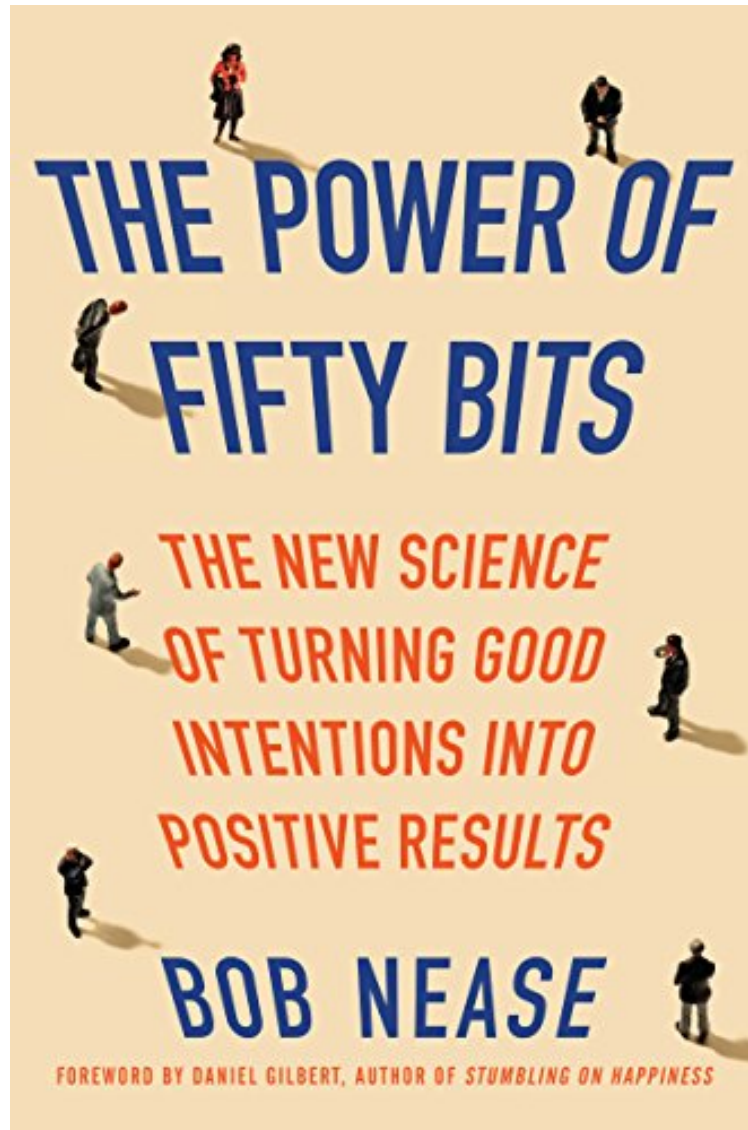


# The Power of Fifty Bits: The New Science of Turning Good Intentions into Positive Results

Bob Nease

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**Bob Nease : The Power of Fifty Bits: The New Science of Turning Good Intentions into Positive Results** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Power of Fifty Bits: The New Science of Turning Good Intentions into Positive Results:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. How to turn inattention and inertia into actionBy Liz GuthridgeBob Nease has written a clear, compelling case for why we need to focus on behavior design--if we want to help ourselves and others do things we want to do. It's hard to get things done because our attention span is so short even without us

practicing continuous partial attention or even worse, multi-tasking. The road to good intentions is paved with hell and so many more pleasurable distractions. Nease serves as a great role model for this "new science of turning good intentions into positive results." His book is easy to read and understand. He also takes the high road and talks about how the brain is "wired for inattention and inertia"-- more diplomatic terms than the ones I've been using. (I still love Matthew Lieberman's observation that he makes in his book *Social: Why Our Brains Are Wired to Connect* that we're all "mental couch potatoes.") "Inattention and inertia" sound so less threatening compared to "mental couch potatoes who stick with the status quo." Based on Nease's work at Express Scripts and interest in wellness, women's reproductive health, and other health care issues, the book also features great examples that many readers should relate to. And from a behavior designer's point of view, Nease is wise to emphasize that somebody has to do the work; it won't just go away. Yet, if you really want people to use your service or do something new at work in addition to everything else they're doing, it often behooves you to take the time and devote some resources to behavior design, which often means shouldering a lot of the work. Among other steps, you've got to create an attention-getting "ask" and then figure out the best way to turn that "ask" into an "act." In my experience, thanks to studying with Dr. BJ Fogg, considered the father of behavior design, I've learned that people are more inclined to act if they'll have a "simple, social and fun" experience. They'll ignore you or drag their feet if it's too hard. I do wish Nease had acknowledged BJ Fogg and his work in the book, especially since both studied at Stanford, and BJ has his Persuasive Technology Lab based there. Nonetheless, considering how few books are available on behavior design, this is a great one to have by your side if you want to help yourself and others put into motion the good intentions that already exist.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. What in the heck is 50 bits? By Sonja Quale  
Fifty Bits is a design for making good decisions easy. Whether you are in HR, Product Development, Marketing, or you are just human, this book will hook you in with humorous stories and keep your attention as you learn about how to guide people toward making good decisions easy. I found this book a fascinating, entertaining look at human behavior that is practical in my everyday life. I will use it as a mom and as someone responsible for helping my clients make good choices about saving money. Dr. Nease, at the end of the book, says it is his deep hope and strong belief that the fifty bits design will be an important part of our success and I think it will.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Amazing book--totally worth a read  
By A. P. Bob Nease makes a really tough topic - how to change people's behaviors - easy to understand and easy to address. With all of the books about behavior economics and behavioral science (Nudge, Blink, Switch, Swayhellip; the list goes on and on), one would think there would be little left to say. But there is plenty of new ground to cover, and Nease guides us through nearly all of it. As interesting as all of the books to date have been, they leave readers with little clue as what to do next. Nease grabs that idea and runs with it. Based on his work as the chief scientist at a large healthcare company, the book lays out a easy-to-follow and proven framework for improving behavior at work, at home, and in our communities. The basic premise is that bad choices aren't the results of misplaced intentions. Instead, most of our bad behaviors reflect good intentions upon which we fail to act. At the root of the problem is a stunning cognitive limitation (and the basis for the somewhat cryptic title): of the 10 million bits of information that our brains handle each second, only 50 bits are set aside for conscious thought. Nease argues that scarcity of attention leads to an "intent-behavior gap." This disconnect between intention and behavior is a critical insight because it changes the focus of efforts to improve behaviors. All too often, Nease says, we assume that bad behaviors are the result of bad intentions, and that leads us to try to change people's underlying intentions. The results of these efforts are often disappointinghellip; because bad intentions aren't the problem. Instead, "The Power of Fifty Bits" offers seven strategies for "activating" the good intentions that most people already have. Each of these strategies is brought to life with engaging, everyday examples. (I was surprised at how pervasive these strategies are in my daily life. Without the fifty bits framework, however, I just didn't see them.) The book also offers suggestions and examples of how to combine the strategies to maximize their effectiveness. This is a well-written, scientifically grounded, fun, and accessible field guide. If you are serious about changing behavior among your customers, colleagues, family or even yourself, read this book!

Going beyond the bestsellers *Predictably Irrational* and *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, the first "how to" guide that shows you how to help customers, employees, coworkers, and clients make better choices to get what they truly want. Of the ten million bits of information our brains process each second, only fifty bits are devoted to conscious thought. Because our brains are wired to be inattentive, we often choose without thinking, acting against our own interests--what we truly want. As the former Chief Scientist of Express Scripts, a Fortune 25 healthcare company dedicated to making the use of prescription medications safer and more affordable, Bob Nease is an expert on applying behavioral sciences to health care. Now, he applies his knowledge to the wider world, providing important practical solutions marketers, human resources professionals, teachers, and even parents can use to improve the behavior of others around them, and get the positive results they want. Nease offers a set of powerful and effective strategies to change behavior, including: Require Choice--compel people to deliberately choose among options Lock in Good Intentions--allow people to make decisions today about choices they will face in the future Let It Ride--set the default to the desired option and let people opt out if they wish Get in the Flow--go to where people's

attention is likely to be naturally Reframe the Choices; set the framework people use to consider options and choices Piggyback It; connect the desired choice or behavior with something they already like or are engaged in Simplify . . . Wisely; make right choices frictionless and easy, make wrong choices more difficult And more.

Focusing on activating good intentions that many people already have can be much more effective than trying to change their intentions through education and increased incentives; a thoughtful, easy-to-digest approach for individuals and organizations seeking to foster better choices. "Fifty Bits is a cleverly engineered system designed to close the gap between people's intentions and their positive actions; Marshall's engaging and thoughtful delivery keeps the information flowing at a pace that gives listeners time to absorb it; "Want to learn how to design approaches that spur others to achieve their goals-and that do the same for you and your own goals? With clarity, eloquence and humor, The Power of Fifty Bits shows you how. (Robert B. Cialdini, Author of Influence) The Power of Fifty Bits shows you how to produce outcomes that have both high financial effectiveness and high acceptance by employees. (Bob Ihrie, SVP, Compensation Benefits) If you want to understand how the environment you live in can be reshaped so that your intuitions, fears, hopes and dreams can best be managed and aligned with your best intentions, I recommend you read this fun, challenging, and useful book. (Arthur Caplan, Professor of Bioethics, NYU) From the Back Cover Even with the very best of intentions, people often fail to make wise choices for themselves; whether for their health, their finances, or their business decisions. Yet it doesn't have to be that way; thanks to the science behind fifty bits design, a set of principles that helps close the gap between intentions and actual behaviors. Of the ten million bits of information our brains process each second, only fifty bits are devoted to conscious thought. This means that humans are wired for inattention and inertia, so we often choose without thinking and act against our own interests. Understanding this is the key to any behavior change, from increasing charitable donations to reducing unintended pregnancies. As the former chief scientist of Express Scripts, a Fortune 25 health care company, Bob Nease is an expert on applying behavioral sciences to the health care industry. He realized that providing financial incentives and tools; an approach that assumes patients will act rationally; was not having the outcome that he expected. Instead, he had to reengineer patients' environments in order for their natural inclinations to lead them to the best decisions. In a nod to the brain's fundamental cognitive limitation, he called this approach "fifty bits design;" and now he applies his knowledge to the wider world, offering important, practical solutions that marketers, human resources professionals, teachers, and even parents can use to improve the behavior of others around them and get the positive results they want. Nease offers a set of powerful and effective strategies for change: • Require Choice: compel people to deliberately choose among options • Lock In Good Intentions: allow people to make decisions today about choices they will face in the future • Let It Ride: set the default to the desired option and let people opt out if they wish • Get in the Flow: home in on where people's attention is likely to go naturally • Reframe the Choices: set the framework people use to consider options and choices • Piggyback It: connect the desired choice or behavior with something people already like or are engaged in • Simplify • Wisely: make the right choices frictionless and easy; make the wrong choices more difficult The Power of Fifty Bits is the first how-to guide that provides step-by-step instructions for helping customers, employees, co-workers, and clients get the results they truly want. Advance Praise for The Power of Fifty Bits "In many ways, this book is yet another one of Bob's cleverly engineered systems, expertly designed to hook you with an enigmatic title, hold you with delightful stories and deep ideas, and ultimately leave you better than you were before; wiser about people in general, and about yourself in particular." —from the foreword by Daniel Gilbert "Want to learn how to design approaches that spur others to achieve their goals; and that do the same for you and your own goals? With clarity, eloquence, and humor, The Power of Fifty Bits shows you how." —Robert B. Cialdini, author of Influence "If you want to understand how the environment you live in can be reshaped so that your intuitions, fears, hopes, and dreams can best be managed and aligned with your best intentions, I recommend you read this fun, challenging, and useful book." —Arthur Caplan, professor of bioethics, NYU Langone Medical Center "The Power of Fifty Bits shows you how to produce outcomes that have both high financial effectiveness and high acceptance by employees." —Bob Ihrie, SVP of Compensation and Benefits, Lowes Companies, Inc. "The Power of Fifty Bits is a great resource for creating state-of-the-art programs to promote well-being. Combining evidence for effective behavior change with practical advice, this book will transform your thinking and put you on a path to a much better life." —Helen Darling, strategic advisor, National Business Group on Health "Bob Nease is a pioneer of implementing social science in business and healthcare, and we are lucky to have him share his expertise." —Dan Ariely, author of Predictably Irrational "This book proves that scientific insight doesn't need to be dry and boring. If you want to learn how to make your organization more effective, or just to make your own life better, read it. It's full of behavioral-science insights in a fun, readable form." —Peter Orszag, former director, Congressional Budget Office About the Author Bob Nease, PhD, served as the Chief Scientist of Express Scripts and is author of more than seventy peer-reviewed papers. He was also an associate professor of Internal Medicine at Washington University in St. Louis and an assistant professor at

Dartmouth Medical School. He has received the Henry Christian Award for Excellence in Research from the American Federation for Clinical Research and the URAC's Health Care Consumer Empowerment and Protection Award. Qarie has narrated over 30 series for the Discovery, Learning Channels The BBC, as well as providing the inflight programming for Virgin Atlantic Airlines BBC radio plays. He has voiced over 80 video games for the Playstation Xbox, and was a guest voice on Comedy Central's Drawn Together. He was made an Associate Artist of The Purple Rose Theatre in 2007.