



Blunder: Why Smart People Make Bad Decisions

By Zachary Shore

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"Engaging... Teases out the cause and effect of seven [cognition] traps with witty stories of famous blunders... to teach the basis of good judgment. Like all good historians he's hoping we can avoid making the same mistake twice."?O, *The Oprah Magazine*

For anyone whose best-laid plans have been foiled by faulty thinking, *Blunder* reveals how understanding seven simple traps?Exposure Anxiety, Causefusion, Flat View, Cure-Allism, I nfomania, Mirror Imaging, Static Cling?can make us all less apt to err in our daily lives.

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Blunder: Why Smart People Make Bad Decisions By Zachary Shore Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1075543 in Books
- Published on: 2009-10-27
- Released on: 2009-10-27
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: .33" h x .72" w x 5.55" l, .58 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 272 pages

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Shore (*Breeding Bin Ladens*), a professor of national security affairs at the Naval Postgraduate School, explains why smart people do dumb things in this glib guidebook that is more pop psychology than serious inquiry. According to the author, people blunder because they fall into inflexible mind-sets formed from faulty reasoning—or cognition traps. Using examples drawn from history, wars, medicine, business and literature, Shore identifies seven common cognition traps such as causefusion (confusing the causes of complex events), flatview (black and white thinking) and static cling (an inability to accept change). Shore cites examples of various actors (individuals, corporations and even nations) stumbling into one trap or another with unfortunate results (e.g., a person will compound a blunder through different kinds of faulty reasoning). Shore points to America's Iraq debacle as a kind of perfect storm where all of the cognition traps... combined to sabotage America's success. But Shore remains optimistic that society can learn to avoid cognition traps and inevitable blunders by following his prescription of cultivating mental flexibility, empathy, imagination, contrarianism and an open mind. Despite the clever wordplay, neat categories and accessible examples, Shore mostly recycles common sense in a fancy package. (Nov.)

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Review

“*Blunder* is highly recommended reading as we pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off, and try not to commit the same blunders again.” ?*BusinessWeek*

“A shrewd, smart book...Every policy-maker should have a copy of *Blunder* near at hand.” ?*James Sheehan, author Where Have All the Soldiers Gone?*

“Think Malcom Gladwell meets David McCullough. NOT reading this book would be a blunder of historic proportions.” ?*Eric Weiner, author of The Geography of Bliss*

About the Author

Zachary Shore is a professor of national security affairs at the Naval Postgraduate School and a senior fellow at Berkeley's Institute of European Studies. The author of *What Hitler Knew* and *Breeding Bin Ladens*, he lives in Berkeley, California.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Lenore Ryan:

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Jeremy Windham:

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