

Changing Behavior

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Improving Decision Making

- Facilitate the decision maker in choosing the option that is right for her/him
 - Don't push any particular option
 - But make it easy to what option fits one's preferences
- Persuasion
 - Nudge decision maker toward particular option
 - The healthy, prudent, or prosocial option



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How Can Decision Making Be Improved?

Katherine L. Milkman,¹ Dolly Chugh,² and Max H. Bazerman³

¹University of Pennsylvania, ²New York University, and ³Harvard University

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System 1 vs. System 2

- Which one is causing the bias?
- Implications for debiasing
- System 2 debiasing strategies:
 - Outsource to a linear model
 - Outside perspective
 - Consider the opposite
 - Using joint rather than separate evaluation
 - Reduce cognitive load

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System 1 debiasing strategies

- This is the idea behind nudges
- Structure the choice architecture to facilitate the desired choice
- Reducing implicit bias by changing the environment

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Gas Mileage and Car Shopping

A family has two cars, an SUV and a sedan, that are both driven roughly 100 miles per week.

The family would like to replace one car by downsizing to a smaller vehicle, and is considering two options:

replacing the SUV with a station wagon

10 mpg → 20 mpg

or replacing the sedan with a hybrid car.

20 mpg → 50 mpg

Which combination of vehicles would result in the greatest fuel savings?

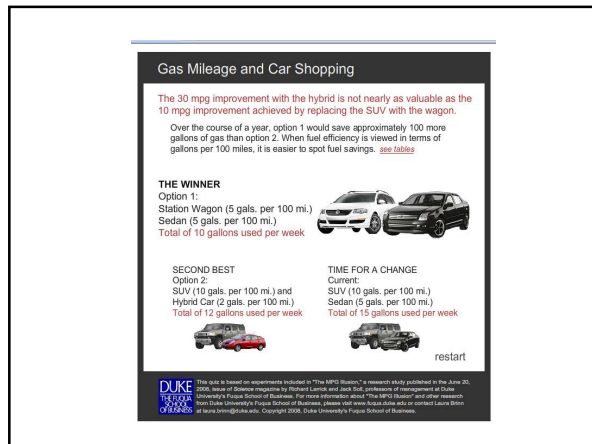
☐ Option 1: Station Wagon (20 mpg) and Sedan (20 mpg)

☐ Option 2: SUV (10 mpg) and Hybrid Car (50 mpg)

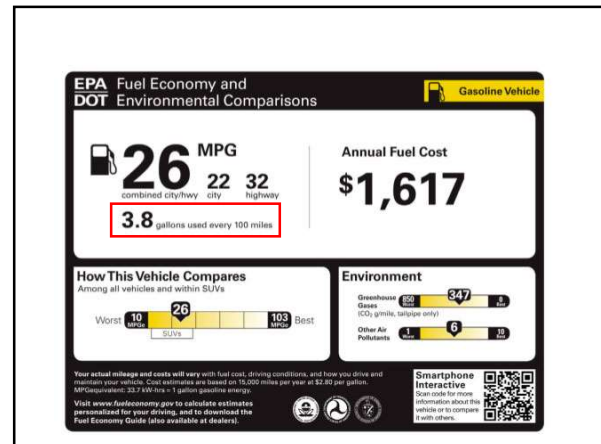
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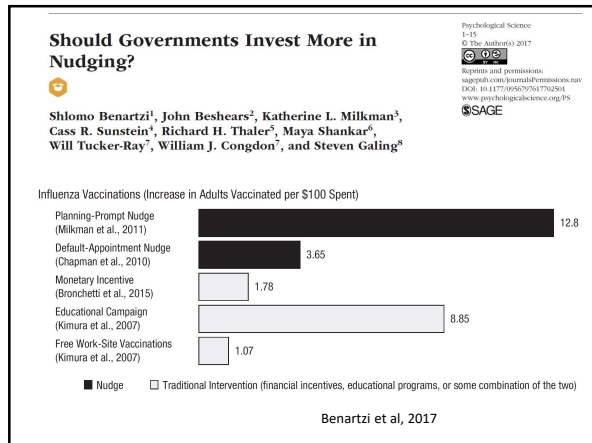
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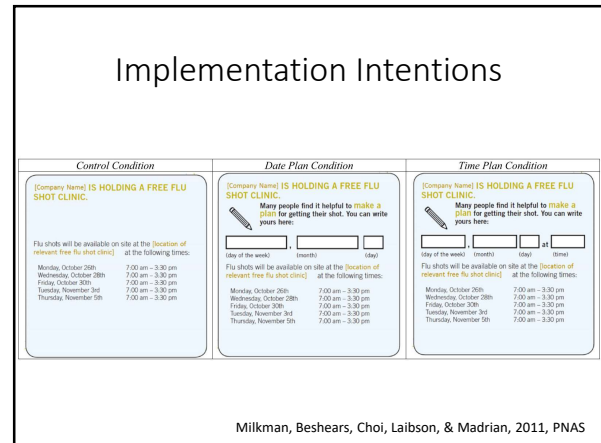
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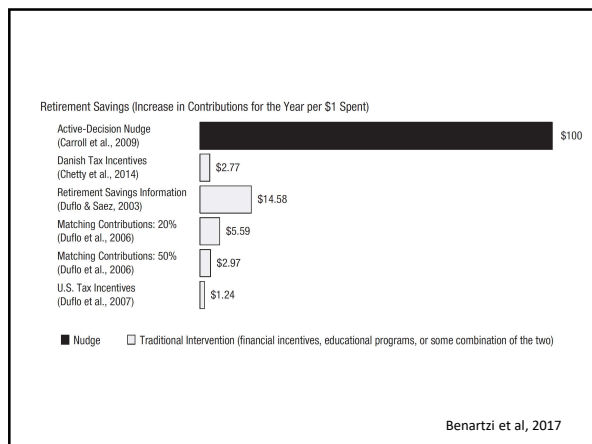
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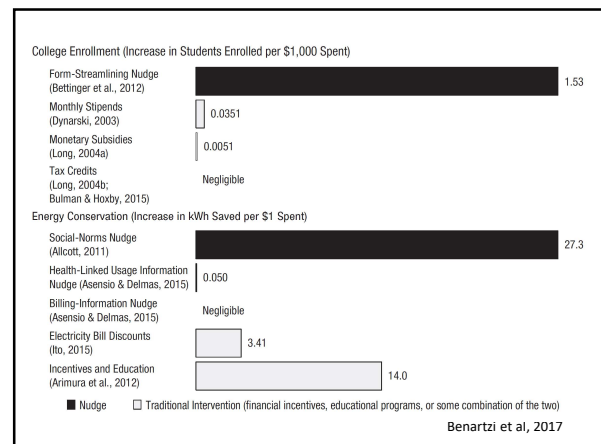
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Social Comparison & Electricity Use



OPower

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Problems for clinical judgement: 5. Principles of influence in medical practice

Donald A. Redelmeier,* Robert B. Cialdini†

Abstract

THE BASIC SCIENCE OF PSYCHOLOGY HAS IDENTIFIED specific ingrained responses that are fundamental elements of human nature, underpin common influence strategies and may apply in medical settings. People feel a sense of obligation to repay a perceived debt. A request becomes more attractive when preceded by a marginally worse request. The drive to act consistently will persist even if demands escalate. Peer pressure is intense when people face uncertainty. The image of the requester influences the attractiveness of a request. Authorities have power beyond their expertise. Opportunities appear more valuable when they appear less available. These 7 responses were discovered decades ago in psychology research and seem intuitively understood in the business world, but they are rarely discussed in medical texts. An awareness of these principles can provide a framework for physicians to help patients change their behaviour and to understand how others in society sometime alter patients' choices.

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Table 1: Pathways of ingrained responses in human reasoning — a framework for physicians attempting to help patients change their behaviour

Pathway	Ingrained response	Approach for physicians
Reciprocation	Repay a perceived debt	Provide some initiating benefit such as new information or a compliment
Concession	Agree to a lesser demand	Preplan possible compromises by having a fall-back position ready
Consistency	Follow past pronouncements	Point out when a patient is doing something right, to build more positive changes
Endorsement	Imitate relevant others	Set a new social comparison group by describing successes of other patients
Liking	Link message to messenger	Be charming and encouraging even in unpleasant circumstances
Authority	Obey authorities' orders	Give recommendations to patients personally rather than through others
Scarcity	Value rare opportunities	Emphasize a special distinction so that the treatment seems uniquely suitable

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How Psychological Insights Can Inform Food Policies to Address Unhealthy Eating Habits

Christina A. Roberto
University of Pennsylvania

In this article, insights from psychology and behavioral economics are identified that help explain why it is hard to maintain healthy eating habits in modern food environments. Most eating decisions engage System 1, rather than System 2, processing, making it difficult for people to consistently make healthy choices in food environments that encourage overconsumption of unhealthy foods. The psychological vulnerabilities discussed include emotions and associations mattering more than reason, difficulty processing complex information, present-biased preferences and planning fallacy, status quo bias and defaults, and susceptibility to unhealthy foods that are in sight and, therefore, in mind. The article argues that these insights should convince us that supporting healthy eating habits and reversing the worldwide obesity epidemic will occur only if our food environments are changed in substantial ways, largely through policy changes. Such policies include restrictions on food marketing, requiring uniform front-of-package nutrition labeling, changing unhealthy food and beverage defaults to healthy ones, and taxing unhealthy foods and beverages. Psychology and behavioral economics should inform the design of these policies to maximize their effectiveness.

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Encouraging Healthy Eating

Psychological Principles

- Role of Emotions
- Difficulty processing complex information
- Present-biased preferences
- Status quo bias / defaults
- Salience

Policy implications

- Restrict food marketing
- Front-of-package nutrition labeling
- Healthy defaults
- Tax unhealthy foods and beverages
- Don't rely on voluntary nudges

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ARTICLE / ARTICLE PREVIEW

Increasing Vaccination Without Changing Beliefs

By Gretchen Chapman, PhD
October 5, 2016

Educational interventions that affirm the safety and efficacy of vaccines are not very successful at increasing vaccination rates. Find out what kind of interventions really do work to encourage immunization.

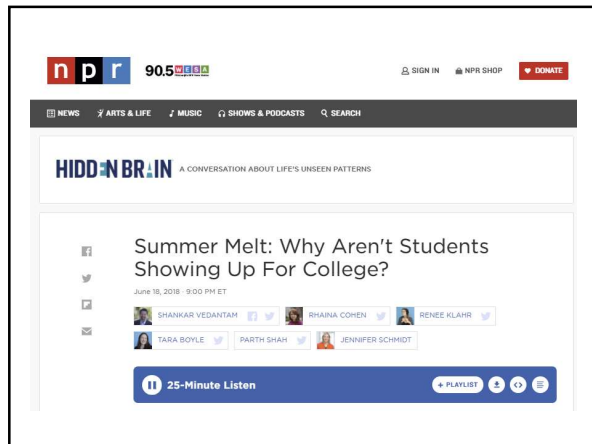
Don't

- Rely on education

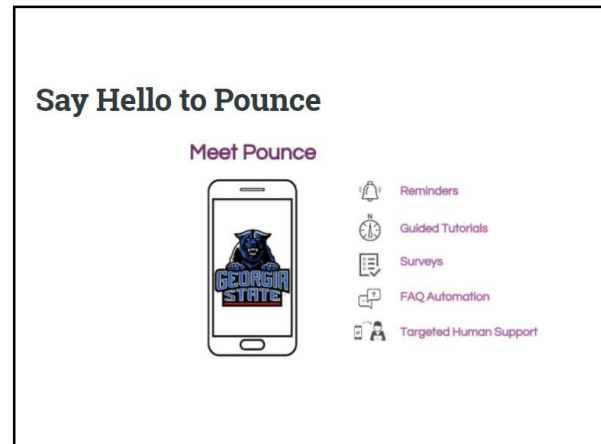
Do:

- Structure the environment
- Default effect
- Planning prompts

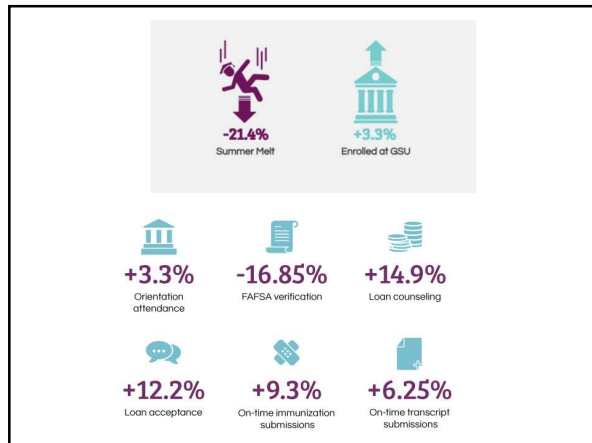
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