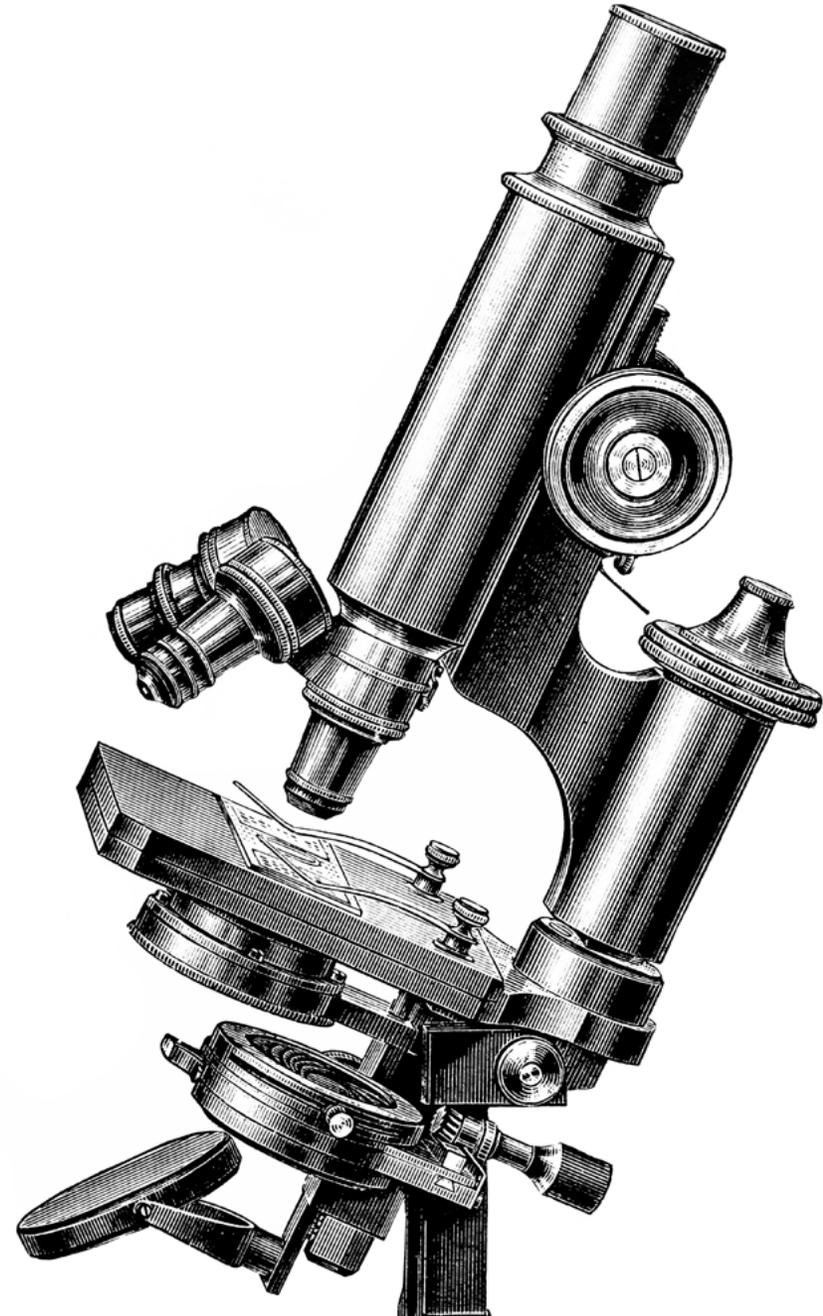


# Designing with behavioural science in mind

((DR)) DrumRoll



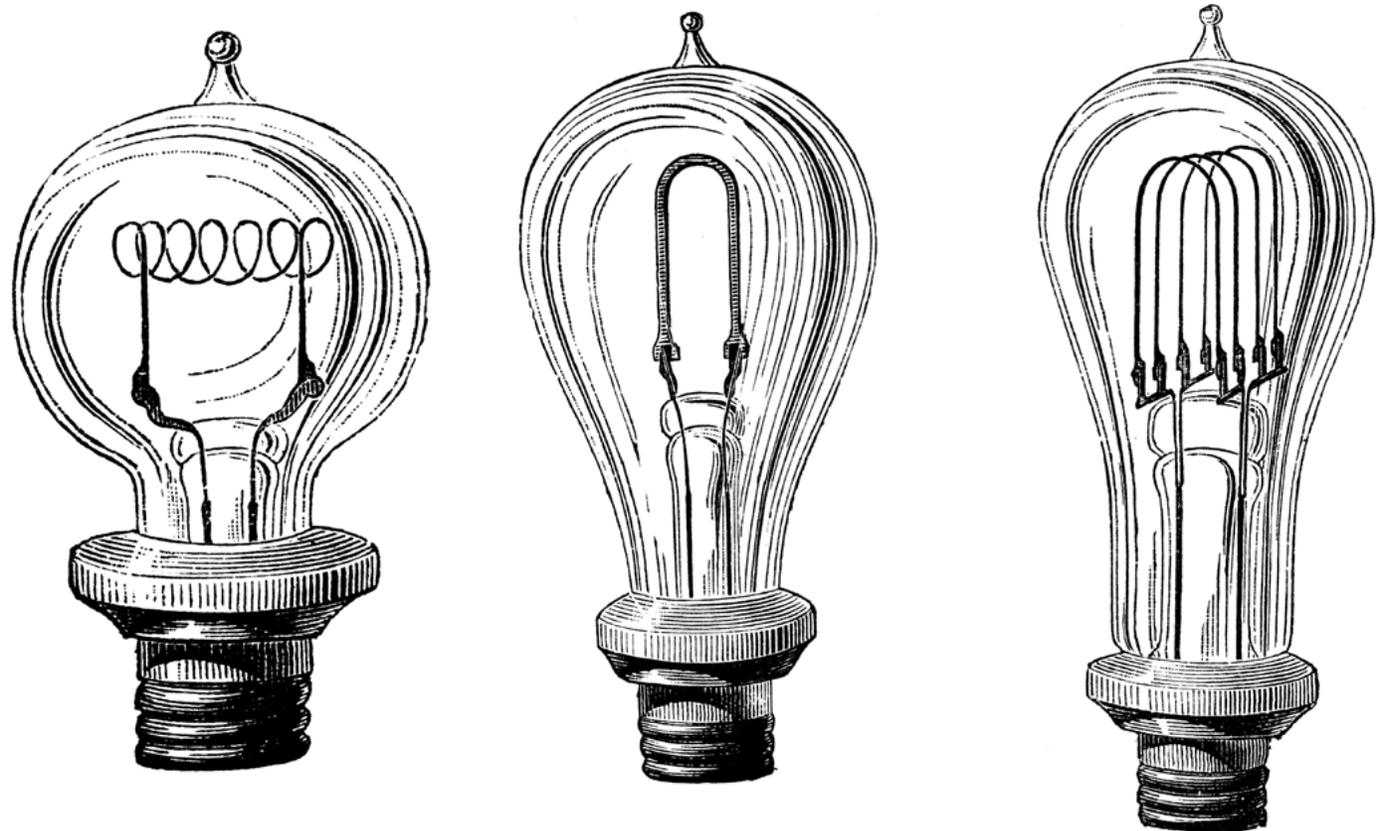
# Hello

At DrumRoll our aim is simple - to help our clients reach their engagement goals in a refreshingly straightforward way. We write and design communications which help deliver the best outcomes for everyone.

To achieve really purposeful engagement, we need to appreciate how our audience thinks, what they'll respond to and why they make the decisions they do.

And that's where understanding biases and the science behind peoples' behaviour really makes a difference.

Here we highlight some of those most well-known biases. We'll show you some real examples of how we've used our behavioural science expertise to design with these biases in mind - how to make them work for us and how to avoid them altogether.



# What is behavioural science?

*"It is the cross-disciplinary, open-minded science of understanding how people behave. It cross-fertilises and brings closer together insights and methods from a variety of fields and disciplines, from experimental and behavioural economics to social and cognitive psychology, from judgement and decision-making to marketing and consumer behaviour, from health and biology to neuroscience, from philosophy to happiness and wellbeing research."*

Matteo M Galizzi is an Assistant Professor of Behavioural Science at the Department of Social Policy LSE

## How does behavioural science affect smart design?

Through the intelligent use of behavioural science, designers working alongside copywriters are able to steer their users to consume their content in the way they want them to. Through 'framing' information or using inherent human 'biases', the choices a user makes can be manipulated to positive or negative effect. We'll take you through some of the biases you might not be aware of and how businesses use them to influence their audiences.

## What is bias?

According to 'Psychology Today' bias is a tendency, inclination, or prejudice toward or against something or someone. Some biases are positive and helpful – like choosing to only eat foods considered healthy or staying away from someone who has knowingly caused harm. But biases are often based on stereotypes, rather than actual knowledge of an individual or circumstance. Whether positive or negative, such cognitive shortcuts can result in prejudgements that lead to rash decisions or discrimination.

# The Dunning-Kruger effect

The Dunning-Kruger effect happens when an unskilled person overestimates their ability or a skilled person underestimates what they can do. It turns out people who are the least competent at a given task often rate their skills most highly, simply because they are too ignorant to understand what it means to have the skill.

In other words, they don't know what they don't know.

A classic example of Dunning-Kruger Effect occurred in 2010 when an elderly church-goer took it upon herself to restore a famous church fresco - destroying the piece.

## How do you avoid the Dunning-Kruger Effect?

Be honest with yourself. If your design/copywriting skills are limited, reach out to colleagues who have the experience and can offer sage advice. It is much simpler than making a wrong or poor decision. The opposite goes for someone with expert skills. At this point, you should know you have had enough experience to make a good decision without second guessing yourself.



# Hick's Law

More options lead to harder decisions.

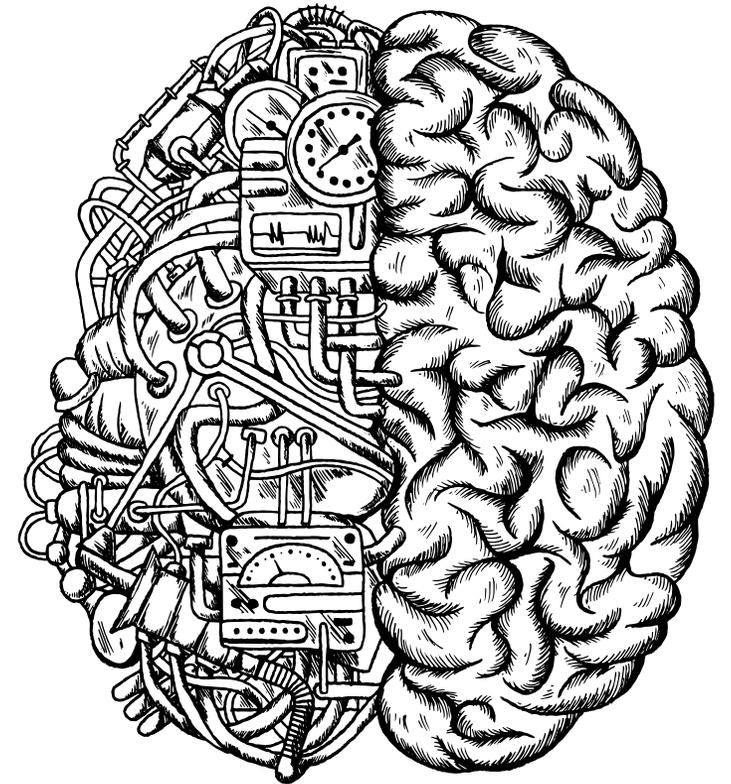
Hick's Law says the more choices you present your users with, the longer it will take them to reach a decision.

In a travel booking app like Airbnb, having too many options can lead to a paradox of choice (and ultimately the loss of customers!).

## As a designer how do you avoid this bias?

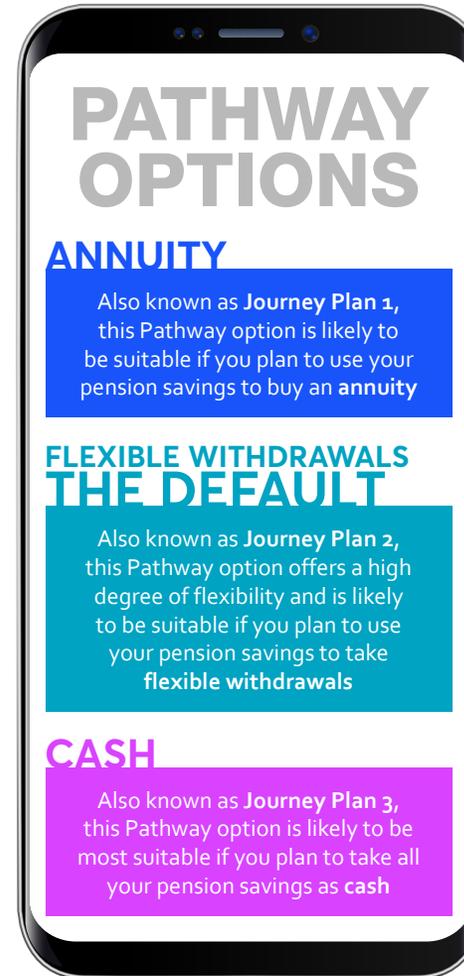
In areas where you have a lot of options or repeated items, try to reduce them or display them differently - they might not all need to be there at once.

If you can't minimise the number of options, try to put them in an easily skimmable order. Make sure the items are familiar so it's easier for the user to make a decision.



# At DrumRoll we...

Aim to present the relevant options to members in a clear and simple format. When it comes to investment choices, lifestyle strategies (including the default strategy) are where 95% of members invest. Usually there are three lifestyle options, so we explain each one in jargon-free, simple language. And for those who want more information about other fund options we direct them to the fund selection website where they can pick and choose what they'd like to find out.



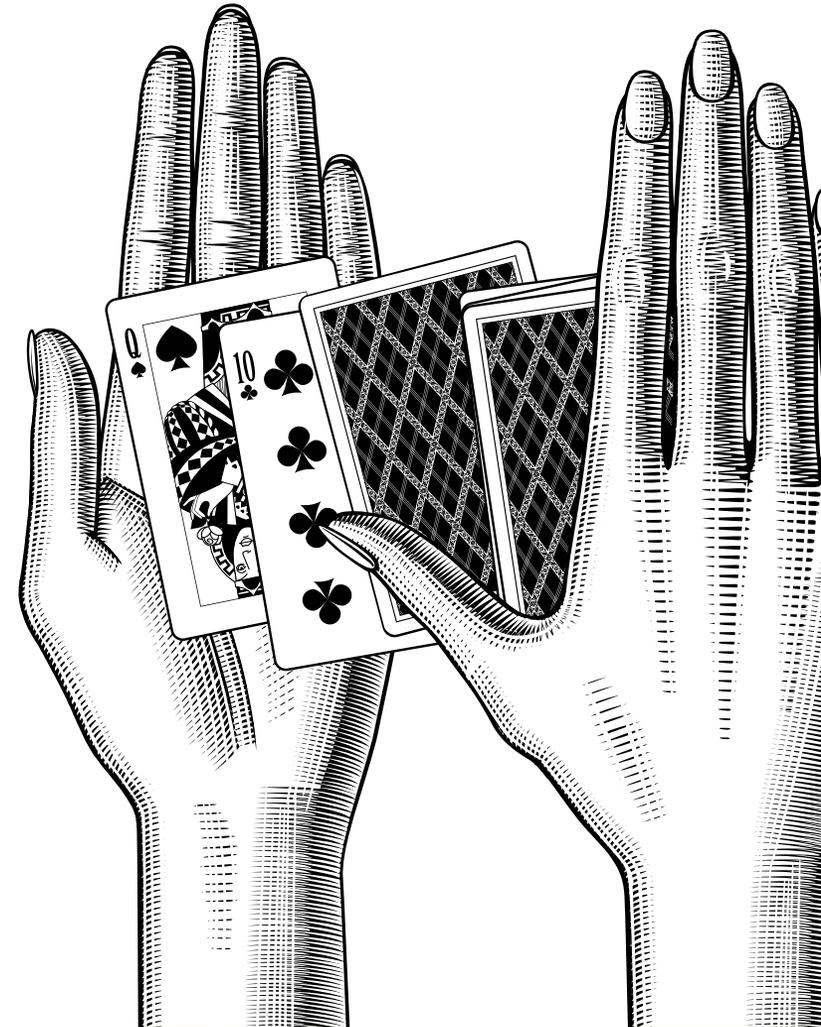
# The anchoring effect

Anchoring is the tendency to heavily rely on the first piece of information offered when making a decision, whether this first piece of information is relevant to the decision or not.

If you were asked to pick a number card out of a deck and then asked to bid on something, chances are your bid would be higher if the card you picked was higher-facing. In this situation you've become anchored to that first piece of information (a high-facing card) and it influenced your next decision.

## As a designer how do you use the anchoring effect?

You can apply the anchoring effect by making the first price or number displayed high so that other prices seem like a discount.



# Attentional bias

Attentional bias is a tendency to focus on some things while ignoring others. And failing to look at alternatives because you're too focused on a specific train of thought.

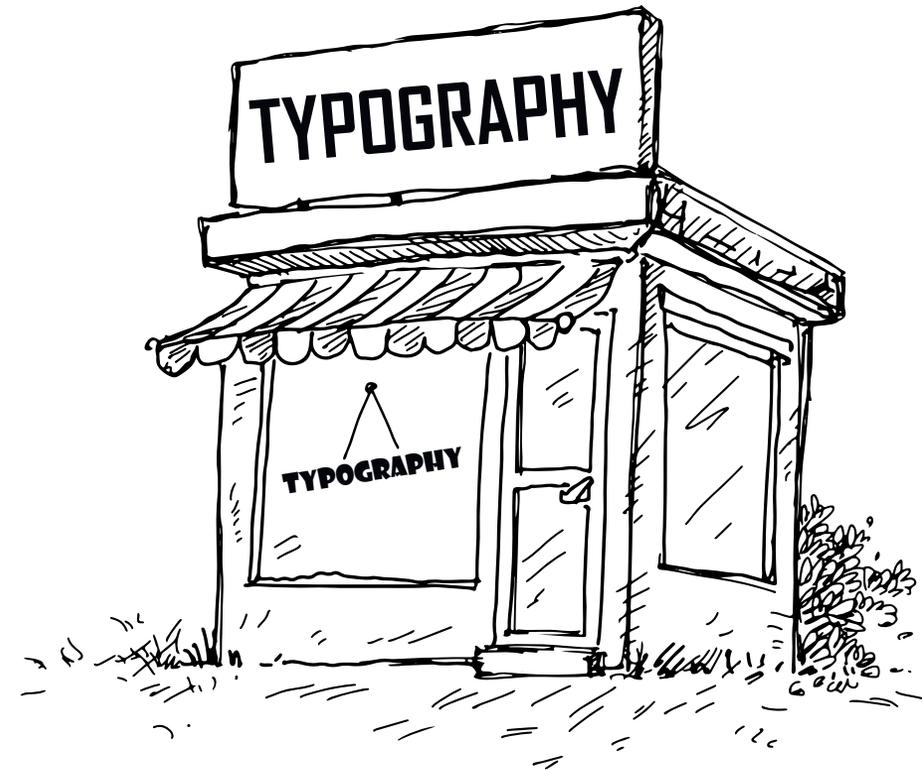
If you're a graphic designer for example, every street and shop sign, book or magazine you see is a composition of typographic leading, kerning and tracking. As the saying goes, "To the man with the hammer, every problem looks like a nail."

There's certainly nothing wrong with being passionate about your interests or absorbed in the work you do. But it can sometimes lead to stagnant thinking and mean overlooking a better solution because you're too focused on using elements you know and favour.

## As a designer how do you avoid this bias?

Work with a diverse team of people from a range of age, sex, gender, ethnicity, ability and social economic backgrounds - it'll help you broaden your horizons. Look to educate yourself outside your field - and brain.

Put simply: you need input and perspective from people who think differently to you.



# Cognitive load

This is the total amount of mental effort needed to complete a task.

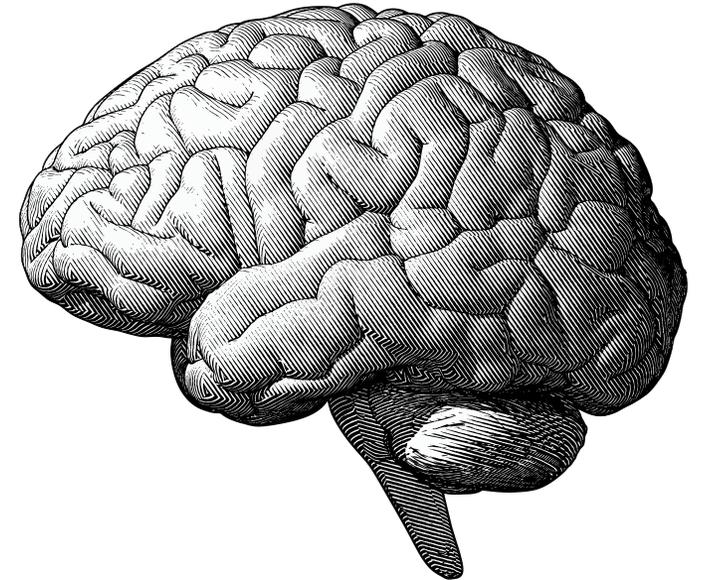
You can think of it as the processing power needed by the user to interact with a product. If the information needing to be processed goes over the user's ability to handle it, the cognitive load is too high.

## How do you avoid too much cognitive load on the user?

Keep your information bite-size so it's easier to manage.

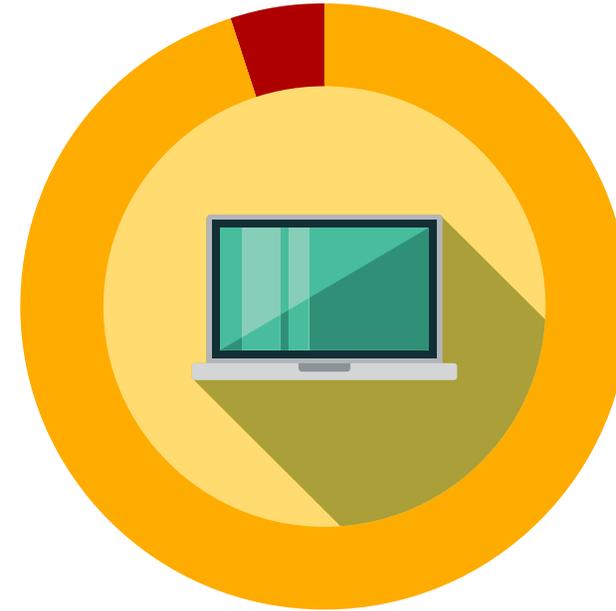
Try to avoid using jargon, formulas or maths equations.

Use infographics where you can and combine them with simple, written explanations. Big, bold figures and images to illustrate content can be really helpful for the user to process lots of information.



# At DrumRoll we...

Use infographics to illustrate our key messages and make things easy to digest for the member. We write in jargon-free, simple language and ensure our content is simple and straightforward to understand.



**95 out of 100**

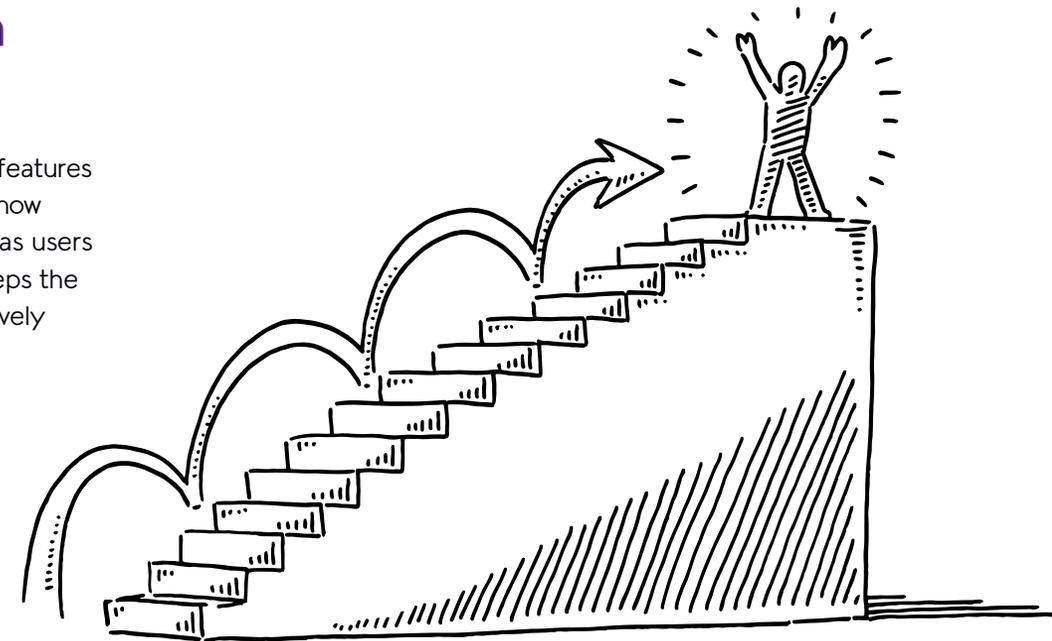
people prefer hybrid working  
to office only working

# Progressive disclosure

Progressive disclosure is a way of sequencing information and actions across several screens – in a step-by-step sign up flow, for example. It's used to help lower the chances a user will feel overwhelmed by too much information all at once.

## As a designer how can you help?

An interface is easier to use when complex features are gradually revealed. During onboarding, show only the core features of your product, and as users get familiar with it, unveil new options. It keeps the interface simple for new users and progressively brings power to advanced users.



# Banner Blindness

Users have learned to ignore content that resembles ads, is close to ads or appears in places usually dedicated to ads.

## As a designer how do you avoid banner blindness?

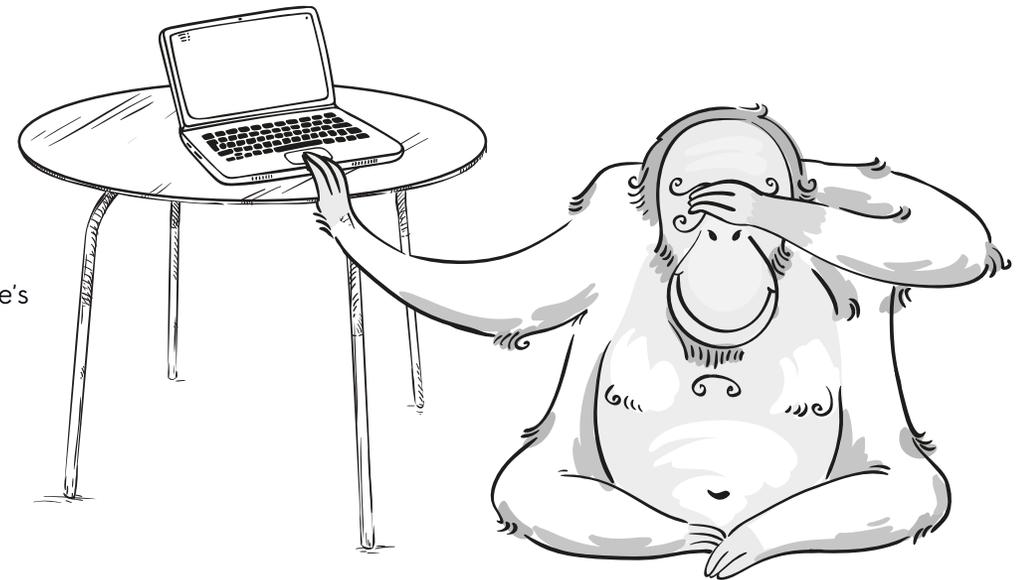
Ask yourself...

Is your important information in a place you'd usually see ads?

Is it close to ads?

Does it look like an ad?

If the answer to any of these is yes, then there's a good chance it'll be overlooked.



# The framing effect

The framing effect is when our decisions are influenced by the way information is presented or how it's 'framed'.

This is critical for product sales, pitches, conversions, marketing and even product design itself.

For example, the iPhone is quite slender but it hasn't been able to claim the 'world's thinnest phone' title. And marketing the iPhone as 'the world's seventh thinnest smartphone' doesn't have a lot of punch. But if they reframe the same fact...

## **The thinnest iPhone. Ever.**

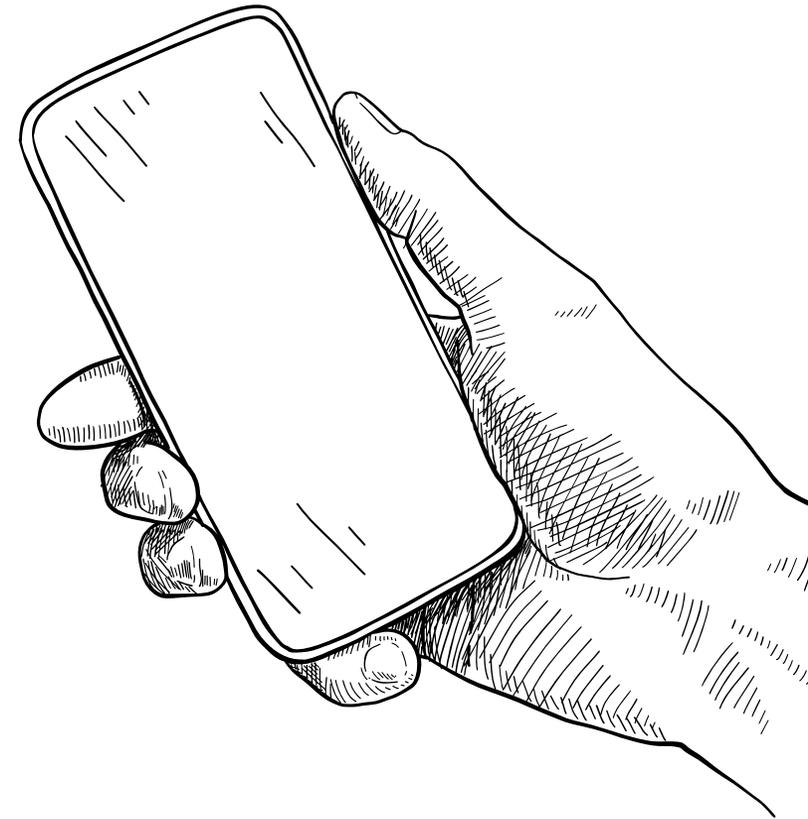
Suddenly looks a lot more desirable, right?

They simply chose what to control and framed it to suit their narrative.

It really isn't all about the features or the products – it's more about the user's needs and desires.

## How do you take advantage of the framing effect?

How a user is interacting with a product is also how you should frame the product to them. Perspective can help or hinder a decision and affect customer experience. Choose your frame wisely.



# At DrumRoll we...

Show how powerful paying in an extra 1% in to your pension can be by framing the headline figures next to each other. Trying to encourage better member outcomes by highlighting what a big difference a small change could make.



# Decoy effect

When we're given a choice between two things, the addition of a third, less attractive option (the decoy) can influence our perception of the original choices. Decoys are completely inferior to one option (the target) but only partially inferior to the other (the competitor).

## How does the decoy effect influence people's choices?

Cinemas often run successful decoy ploys where they offer three options:

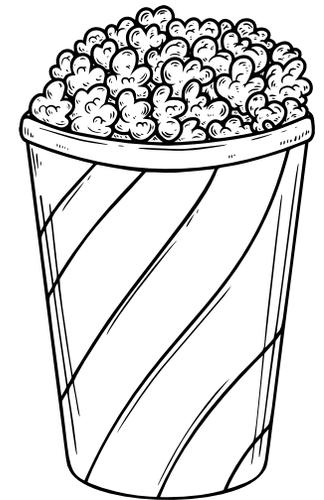
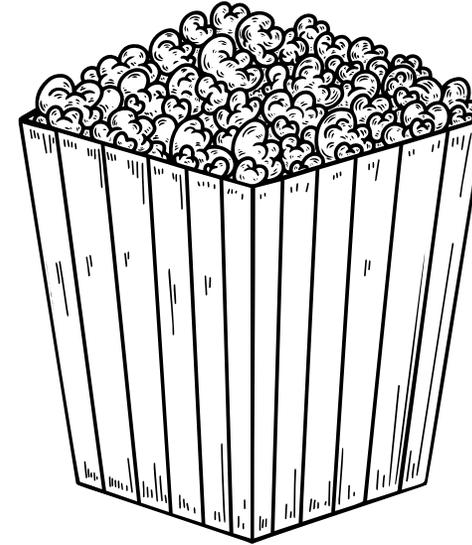
**Small popcorn (competitor): £3.00**

**Medium popcorn (decoy): £6.50**

**Large popcorn (target): £7.00**

Most people will buy the large popcorn because it's only 50p more than the medium so it looks like the best value. If the medium option is taken away most people will go for the small.

Designers can incorporate the decoy effect to make certain aspects of their design layout more prominent or more noticeable than other elements.



# Present bias

Present bias is the tendency to settle for a smaller reward now rather than wait for a bigger reward in the future.

## Present bias example

**Would you prefer £1,000 now or £1,100 in a week?**

Many people would choose £1,000 now and not wait an extra week.

**Would you prefer £1,000 in a year's time or £1,100 in a year and one week?**

Most people would choose £1,100 and be willing to wait an extra week.

In other words, in the short term, we are impatient for money now. But, a long time in future, we are willing to wait.

Designers can use this bias in their designs to help steer users quickly through a time sensitive process.



# Choice- supportive bias

Choice-supportive bias is the tendency to remember making better choices than you actually have.

Have you ever asked someone how they got on with their gambling at the race track? Often the answer is something like "Oh, I pretty much broke even". Of course, the bookies seem to do pretty well, so someone is losing.

This bias is simple to explain: no-one wants to focus energy on their memories of making flawed decisions.

## As a designer how do you avoid this bias?

Keep detailed notes on the progress of the project and your team, or use something more quantitative such as frequent user testing.

Unfortunately, when it comes to design, this bias can have negative effects on your future work. That's why it's critical to rely on cold hard data rather than your gut feelings. Data stays the same no matter what your perception of it is. What data you use, is up to you.



# At DrumRoll we...

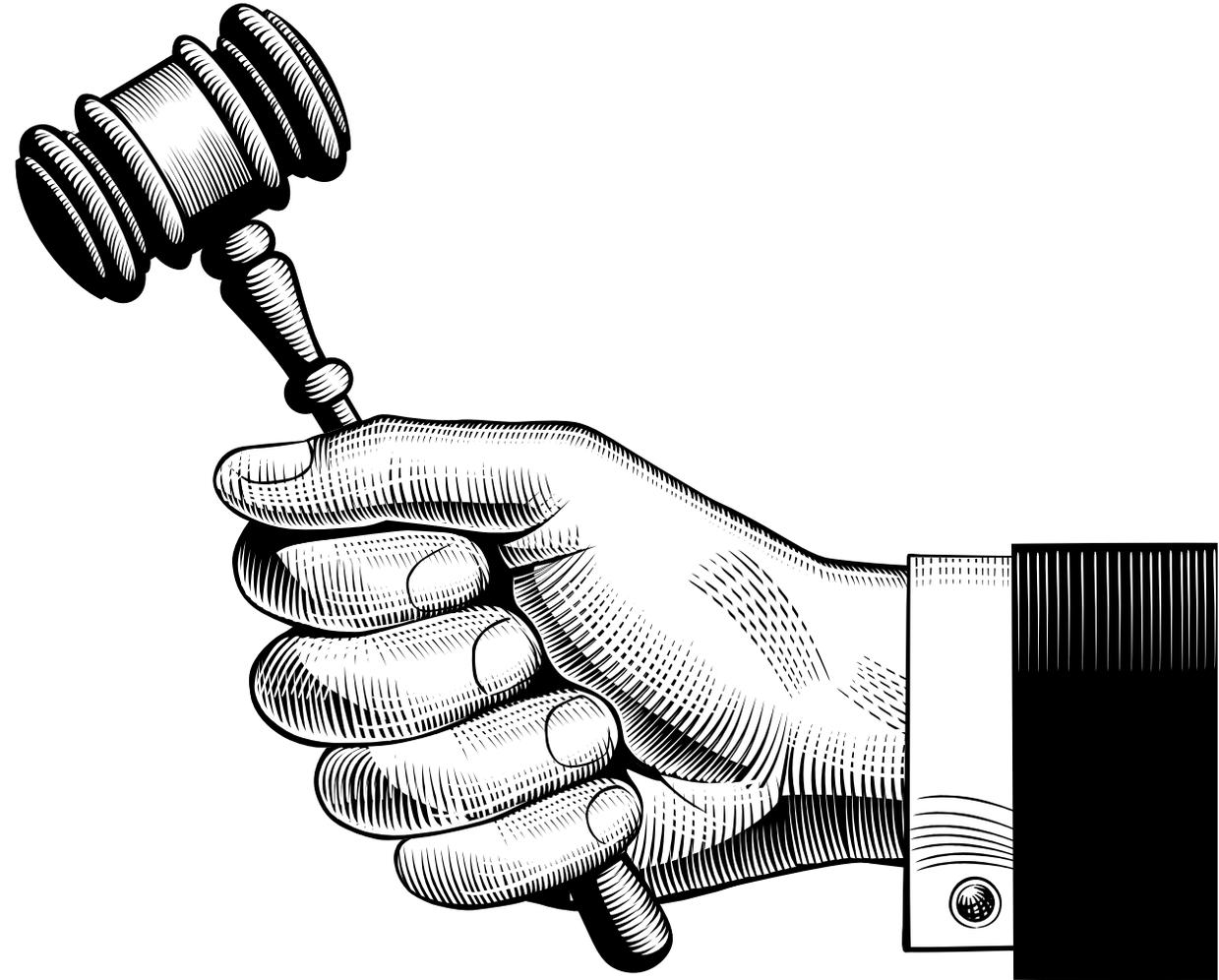
Try to drive positive retirement outcomes for members, by reminding them pensions are long-term investments. By showing the long-term performance of funds and lifestyle strategies, we're highlighting this and reminding members of the positive choice they've made by joining the pension (...even if they have been automatically enrolled).



# The last word...

Cognitive biases are part of being human. We all have them and they only really become a problem when we don't notice their impact on our decisions.

Designing with our top tips in mind can help you mitigate against their negative influences on your design work.



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