

HANDOUT 3.7A Cognitive Bias Chart

Cognitive Biases that screw up your perception and decision making!

Remix of Major Cognitive Biases: Confirmation Bias, Availability Bias, and related biases



Confirmation Bias/Selective Perception

We only hear information that supports our preconceptions. Information that doesn't fit our prior thinking just doesn't stick—it floats in and out of our brain!

Example: We only see the bad calls made against OUR team!

Reminder: Ask: What other positions are there? What disconfirming information exists?



Availability Bias

We overestimate the importance of information that is most readily available to us—from our life experience media, or in our surroundings—and think that available information is way more the norm than it is.

Example: Climate change can't be true because it's cold today. Smoking must be good for your health because my grandpa smoked and lived to be 100.

Reminder: Under-weigh your own memorable experiences. Look for other positions and possibilities.



Conservatism Bias (related to confirmation bias)

We favor old evidence and old ways of thinking over new possibilities that can be much more correct and powerful.

Example: Humans held on to their prior belief that Earth was flat despite scientific evidence that Earth was round!

Reminder: If you aren't constantly changing your mind, then you are behind the times (i.e., You are not learning or keeping up)!



Bandwagon Effect (related to availability bias)

The more people (especially those near and dear to us) believe something, the more likely we are to climb on the bandwagon! Aka Groupthink.

Example: Everybody has the new app, so you buy it, too! Everybody around you thinks the election was stolen, so you think so, too (without looking at the facts).

Reminder: If it's what everybody around me thinks, then it probably stinks (like a bandwagon).

(Continued)

(Continued)

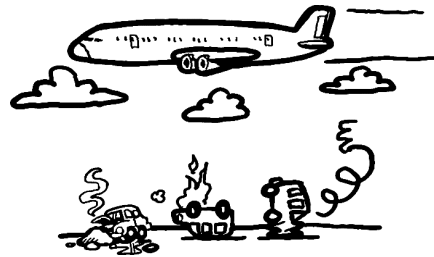


Blind Spot Bias (related to confirmation bias)

Failing to see our biases and blind spots is a bias in itself! We see other people's biases way better than we see our own!

Example: You know what you know, but not what you don't know. So you see the proofreading errors in your friend's essay, but not your own!

Reminder: The more confident you are, the more your eyes are filled with stars. You don't see things as they are, but *as you are!*



Saliency Bias (related to availability bias)

We tend to focus on the most immediate, most charged, and most recognizable features of a person, event, or concept.

Example: We fear airplane crashes although we are thousands if not hundreds of thousands of times more likely to die in a car wreck.

Reminder: Look deeper! Use real-time procedural feedback from a trusted peer!



Overconfidence/Lake Woebegone Effect (related to confirmation bias)

Most of us overestimate our own abilities and capacities. Almost everyone thinks they are above average in most domains!

Example: The more you are interested in or know about something, the more you think your position is the only one. You like to bicycle, so you think you have the corner on the market of knowledge about bicycling.

Reminder: The more confident you are, the more at risk you are. Things are more complex and detailed than we think. Consider how you could be wrong!



Anchoring (related to availability and confirmation bias)

We are all overly influenced and reliant on the very first piece of information that is introduced. It carries more weight and keeps us from straying too far from it—just like an anchor keeping a boat in place!

Example: The first review you read is a bad one, so you won't go to that movie or restaurant even though there are many other reviews that are good. When making an offer to buy, whoever makes the first offer establishes the range of reasonable possibilities.

Reminder: Bracket out first impressions, or you will miss the overall lesson! Look at all the data!

SOURCE: Illustrations by Joel Wilhelm, adapted from student ideas.

Retrieved from the companion website for *Fighting Fake News: Teaching Students to Identify and Interrogate Information Pollution* by Jeffrey D. Wilhelm, Michael W. Smith, Hugh Kesson, and Deborah Appleman. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, www.corwin.com. Reproduction authorized for educational use by educators, local school sites, and/or noncommercial or nonprofit entities that have purchased the book.