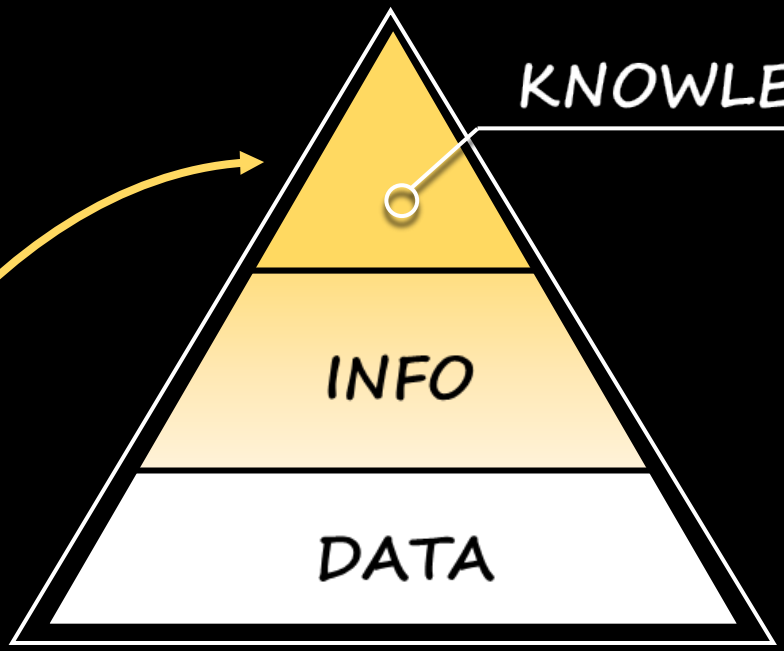


Convey knowledge

(not just information)

Fog of War as Overload of Information

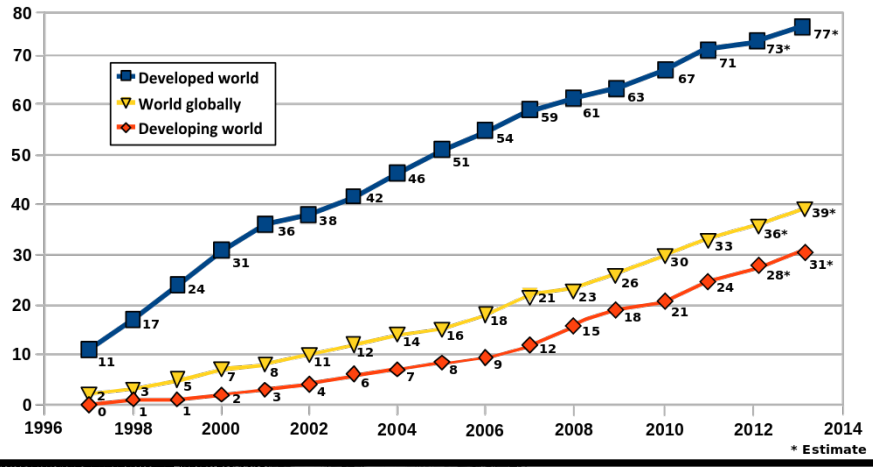
1969–Present

OR THE INABILITY TO MEANINGFULLY PROCESS THE DATA AND TURN THAT INFORMATION INTO MEANINGFUL, ACTIONABLE KNOWLEDGE

In Carl von Clausewitz's era, the Fog of War was typically caused by too little info:

"War is the realm of uncertainty; three quarters of the factors on which action in war is based are wrapped in a fog of greater or lesser uncertainty. A sensitive and discriminating judgment is called for; a skilled intelligence to scent out the truth."

…Now we struggle (in part) with too much information.



INFORMATION OVERLOAD

…also called
- infobesity
- Infoxication
- information glut
- data smog
- Info pollution

> *"The resulting abundance of – and desire for more (and/or higher quality) – information has come to be perceived in some circles, paradoxically, as the source of as much productivity loss as gain."*
>
> Lincoln (2011)

Causes
- Rapidly increasing rate of new information being produced
- Ease of duplication and transmission of data across the Internet
- Increased availability channels of incoming information
- Large amounts of historical information to dig through
- Contradictions and inaccuracies in available information
- A low signal-to-noise ratio
- A lack of a method for comparing and processing different kinds
- The pieces of information are unrelated or do not have any overall structure to reveal their relationships

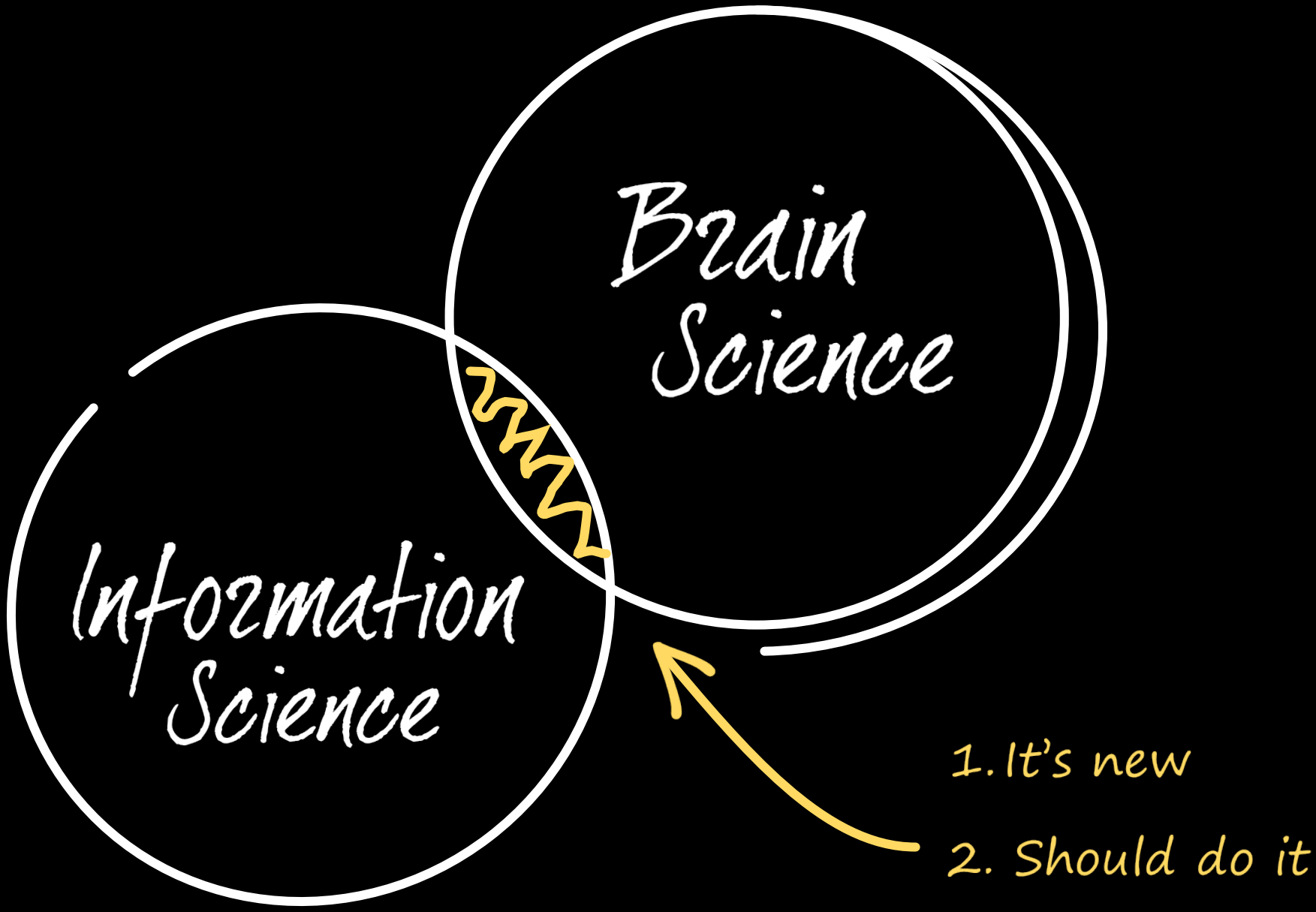
NEUROPHYSIOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS

$7^{\pm 2}$

- Paradox of Choice ("Overchoice")
- Cognitive Load
- Limited Decision Resources
- Analysis paralysis
- Complexity and ambiguity avoidance

Many examples of this include Organ donation and 401Ks. See "When Choice is Demotivating" and Barry Schwartz's "Paradox of Choice."
Famous example with Jam:
- More jam-- 242 Customers passed by
  - 145 stopped at the extensive display (60%)
  - Only 3% of the extensive-choice customers purchased – 4 people
- Less jam-- 260 customers passed by the limited display
  - 104 of them stopped (40%)
  - Nearly 30% of limited-choice customers purchased – 31 people

- [x] Simplify
- [x] Make it more usable
- [ ] Facilitate knowledge creation!!

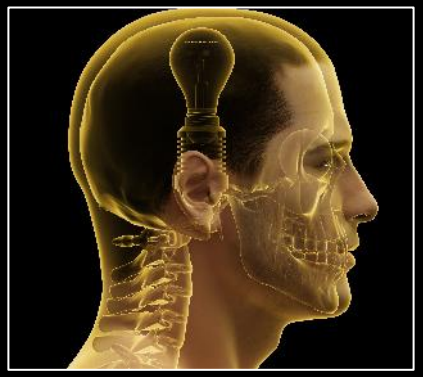

Brain Science
Information Science
1. It's new
2. Should do it
3. Grammar

Focus on the real goal ("Nudge")

Design for System 1 and System 2

Make concepts easy to grok

Support metacognition



Know thy user

Remember aesthetics

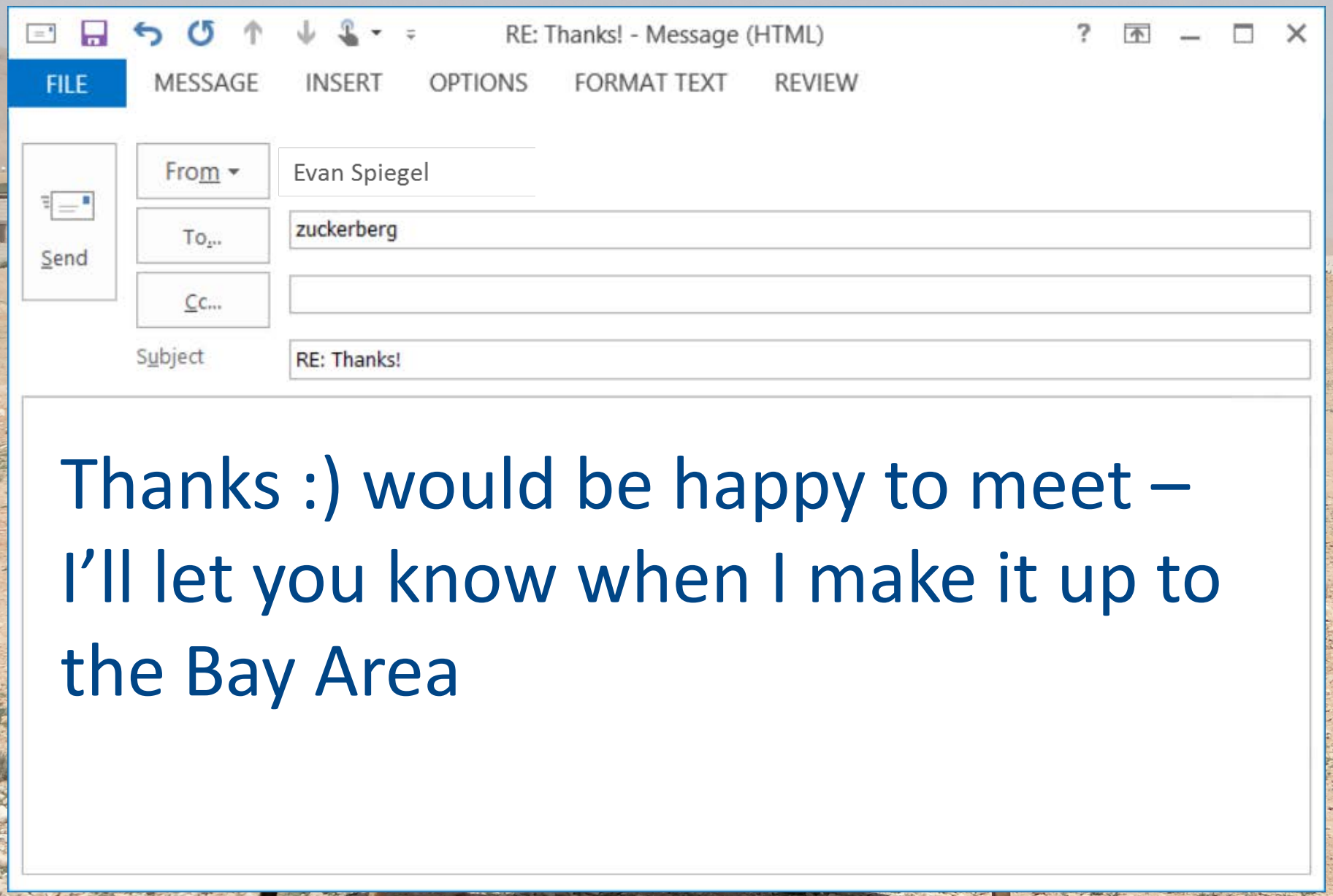
Design "experiences" on multiple levels

Create a pull

Tutor: What a pathetically incorrect answer!

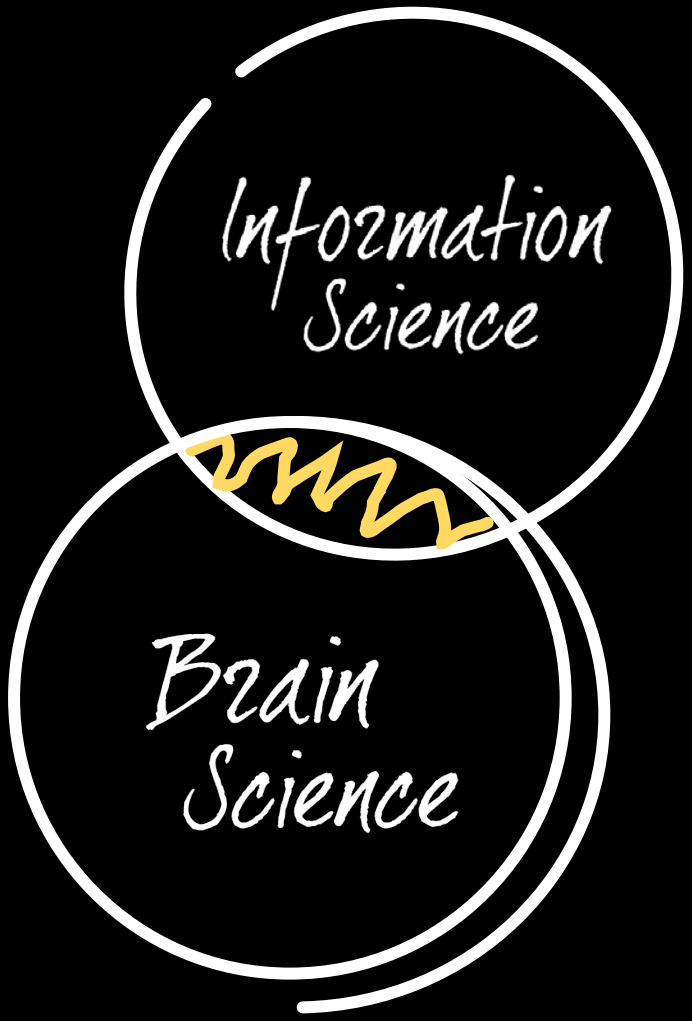
You must have been daydreaming in your high school football physics course…

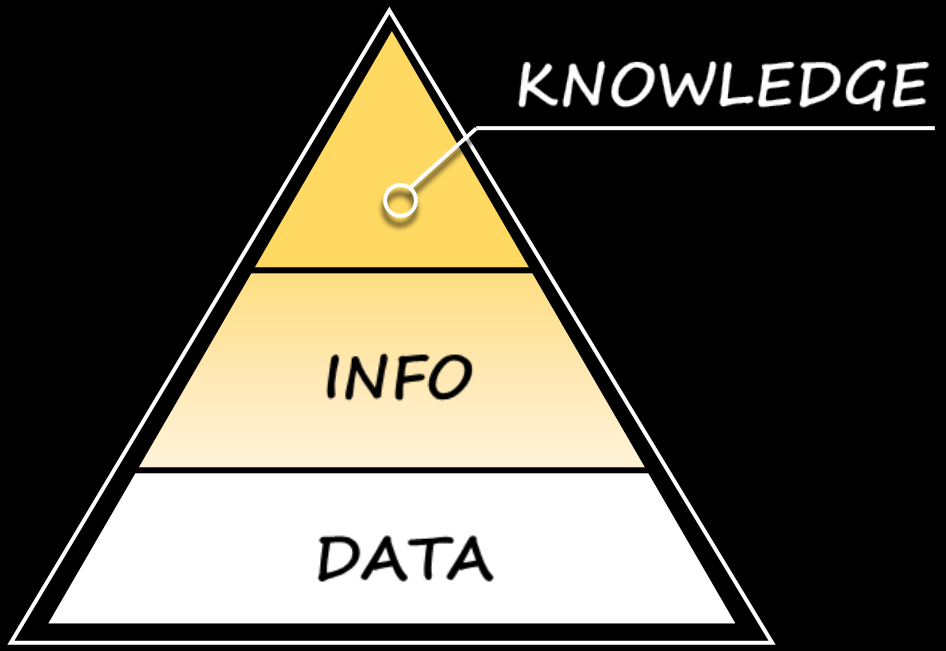
500 m
تدمر
PALMYRA
حمص
بغداد
H O M S
BAGHDAD


RE: Thanks! - Message (HTML)
FILE
MESSAGE
INSERT
OPTIONS
FORMAT TEXT
REVIEW
Send
From
Evan Spiegel
To...
zuckerberg
Cc...
Subject
RE: Thanks!
Thanks :) would be happy to meet – I'll let you know when I make it up to the Bay Area

Kevin Roose

Meta Messages





Grammar of Knowledge Design

- Meta Messages (Email)
- Pull of Novelty (Rude Tutor)

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