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HOW TO READ A PERSON LIKE A BOOK

By **Oscar Bruce**

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The human mind is an innovative hybrid that allows us to anticipate the future – to think big thoughts. That's the good news.

However a growing number of psychologists and behavioral scientists are finding evidence that our brains are hard-wired for mistakes in today social environment, especially when it comes to assessing the personality and predicting behavior of people we encounter.

Why are we so bad at reading the intentions of others? Built on top of the older "emotional" parts of our mamallian circuitry, there is a "rational" cerebral cortex. The two are often at odds, and under the surface, our protective instincts are always lurking. Unfortunately the "emotional" circuitry frequently overwhelms the "rational" cortex. We simply give more weight to elements in the personality of people we encounter that supports our beloved preconceptions than to any evidence to the contrary. Thus we frequently completely miss the target and pay a price for our misjudgments.

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ARBITRARY OBSESSIONS... The frontal lobes have fallen in love with our preconceptions. This hard-wired programming undercuts us in a host of sadly familiar ways. The most common is how our preconceptions and prejudices distort perception of individuals we wish to assess.

CONFIRMATION BIAS... It's our all too natural ability to convince ourselves of whatever it is that we want to believe. How? We simply give more weight to events that support our desired prejudice or preconception than to any evidence to the contrary.

PREPARATION MUST PRECEED OPPORTUNITY... Consider how many great opportunities are lost by what I call "semantic sabotage". If you've ever found yourself stumbling over your words, or simply not knowing what to say next, you've experienced "the dialog dilemma. Or if you've uttered a statement, then realized that isn't exactly what you meant to say. These are all curable maladies.

I 'LL BET YOUR'VE NEVER HAD THIS EXPERIENCE... Someone introduces themselves to you. Then you tell them your name. Suddenly you realize you can not recall their name. Why does this happen so often? Simple, you didn't forget their name – you never really heard it in the first place! You still had yourself in the middle of the picture.

Most people do not listen with the intent to understand – they listen with the intent to reply or impress. This is never successful because the mind does not have simultaneous capability. Therefore, if you are contemplating your next statement, you are not focusing on his words, tones and actions.

In order to read a person like a book, you must get them to open up, get them talking. Getting people to open up is a skill that you can learn.

A skilled conversationalist uses specific question in three different categories.

- (1) Conversation starters.
- (2) Personal questions.
- (3) Philosophical questions).

Once you've mastered a small inventory of optional question you can switch categories to control the outcome.

He who does not ask the right questions always hears the wrong answers.

An unclear question has an infinite number of possible answers.

Many say that information is the path to power. The wealthiest people will tell you that it's their ability to make wise choices in dealing with people that is their greatest asset. And that when they did make mistakes, it was often disastrous for them socially and financially.

If you like to lean to "read people like a book" and upgrade your personal communications subscribe to Oscar Bruce's FREENEWSLETTER. Visit his web site at <http://www.oscarbruce.com> For Questions or Comments email him at (oscar1@moment.net)

7 Tips On How To Locate Junior Editors for Your Children's Book

By Catherine Franz

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Are you writing a children's book -- nonfiction or fiction?

Here are a few tips on how to test your almost final draft. And test your manuscript on the same audience that is going to read the book. Make them junior editors.

1. Talk with a teacher at your local school that has a classroom of your book's age group. Ask for permission to come in and read the book to the class. Video tape the children's reactions or ask two people to accompany you to record the children's reactions to direct parts of the story. Give each of the recorders a copy of the manuscript that they can write comments on in the exact location of the children's reaction. They can make smiley faces of J L to save time.

2. Or maybe ask the teacher if she is willing to give the manuscript to students to read as an assignment then ask for the children's opinion. Have a class discussion about the book afterwards with you present.

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3. If the teacher doesn't like any of these, let her make some suggestions.

4. Do you have children the age of your readers? Ask the parents if you could provide a manuscript for them to read and get their feedback.

5. If this is a book that is read to children (they are too young to read yet). Find parents that frequently read to their child and have children that age. Ask them if they would read your book to them and fill out a questionnaire about their reaction. Offer to send them an autographed complimentary copy.

6. Don't forget to place this test information and results into your marketing plan for your agent/publisher. It does make the world of different on if it is accepted.

7. How about a Cub Scouts or Girl Scouts group? Find a few leaders and ask for their help in your goal. A local

community center director might also have some ideas for how you can do the same in their center.

Catherine Franz, a Certified Professional Coach, specializes in infoproduct development. Newsletters and additional articles available: <http://www.abundancecenter.com/blog>:
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