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FAKE NEWS

AND HOW TO SPOT IT



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In order to avoid accidentally spreading fake news, we need to be CRITICAL of what we read, and not be afraid to QUESTION IT. Some important questions include:



FAKE NEWS TYPE 1: Misinformation

Misinformation is information that... ISN'T. Misinformation is *inaccurate* or *out-of-date information* that is mistakenly presented – or interpreted – as fact. It might take the form of just one sentence. For example:

A vague news headline

SUNLIGHT BAD FOR YOU*

An out-of-context statistic

20% LESS HARMFUL**

A recirculated old meme

'GANGNAM STYLE' REACTION VIDEOS VOTED FUNNIEST THING EVER***

All it takes is just one person *misunderstanding* that information and *forwarding it on*... for confusion to spread.

*If you don't wear sunscreen.
**Than what?
***According to a poll from 2012.

Nearly true or REALLY true?

Of course, it's ideal if the gossip that *you* share is TRUE. That'll build up your rep not just as someone who has secret information, but someone whose information is accurate. (You need to be careful about *how much* gossip you share – you don't want to develop a reputation as someone who can't keep a secret!)

That said, it seems to matter LESS if your gossip is true, than if other people LIKE HEARING IT.

That's a **BIG** part of how and why fake news spreads so easily. Another big part is that every time a story gets shared, people use their own words. And that can turn a silly story meant as a joke into a maybe-true story that people take seriously...



As long as each person in the chain hears the story from a friend – someone they trust – they might feel it's OK to share the story *wherever and however they like*.

Percentages and averages can make a claim believable, regardless of what those numbers actually ARE. They may imply that scientific research has PROVEN something, which could persuade you that believing the claim is a *rational* and *informed* decision.



8 out of 10

78%

Statistics are a GREAT tool to identify trustworthy facts. But there are people who use them to persuade others that something SEEMS true, even if it's not. The main trick they use is to *keep things as simple as possible*, which can result in statistics being taken out of context or presented in a confusing way. This chapter covers six ways statistics can be used to LOOK trustworthy, whilst misleading people:

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Using the term 'on average'
Scaling up numbers
Cherry-picking data
Manipulating words
Manipulating pictures
Ignoring proportions

Top tips to avoid being caught out by fake communications:

DON'T click on links or call numbers sent via emails, direct messages, texts, or social media.

Instead, search for the official website of the organization to contact them.

DON'T send any donations via bank transfer or money-transfer companies.

If someone asks you to send money to a charity in this way, **DON'T.**

It's a SCAM!

URGENT ACTION REQUIRED!



They can con huge numbers of people at once by *pretending* to be from reputable companies – copying company logos and email addresses – and sending messages worded to **panic** people into acting ***QUICKLY.***

You have 1 new message

FROM: bankinaccountss55@thisbank.com
SUBJECT: You've been hacked!