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# Stats And Curiosities: From Harvard Business Review



## Synopsis

Fascinating stats, useful tips, and entertaining topics. Did you know that to make a task seem easier, all you have to do is lean back a little? Or that retail salespeople who mimic the way their customers speak and behave end up selling more? If you like stats like this, are intrigued by ideas, and find connecting the dots to be a critical part of your skill set, this book is for you. Culled from Harvard Business Review's popular newsletter, The Daily Stat, this book offers a compelling look at insights that both amuse and inform. Covering such managerial topics as teams, marketing, workplace psychology, and leadership, you'll find a wide range of business statistics and general curiosities and oddities about professional life that will add an element of trivia and humor to your learning (and will make you appear smarter than your colleagues). Highly quotable and surprisingly useful, *Stats and Curiosities: From Harvard Business Review* will keep you on the front lines of business research and ahead of the pack at work.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

*Stats & Curiosities* is a very fast little collection of over 160 research findings, one to a page, and filling half a page or less each. They range from the obvious to the absurd, with many stops along the way. It seems that academic research has run out of ordinary things to study and has opened the doors to pretty much anything, especially in Canada, which jumps out as the largest single source of these "findings". Here are ten I found worth remembering: -Children cared for by grandmothers do much worse in test scores. -Red makes auction participants bid more. -Men with

shaved heads are treated as taller and more powerful.-Oxycontin more than doubled the number of subjects who trusted a total stranger with all their money.-Despite the billions spent on ads, only 46% of American teens favor a car as one of their top 10 brands, down from 64% in 1998.-The last passenger on a flight provides essentially the entire profit on that flight.-Larger teams slow processes, develop larger forecasting errors, hamper co-ordination, increase conflicts, and diminish motivation. The ideal team size is two.-Peppermint (the scent, not the candy) enhances attention, alertness, memory and mood.-Mimicking a customer's speech pattern and behavior increases sales and impression of the whole store.And last but probably most relevant: Reading too much useless information makes people 46% less likely to think clearly. People cannot perceive the extent of the uselessness of the information they read.David Wineberg

I keep this book on my desk at work and lots of people like to come in and just read a couple of page. Makes me feel like people actually like me. It's on the smaller side so don't expect a huge normal size book but it does the trick. Anytime I need a boost in my life, I just have to pick it up and start reading it and suddenly I feel smarter!

It's an introduction to some unique problem solving. But less enlightening and more of curiosity. I'd like to see more of this, but perhaps more in depth (how about something like "predicting rare events"?). Probably would not have picked it up if I had a chance to breeze through it at the bookstore.

This book is an amalgamation of a wide variety of statistical findings across various categories. They are for the most part interesting and motivate curiosity and further study. There are a total of 160 or so such snippets like "whites have benefited more from pay for performance jobs" to "flattering the boss can set him up for a fall" to "why women pay more for mortgages: they don't shop". Each entry is just a short paragraph which begins with an introduction of the finding that includes mention of the academics and the universities involved. This is followed by a very quick mention of the correlation and usually by an explanation. The explanations are not always convincing; in fact, a couple of the snippets suggest that the reader should take a lot of what's included with a grain of salt. One snippet says that absorbing data this way makes one stupid; another says that you using statistics you can come up with all kinds of correlations. Another example of this are the two findings that contradict each other. In any case, a serious reader should take something they are interested in and dig deeper into the original research and find possibly

other research that may support or contradict the finding presented. Still, in this very short format, the book does provide some entertaining information and food for thought.

I purchased two of these books, because I consider it a very good small present for this Christmas. It is a little book that you can use during short travels. You will find a lot of fun, with amazing discoveries. Reading is easy, is not scientific language, and many of the tips could be useful for real management.

A book full of curiosities and can help provide one upmanship at the water cooler. It's a quick read but doesn't stick.

Great bathroom reading; seldom over one page on a Kindle. I bought it when I was about to have surgery, and it served me well. Don't expect to be much smarter when you have finished it.

This is a book of statistical factoids... You can probably glean all of them from the internet, for free.  
word

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