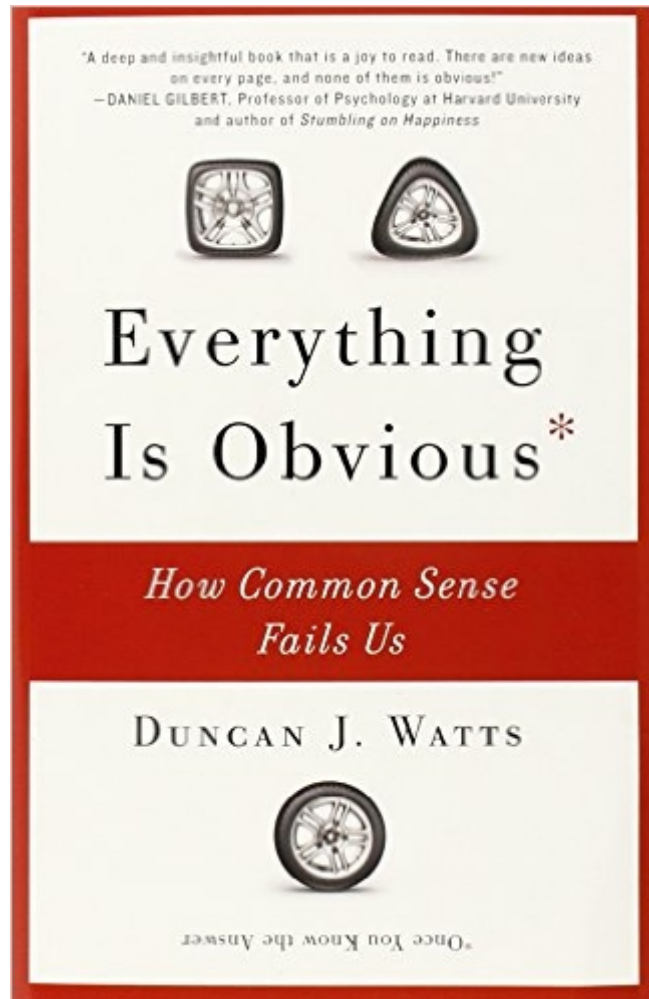


The book was found

Everything Is Obvious: How Common Sense Fails Us



Synopsis

Why is the Mona Lisa the most famous painting in the world? Why did Facebook succeed when other social networking sites failed? Did the surge in Iraq really lead to less violence? How much can CEOâ€™s impact the performance of their companies? And does higher pay incentivize people to work hard? If you think the answers to these questions are a matter of common sense, think again. As sociologist and network science pioneer Duncan Watts explains in this provocative book, the explanations that we give for the outcomes that we observe in lifeâ€”explanations that seem obvious once we know the answerâ€”are less useful than they seem. Drawing on the latest scientific research, along with a wealth of historical and contemporary examples, Watts shows how common sense reasoning and history conspire to mislead us into believing that we understand more about the world of human behavior than we do; and in turn, why attempts to predict, manage, or manipulate social and economic systems so often go awry. It seems obvious, for example, that people respond to incentives; yet policy makers and managers alike frequently fail to anticipate how people will respond to the incentives they create. Social trends often seem to have been driven by certain influential people; yet marketers have been unable to identify these “influencers” in advance. And although successful products or companies always seem in retrospect to have succeeded because of their unique qualities, predicting the qualities of the next hit product or hot company is notoriously difficult even for experienced professionals. Only by understanding how and when common sense fails, Watts argues, can we improve how we plan for the future, as well as understand the presentâ€”an argument that has important implications in politics, business, and marketing, as well as in science and everyday life.

Book Information

Paperback: 368 pages

Publisher: Crown Business; 5/27/12 edition (June 26, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0307951790

ISBN-13: 978-0307951793

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.8 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (118 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #30,301 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #20 inÂ Books > Business & Money > Management & Leadership > Planning & Forecasting #133 inÂ Books > Medical Books >

Customer Reviews

This is a personal review - if you haven't come across similar material I think it's a very recommendable read. I'm a big fan of Duncan Watts' work on Small Worlds, but I did not get as much as I would have liked from his latest pop-sci offering. Some of the material I found new, such as Grannovetter's intriguing threshold hypothesis as to why some mobs gel into mass action and others do not, and he had a very good discussion on the use of online networked communities as social science laboratories, with some interesting results generated from twitter, Facebook and email. And, as is necessary for this kind of a book, there are a number of illustrative anecdotes, such as why BetaMax and Discman failed in the market, but iPod succeeded or 's "Mechanical Turk" - which I just tried out after reading the book, or Zara's approach to marketing. If nothing else it makes for good entertainment and fodder for conversation. However much of the book hinges around the nature of workable explanations, and I'm surprised that in his wanderings Watts did not come across Herbert Simon's well known

"Everything is Obvious" by Dr. Duncan J. Watts suggests that we are on the brink of a new age of social scientific discovery with profound implications for business, politics and culture. Dr. Watts brings an interesting and rare critical discipline to the soft science of sociology due to his PhD's in the hard sciences of theoretical and applied mechanics. Dr. Watts shares insights gained from his academic and professional experiences including his role as a principal research scientist at Yahoo! Research. Accessibly written for general interest readers, Dr. Watts' enlightening book gives us many good reasons to get excited about sociology. Although Dr. Watts rarely acknowledges it, his book represents an implicit refutation of Malcolm Gladwell's pseudo-scientific *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*. Dr. Watts charges Mr. Gladwell with employing an obvious kind of circular logic where a particular social, cultural or artistic phenomenon is heralded simply due to the fact of its success (while ignoring how dozens of others that possessed the same attributes failed). In fact, Dr. Watts argues that answers to the riddles of history are usually not well understood in the moment; it is only with the benefit of hindsight that historians can piece together the relevant factors that might have produced noteworthy events. For example, Dr.

[Download to continue reading...](#)

Everything Is Obvious: How Common Sense Fails Us Making Common Sense Common Practice, Third Edition: Models for Manufacturing Excellence You're Making Me Hate You: A Cantankerous

Look at the Common Misconception That Humans Have Any Common Sense Left Obstacles to
Deliverance: Why Deliverance Sometimes Fails (The Frank Hammond Booklet Series) Bad
Software: What To Do When Software Fails What to Do When the Power Fails: Storey's Country
Wisdom Bulletin A-191 (Storey Country Wisdom Bulletin) When Technology Fails: A Manual for
Self-Reliance, Sustainability, and Surviving the Long Emergency, 2nd Edition The Mystery of
Capital: Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere Else What They Do With Your
Money: How the Financial System Fails Us and How to Fix It Perrine's Sound and Sense: An
Introduction to Poetry (Perrine's Sound & Sense: An Introduction to Poetry) 5 Things You Can Do
Right Now to Lower Your Auto Insurance Premium: Making Sense of Insurance (Making Sense of
Insurance Blog Post Book 3) PRE-ALGEBRA MAKE SENSE, BOOK 3, PATTERNS OF FACTORS
AN MULTIPLES, STUDENT EDITION (Pre-Algebra Makes Sense) PRE-ALGEBRA MAKE SENSE,
BOOK 3, PATTERNS OF FACTORS AN MULTIPLES, STUDENT EDITION (Pre-Algebra Makes
Sense) Non-Obvious: How to Think Different, Curate Ideas & Predict The Future Non-Obvious 2016
Edition: How To Think Different, Curate Ideas & Predict The Future Isn't It Obvious? Revised Edition
Isn't It Obvious? Isn't It Obvious? Revised Isn't It Obvious?: A Business Novel on Retailing Using
the Theory of Constraints An Obvious Fact

[Dmca](#)