

Master of Science in Quantitative Management: Health Analytics

Psychology of Waiting Lines

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David Maister, Harvard

Satisfaction = Perception – Expectation

Maister's Eight Maxims on Waiting

Psychology of Waiting Lines

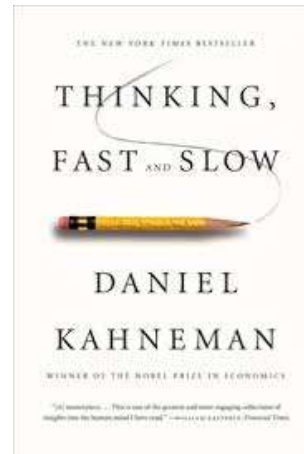
1. "Unoccupied Time Feels Longer than Occupied Time"
2. "Pre-Process Waits Feel Longer than In-process Waits."
3. "Anxiety Makes Waits Seem Longer"
4. "Uncertain Waits are Longer than Known, Finite Waits"

Psychology of Waiting Lines

- 5. "Unexplained Waits are Longer than Explained Waits"
- 6. "Unfair Waits are Longer than Equitable Waits."
- 7. "The More Valuable the Service, the Longer I Will Wait."
- 8. "Solo Waiting Feels Longer than Group Waiting"

The Psychology of Waiting and How it Affects Urgent Care Patients*

Cites David Maister as well as Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky.



Richard Larson (MIT): "the real problem isn't just the duration of a delay. It's how you experience that duration."

The Psychology of Waiting and How it Affects Urgent Care Patients*

Article:

"In healthcare, researchers have established a clear link** between perceived wait times, level of service, and satisfaction. This link affects more than just satisfaction with the wait; it colors the patients' entire experience with the center."

*Source: G. Bomba and M. Burke <https://docutap.com/resources/2017/07/the-psychology-of-waiting-and-how-it-affects-urgent-care-patients/>

**Camacho, F. Anderson, R. Safrit, A.S., Hoffmann, P. The relationship between patient's perceived waiting time and office-based practice satisfaction, *NC Med J*, 2006 Nov-Dec, 67(6) 409-13.

The Psychology of Waiting and How it Affects Urgent Care Patients*

"What urgent care patients 'hate' about waiting:

- Waits of uncertain duration
- Waits perceived as unfair.
- Unexplained Waits.
- Unoccupied time"

The Psychology of Waiting and How it Affects Urgent Care Patients*

Larson:

- "dangers of unoccupied time"
- "people generally overestimate the time they spend waiting."
Need "easily accessible, realistic estimates of waiting time."

Kahneman and Tversky:

- "many cognitive biases are rooted in an overall bias for negativity.
Disproportionate sense of frustration/satisfaction with slow/fast moving lines.
- Most meaningful impression is made in the final moments of a waiting experience.
Important for waits to end positively (e.g., wait less than expected)

7 *Source: <https://docutap.com/resources/2017/07/the-psychology-of-waiting-and-how-it-affects-urgent-care-patients/>