

# The Gist Strategy

Goal: identify & restate main idea in 25 words or less



## Watch the video

**The method:** After completing a close reading of your text, summarize the main idea or “Gist” of that section in your own words. Depending on your comprehension of the material and density of the reading, summaries may follow a paragraph, section, or page.

## You will place this note...

- 1) On a sticky note in middle of page
- 2) In notebook labeled per page/reading passage
- 3) On running Word Doc labeled per page/reading passage
- 4) In apps like Notability, you can create a sticky note and place it directly on the PDF

## Students identify the most important idea in a section of text by using the following steps:

1. Preview the text by looking at headings, subheadings, pictures, bolded terms, diagrams, etc.
2. As you read, ask yourself the following questions. This will help guide your highlighting and annotations:
  - **Who** is doing **what**?
  - **When** and **where** is this taking place?
  - **Why** is this taking place or **Why** is this important?
  - **How** is this taking place?
3. Create a short (approximately 25 words) Gist Summary of text that encapsulates as much of the above as relevant. Note: one section may cover the Who and What while the next section might cover the Why and How.

## Example for Notebook or Sticky Note:

### Psychology: Tu & Soman Reading

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- Hypothesis: We divide future events into two categories: “like-the-present” and “unlike-the-present.” Our categorization is tied into task initiation with like-the-present equaling higher task initiation. The researchers will try to prove this.

### Note Breakdown

- Who – Humans
- What— Categorize future
- How – “like-the-present” and “unlike-the-present”
- Why – Categorization impacts task initiation
- When – 2014 Study

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FIGURE 1

H: We divide future events into 2 categ. → like present & unlike present. Our categorization is tied into task initiation w/ like-present = higher t.i. R will try to prove this.

tu and soman

the month, and set goals for the year. Similarly, students tend to compartmentalize events in time by academic terms, farmers by harvesting seasons, and accountants by financial quarters.

Does the categorization of events in time affect consumers' tendency to initiate tasks? We propose that categorization would lead consumers to divide future events in time into two categories—a like-the-present category that is viewed in the same manner as present events, and an unlike-the-present category that is viewed differently. Since the default mind-set toward present tasks is implemental and is characterized by an action orientation, and consumers treat events and tasks in the same temporal category with the same mind-set, we argue that consumers' propensity to initiate a task would be higher if the task is categorized in a like-the-present category than in an unlike-the-present category. For example, consumers regularly use the end of month as a cue to categorize future time events, and thus we expect that they would be more likely to start working on a task whose deadline is in the current month than in the next month, holding the time duration between the present and the deadline constant. Similarly, Harry Potter used Christmas as a cue to categorize future time events and suddenly felt a greater sense of urgency in preparing for the TriWizard Cup right after Christmas.

Stated formally, our investigations address the following specific research questions:

- 1) Does the categorization of time events influence consumers' decisions to initiate tasks? We hypothesize and show that consumers are more likely to initiate a task when the deadline is categorized in a like-the-present category than in an unlike-the-present category.
- 2) What theoretical account drives the effect? We propose that when the task deadline is categorized in a like-the-present category, consumers view the task with a stronger implemental mind-set (i.e., the default mind-set toward present tasks) than when the task deadline is categorized in an unlike-the-present category, and consequently, they have a stronger tendency to initiate the task.

The rest of this article is organized in three sections. First, we review relevant literature, develop a theoretical framework, and propose testable hypotheses. Second, we present the results of several field and laboratory experiments that support our framework. Finally, we conclude with a general discussion and potential avenues for future research.

**CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

Success in various domains in life essentially boils down to the ability to set and achieve task-oriented goals. It is therefore not a surprise that a lot of research has been conducted with the aim of better understanding goal pursuit in general and the factors that facilitate and hinder goal attainment in particular (Gollwitzer 1993). Early researchers

(Heckhausen and Gollwitzer 1987; Heckhausen and Kohl 1985; Lewin 1926) typically drew a distinction between two stages of goal pursuit—*preparation* (goal setting, strategizing, and planning) and *action* (action orientation and implementation)—and argued that as people approach a goal over space and time, they switch from a motivational stage to a volitional stage. In a similar vein, Gollwitzer (2012) and others (Xu and Wyer 2010) made a distinction between a deliberative mind-set, an information processing mode characterized by planning and evaluation, and an implemental mind-set, an information processing mode characterized by action orientation, goal commitment, and willingness to make choices. However, the literature is generally silent on precisely what decides the shift from a deliberative mind-set to an implemental mind-set. As **SHILP KARBAN** [We propose that the temporal category membership of the task deadline matters.] Specifically, when the task deadline is in the same category as the present (i.e., in a like-the-present category), consumers view the task with a stronger implemental mind-set than when the task deadline is in a different category than the present (i.e., in an unlike-the-present category). Consequently, consumers are more likely to initiate the task in the former condition than in the latter. Figure 1 depicts our conceptual framework, and we elaborate on its conceptual underpinnings in the paragraphs that follow.

**Categorization of Events in Time**

The categorization of space, persons, and objects is a ubiquitous and spontaneous process (Allport 1954; Brewer 1988; Cohen and Basu 1987; Devine 1989; Fiske and Neuberg 1990) and widely influences perception, judgment, choices, and motivation. For example, in the domain of spatial perception, Tversky (1992) showed that “the same real distance was remembered as smaller if it was between

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