Biases, Effects, and Paradoxes

1. Availability Heuristic – Describes that what we think of immediately/first must be more relevant. “If it can be recalled, it must be important”. **Example:** Two employees are up for promotion, John and Jane. Jane is considered an overall better candidate than John. In Jane’s first year with the company, she accidentally deleted an important company project. Thinking about that incident has you promoting John instead of Jane. This singular memorable event weighed more heavily in this decision than it should have, when you consider the overall track records for both Jane and John.

Sources:

<https://www.scribbr.com/research-bias/availability-heuristic/#:~:text=The%20availability%20heuristic%20(or%20availability,is%20most%20available%20to%20us>

<https://www.verywellmind.com/availability-heuristic-2794824>

<https://thedecisionlab.com/biases/availability-heuristic>

2. Confirmation Bias – People tend to favor information that supports their prior beliefs. Something everyone is likely guilty of at some point in their lives. **Example:** Having a prior belief that left-handed people are more creative than right-handed people. When you see someone left-handed who is an artist, you place more weight on this observation to support what you already believe.

Sources:

<https://thedecisionlab.com/biases/confirmation-bias>

<https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-a-confirmation-bias-2795024>

<https://www.simplypsychology.org/confirmation-bias.html>

3. Cherry Picking – Making selective choices when presenting evidence in order to emphasize results that support a given position while ignoring findings that are contrary. **Example:** A presidential candidate mentioning all the cities where his tax policy decreased crime rate, while ignoring the cities where the same policy increased crime rate. Politics is a prime example of lots of cherry picking.

Sources:

<https://effectiviology.com/cherry-picking/>

<http://ds-wordpress.haverford.edu/psych2015/projects/chapter/cherry-picking-data/>