

Sway: The Irresistible Pull of Irrational Behavior

By Ori Brafman, Rom Brafman

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A fascinating journey into the hidden psychological influences that derail our decision-making, *Sway* will change the way you think about the way you think.

Why is it so difficult to sell a plummeting stock or end a doomed relationship? Why do we listen to advice just because it came from someone “important”? Why are we more likely to fall in love when there’s danger involved? In *Sway*, renowned organizational thinker Ori Brafman and his brother, psychologist Rom Brafman, answer all these questions and more.

Drawing on cutting-edge research from the fields of social psychology, behavioral economics, and organizational behavior, *Sway* reveals dynamic forces that influence every aspect of our personal and business lives, including loss aversion (our tendency to go to great lengths to avoid perceived losses), the diagnosis bias (our inability to reevaluate our initial diagnosis of a person or situation), and the “chameleon effect” (our tendency to take on characteristics that have been arbitrarily assigned to us).

Sway introduces us to the Harvard Business School professor who got his students to pay $204 for a $20 bill, the head of airline safety whose disregard for his years of training led to the transformation of an entire industry, and the football coach who turned conventional strategy on its head to lead his team to victory. We also learn the curse of the NBA draft, discover why interviews are a terrible way to gauge future job performance, and go inside a session with the Supreme Court to see how the world’s most powerful justices avoid the dangers of group dynamics.

Every once in a while, a book comes along that not only challenges our views of the world but changes the way we think. In *Sway*, Ori and Rom Brafman not only uncover rational explanations for a wide variety of irrational behaviors but also point readers toward ways to avoid succumbing to their pull.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly
Recently we have seen plenty of irrational behavior, whether in politics or the world of finance. What makes people act irrationally? In a timely but thin collection of anecdotes and empirical research, the Brafman brothers—Ari (*The Starfish and the Spire*), a business expert, and Rom, a psychologist—look at sway, the submerged mental drives that undermine rational action, from the desire to avoid loss to a failure to consider all the evidence or to perceive a person or situation beyond the initial impression and the reluctance to alter a plan that isn't working. To drive home their points, the authors use contemporary examples, such as the pivotal decisions of presidents Lyndon B. Johnson and George W. Bush, coach Steve Spurrier and his Gators football team, and a sudden apparent epidemic of bipolar disorder in children (which may be due more to flawed thinking by doctors making the diagnoses). The stories are revealing, but focused on a few common causes of irrational behavior, the book doesn't delve deeply into the psychological demons that can devastate a person's life and those around him. *(June)*
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Review
Praise for SWAY*

"A breathtaking book that will challenge your every thought, *Sway* hovers above the intersection of *Blink* and *Freakonomics*."**--Tom Rath, coauthor of the *New York Times* #1 bestseller *How Full Is Your Bucket?***

“Now we know why no one ever coined the phrase ‘rational exuberance.’ Behind the surprising ways we all make choices, the Brafmans find biology, humanity, and the wisdom of our collective experience. As a longtime student of how financial decisions are made, I found their insights utterly fascinating. Once I started reading, I couldn’t stop—and I suspect the Brafmans could tell you exactly why!”
--Sallie Krawcheck, CEO, Citi Global Wealth Management

"Count me swayed--but in this instance by the pull of entirely rational forces. Ori and Rom Brafman have done a terrific job of illuminating deep-seated tendencies that skew our behavior in ways that can range from silly to deadly. We'd be fools not to learn what they have to teach us."**--Robert B. Cialdini, author of *New York Times* bestseller *Influence***

“Brilliant.”
—Klaus Schwab, chairman of the World Economic Forum

"A page-turner of an investigation into how our minds work . . . and trick us. Think you behave rationally? Read this book first."**--Timothy Ferriss, author of the *New York Times* #1 bestseller *The 4-Hour Workweek***

"*Sway* helped me recognize an aspect of irrational behavior in my experimental work in physics. Sometimes I have jumped into some research that didn't feel quite right . . . but some irrational lure, such as the hope of quick success, pulled me in."**--Martin L. Perl, 1995 Nobel Laureate in Physics**

DISCLAIMER: If you decide to buy this book because of these endorsements, you just got swayed. One of the psychological forces you'll read about in *Sway

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