

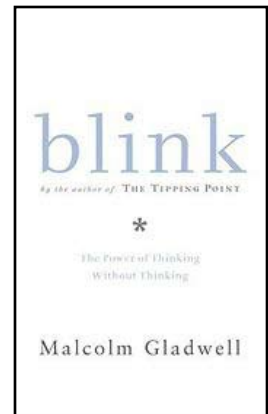


Look At This Book: Blink

By Gary M. Goscenski, Director of Consulting Services

Malcolm Gladwell, author of *The Tipping Point*, continues to explore social science ideas focused on rapid cognition in his second book, *Blink*. For example, rapid cognition is the thought process that occurs in the first couple of seconds when you meet someone for the first time or you walk into a house you are thinking of buying. According to Gladwell in those first couple of seconds you form conclusions that are important, powerful, and occasionally really good.

In order to achieve a really good “instant” conclusion, it is important to have the right information and to be able to process that information. For any charity or nonprofit organization seeking the support of donors, it is imperative to understand that donors are not seeking a lot of information about your charity; rather they are seeking the “right” information about your charity. Gladwell stated in his book that more information is not necessarily better information, and spending more time in deliberation does not necessarily result in better decision-making. Given the myriad of examples used throughout the book, it would be easy to conclude that perhaps your donors do not have the right information about your cause.



Blink also explores the idea of sensation transference, which is when you transfer sensations or impressions about the packaging of the product to the product itself. Gladwell lists several examples about sensation transference using consumer products such as margarine, brandy, and the subtleties of a tiny sprig of parsley on the label of a Hormel can. This brand imagery is important for nonprofit organizations to master as well, since how you “package” your cause will impact your ability to raise funds. It is critical to ensure that how you deliver your message and its content is optimized to provide the information donors want and need – right down to the pictures and colors you use.

There is no easy fix coming out of *Blink* that will be applicable to nonprofit organizations. In fact, even though *Blink* topped the best-seller list, it is difficult to make the case that *Blink* should be required reading for a nonprofit CEO, marketing or communication person. However, on a personal level, if you have ever wondered if you should listen to the little voice deep inside you, *Blink* will probably convince you that you should.

Source: Gladwell, Malcolm. *Blink*. New York: Little, Brown, and Company, 2005.