



Eerste boek van Malcolm Gladwell, ook het eerste dat ik las. Waarin meteen zijn talent blijkt om onderzoeksresultaten uit onverwachte hoeken tot nieuwe gezichtspunten te smeden.

'The reason that most of us seem to have a consistent character is that most of us are really good in controlling our environment.'

Malcolm Gladwell, The tipping point.
How little things can make a big difference

You fold a piece of paper 50 times, how tall do you think the final stack is going to be? As high as the distance to the sun. As human beings we have a hard time to imagine this kind of progression, because the end result –the effect- seems far out of proportion to the cause. We need to prepare ourselves that sometimes big changes follow from small events. p11

The Law of the Few
The 80/20 Principle.
80% percent of the criminals commit 80% of the crimes.
20% of the motorists cause 80% of all the accidents.
20% of the beer drinkers drink 80% of the beer.
p19

The Stickiness Factor
The HIV epidemic tipped in the early 80's not because of the enormous changes in sexual behavior in the gay communities that made it possible to spread so rapidly. It also tipped because HIV itself changed. Once it infected you, you stayed infected. It stuck.
We spend a lot of time thinking of how to reach as many people as possible. But the hard part of communication is often figuring out how to make sure a message doesn't go in one ear and out the other. Stickiness means a message makes an impact. p 25

The Power of Context
Humans are a lot more sensitive to their environment than they may seem.
The Bystander Problem.
When people are in a group responsibility for acting is diffused. They assume that someone else will make the call. Or they assume that because no one else is acting, the apparent problem isn't really a problem. It is that no one called because 38 people heard her scream. Ironically, had she been attacked on a lonely street with just one witness, she might have lived. p28

Because the sheer ubiquity of marketing efforts these days, word-of-mouth appeals have become the only kind of persuasion that most of us respond to anymore. p 32

How many steps does it take to get a packet from friend to friend towards someone you do not know living somewhere far away? Milgram found out that most of the packets reached the target in five or six steps.
Most of us do not have broad and diverse groups of friends. In general people choose friends of similar age and race. But if a friend lived on the same floor, then race and age become less important. Proximity overpowers similarity. Although people tend to think that they share attitudes, they actually share activities. We are friends with people we like to do things with.
p35

Connectors do not think of their connections as part of a business strategy. He's not overly social, back-slapping. He's more an observer with the dry, knowing manner of someone who likes to be a bit on the outside. He simply likes people, in a genuine and powerful way, and finds the patterns of acquaintanceship and interaction in which people arrange themselves endlessly fascinating. After you've met him you feel lightly frustrated. You want to know him better, but you wonder if you will ever have the chance. He himself is happy with weak ties.
p43-46

People aren't getting their jobs through their friends, they get them via their acquaintances. Your friends after all, occupy the same world that you do. What could they know that you don't?

The strength of weak ties. Acquaintances represent a social power. The closer an idea or a product comes to a connector the more opportunity it has. p54

The connector has a good meal at a restaurant and mails all his acquaintances in the neighborhood what a nice restaurant it is. It is not me telling you, and you telling another friend. Word-of-mouth is that somewhere along that chain, someone tells a connector. p56

What a great salesman separates from an average one is the number and quality of answers they have to the objections commonly raised by potential clients. p72

They were given an headset and were told the company wanted to test to see how well they worked when the listener was in motion. First some songs and then they heard a radio editorial arguing that tuition at their university should be raised from its present level of \$587 to \$750.

A third were told that while they listened to the tapes radio editorial they should nod their heads vigorously up and down. The next third were told to shake their heads from side to side. The final third were the control group. They were told to keep there heads still. When finished all the students were given a short questionnaire asking them questions about the quality of the songs and the effect of the shaking. Slipped at the end was the question the experimenters really wanted an answer to: 'What would you feel would be an appropriate dollar amount for the undergraduate tuition fee per year?'

The students who kept their heads still, the tuition amount they guessed appropriate was \$582 – or just where the tuition fee was already. Those who shook their heads from side to side disagreed strongly with the proposed increase (...) Those who were told to nod their heads found the editorial very persuasive p77

I you asked the head nodders why they wanted intuition to increase so dramatically none of them would say, because I was nodding my head. p79

The pioneer of this kind of analysis –called the study of microrhythms- is a man named William Condon. In one of his most famous research projects in the 1960s he attempted to decode a four-and-a half-second fragment of film in which a moman says to a man and a child over dinner: "You all should come around every night. We never had a dinnertime like this on months."

Condon broke the film Ito individual frames, each representing about 1/45th of a second. Then he watched and watched as he describes it:

To carefully study the organization and sequence of this, the approach must be naturalistic and ecological. You just look for thousands of hours until the order of the material begins to emerge. It is like sculpturing p81

Lorch and Dan Anderson showed two groups of five-year-olds an episode of Sesame Street. The kids in the second group however, were put in a room with lots of very attractive toys on the floor. Als you would epectm the kifs in the room without the toys watched the show about 87% of the time, while the kids with the toys watched only 47% of the show. But when they tested the two gro0ups to see how much of the show the kids remembered and understood, the scores were exactly the same. p101

...human beings invariably make the mistake of overestimating the importance of fundamental character traits and underestimating the importance of situation and context.
p160

Character is more like a bundle of habits and tendencies and interests, loosely bound together and dependent, at certain times, on circumstance and context. The reason that most of us seem to have a consistent character is that most of us are really good in controlling our environment. p163