The Tipping Point by Malcolm Gladwell

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Book Report

In his book *The Tipping Point*, Malcolm Gladwell observes the laws of human nature and summarizes man’s behavioral patterns. The given book depicts the ways to excel in all business fields. Furthermore, it helps to understand the prime causes of human interaction and thus becomes “a tipping point” on the way to facilitate the life of society. The main idea of this book is that people are influenced greatly by their surrounding, which includes the impact of other individuals, as well as the peculiarities of the environment. That is why Gladwell’s ideas are relevant and topical. Moreover, his advices can be implemented in the modern daily situations. The author depicts numerous samples of sociological and psychological researches making the plot of the given book easy to comprehend.

The writer compares the information spread with a virus. He claims that there are three factors, which cause epidemics: the particularities of the epidemics’ agents. The performance of agents’ transistors is measured by how many people, in what ways they contact, and how effective these contacts are. The second factor is the quality of agents (how contagious the virus is), and the third one is the environment, in which the given process takes place.

Malcolm Gladwell introduces the ways to eliminate the problems of contagious epidemics and harmful habits like smoking or suicidal possession. On the other hand, he detects the ways to spread “educational” and “marketing” infections. The writer emphasizes that both these processes are two sides of the same coin, subordinated to the same rules.

The principles of “The Law of the Few,” “The Stickiness Factor,” and “The Power of Context” work equally effectively; they are either implemented to tip new shoes or beauty salon. What is more, they are authorized by the same processes as, for instance, the spread of the sexually transmitted diseases.

The current market implements the insights of researches, which are described in *The Tipping Point*. For instance, “the Law of 150” claims that CEO should keep the number of employees below 150; otherwise, the entire working process becomes ineffective, or at least it
becomes rather difficult to maintain. The given concept is based on the insight that human emotional capacities are limited. People, who know each other well, make transitive memories, and this process encourages them to share the responsibilities. That is why the best systems are those smaller than 150 members, in which every employee knows his/her co-workers. The pressure of peers is a very important principle of grouping; it is much more effective than the pressure of a boss.

Another essential principle of grouping associated with “the law of 150” is that the epidemic starts with infecting small groups and then extends to the thousands and even millions of people. A business owner, who wants to convey his message, must remember that, first of all, it is important to “infect” the minor communities. To succeed with this idea, one should use the help of Connectors, Mavens, and Salesmen—special groups of gifted people, capable of starting the epidemics. The Connectors are familiar with a large number of people and thus their capacity to spread the information goes beyond the average. The Mavens, on the other hand, are always curious about the new trends of goods and services. What is more, they sincerely want to share gathered information with the other people. The Salesmen are charismatic persuades who intuitively and rather effectively use their innate manner of communication to convince people or, in other words, to sell their ideas. Connectors, Mavens, and Salesmen are the individuals who “translate” the message of the company and increase its acceptance by the society. They relate to “The Law of the Few” and belong to “the epidemics’ agents”.

The author distinguishes these people in three categories, according to their innate abilities and the way of life; however, he makes an assumption that there are also individuals who have the features of all three categories. The given presumption is reasonable because a particular human can be fairly sociable maintaining “weak ties” with numerous people due to his/her intuitive manner to “feel” and “understand” others. Simultaneously, this set of personal characteristics creates a good basement for becoming a Salesman. In addition, this person can
be a Maven if she/he likes to collect not only connections but also information. Probably, in this case, some characteristics are more prominent than the others; however, it is possible for one individual to combine the qualities of all three categories. It goes without saying that such people are the most powerful epidemic’s agents. They are able to convey “the word of mouth” and trigger an epidemic.

Marketing is a process of introducing the benefits of a product or service to customers with the aim to convince them to buy the given goods or use the service. Malcolm Gladwell reveals how it affects customers’ needs through “The Stickiness Factor” that, according to the author, relates to the quality of the agent. The research claims that an advertisement must be seen for at least 6 times before it is memorized. What is more, if there is a set of advertising videos on TV, none of them will be remembered. These methods do not create the stickiness. To create the stickiness factor, one should encourage people to act. Apart from action, the advertisement is supposed to communicate with the people’s emotions arousing their memories in this way. For instance, if the potential representatives of “The Law of Few” are interested in skating, the advertisement should be implemented through relevant images. When the Connectors, Mavens, and Salesmen are “infected”, they will carry this idea to other people.

The author claims that, in a contemporary world, people are exposed to roughly 254 different advertisements at once; this fact is known as a “clutter issue”. It goes without saying that, under such circumstances, the effectiveness of each advertisement declines. Therefore, it is very important to make the product “contagious” and increase its stickiness.

The firm, as well as its particular employees, is able to understand its competitors and the entire marketing environment by analyzing the methods its rivals use. It is crucial to find the answers to the following questions: if a company excels, what stickiness factor do they implement? What context helps to attract Connectors, Mavens, and Salesmen? What groups of people does a particular community comprise? In what way do these people relate to one another? How do Connectors, Mavens and Salesmen “translate” the competitors’ ideas?
The given book relates the manufacturers, producers, and resellers to the institutes that study these processes. In fact, *The Tipping Point* depicts the connection between all fields of society such as criminology, management, design, health care, and many others. The author emphasizes that the same processes create the predictable outcomes whatever field it touches.

One who enters the market for the first time, first of all is supposed to survey “The Power of Context” (whether the product or service is capable of tipping an infection in a given community). It is necessary to detect the “persuaders” and “messengers”. A business newcomer should examine the interests “of the few,” in order to draw their attention in the first place. Once it is done, they will spread “the infection” in a geometry progression. Later on, when the business grows larger, the owner should maintain its principles and police since it is very important to care about the image and details.

The 5 C’s of pricing assist companies in a positive way because it is based on the following principles. The first one is the context, which presumes that a person/business must understand the audience. The second one is clarity; it is the agent, the logical progression of ideas; while creating an advertisement, one is supposed to carry the proper message to the possible customers. The third advice is “be concise”, which is especially important in a written presentation of advertisements. The written advertisement should be brief and effective; one should establish a valuable point, in order to get people interested in spending their time on reading the given advertisements. “Be complete” is the fourth principle; it means that the future customers do not care about unimportant details. All the relevant information must be included to give consumers a chance to comprehend the idea. The fifth principle claims “be compelling” since it is essential for the company to make a connection between what they have to propose and what benefits they give to the buyers.

The plot of *The Tipping Point* advises the reader on how to endure the pressure of the competition. For instance, it reflects the most effective way to organize the groups. The given book educates on how to provide relevant advertisements that are able “to stick”. It gives a
better insight of human psychology and claims that all people are much more alike as they think they are. That is why it gives strong competitive advantage to those who read it. Malcolm Gladwell conveys his ideas in a proper and smooth sequence of reasoning. The author connects the examples from the everyday life with the psychological claims. He relates theoretical facts to practical life situations and suggests possible improvements. The book helps understand the cognitive processes and their prime causes. This insight helps the reader become a better part of society. One interested in sociology, criminology, teaching, or marketing will be able to find the answers on how to excel in his/her field of studying or employment. For instance, someone interested in marketing, after having read the given book, will have better chances to start a relevant epidemic using the Law of the Few, the Stickiness Factor, and The Power of Context.
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