF OUR UNCONSCIOUSNESS

Our unconscious  
mind can be  
primed

The way we  
think and act is  
lot more  
susceptible to  
outside  
influences

People are  
ignorant about of  
the things that  
affect their  
actions, yet they  
rarely feel  
ignorant

# Experiments on Subconscious

**Bargh  
Experiment**

Priming of Sub  
consciousness  
?

**Ted  
Williams**

Best Baseball  
Player

# Blinking may lead us astray ☹️

Our first impressions are generated by our experiences and environment



Unconscious forms opinions from our experiences



**Our unconscious attitudes may have elements of prejudice and discrimination**



This influences our behavior in certain spontaneous situations



**AND**

**we may not be aware about it !!!**

# The state of our subconscious...

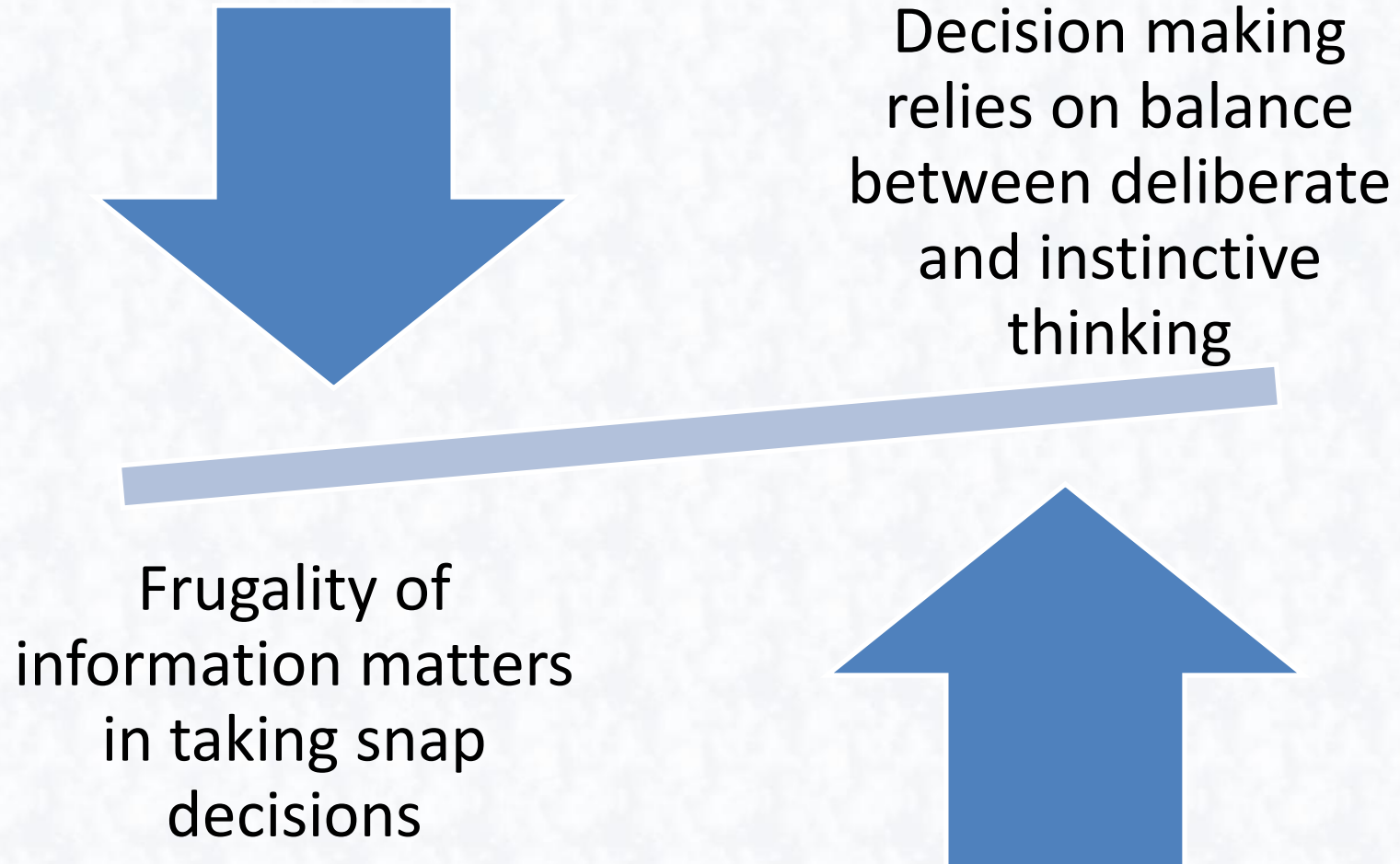
IAT Test

Do we have  
biases ?

Warren  
Harding Error

One of the worst  
President of  
American history

# Blinking under decisive situations



# Snap Decisions provides the edge...

Van Riper

The General  
who defeated  
the U.S.A. Army

Cook County's  
Experiment

Heart Attack  
Algorithm



# Importance of “Context”

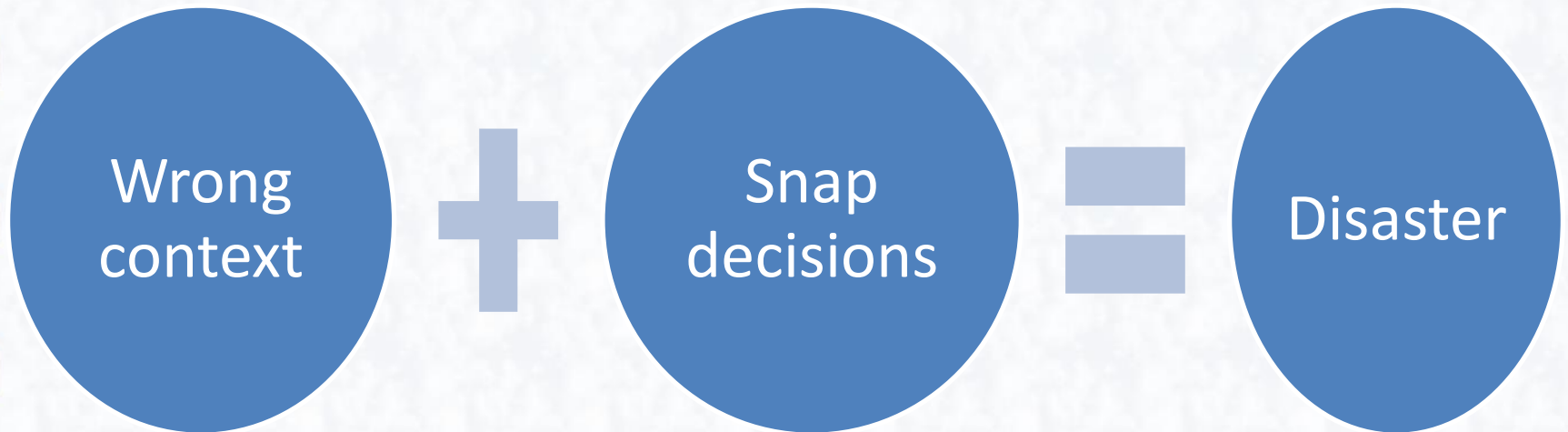
Pepsi vs.  
Coke

The New  
Coke

Kenna's  
Album

Market  
Research

# Blinking can go wrong if...



# Blink from mind blindness to mind reading

Mind reading failures lie at root of disagreements, misunderstanding and hurt feelings

Face signals can be read to understand what is going on inside mind

Under certain circumstances our mind becomes autistic

Heart Rate between 115 and 145 beats per minute improves our performance

Above 175 beats per minute, our cognitive processing breaks down and we become useless  
!!!

When making split decisions, we are vulnerable to being guided by our stereotypes and prejudices

# What happens in 2 seconds ???

Wheeler  
Avenue Tragedy

Police  
encounter

FACS

Mind  
reading

# Blink's role to create an equitable society...

Abbie Conant episode

Classical music revolution



The bubbles coming out from our subconscious can contain elements of prejudice



*We can control the environment in which rapid cognition takes place and then, we can control rapid cognition*

# STRENGTHS OF THE BOOK

- Ventures into a relatively new psychological concept called Adaptive Unconscious.
- Social agenda to correct our prejudices based on past experiences or biased subconscious.
- Introduces concept of “thin- slicing” for taking snap decisions.
- Sources data from varied and diverse fields to give more teeth to his findings.

# CRITICAL ANALYSIS

- States the obvious
- Analysis is superficial and cherrypicks examples to suit his theory
- The book gets repetitive and seems to be hovering around only one theme
- Does not give concrete ways to develop or improve our snap judgments



# CONCLUSION

Excellent book to peep into our subconscious thinking

Its applications can lead to creation of a more equitable society

We can become better human beings by becoming more aware about our behaviors

Introduces art of “thin slicing” which Civil Servants should extensively use to become better administrators

A spiral-bound notebook with a white cover and blue spiral binding on the left side. The notebook is open to a blank white page. A large, solid blue rectangular box is centered on the page, containing the text "THANK YOU" in white, bold, uppercase letters.

THANK YOU