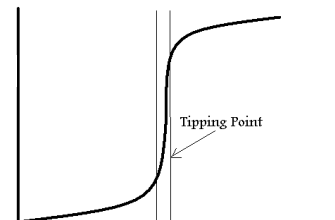# The
TIPPING POINT

How Little Things Can
Make a Big Difference

MALCOLM
GLADWELL

"*A fascinating book that makes you see the world in a different way.*" —FORTUNE
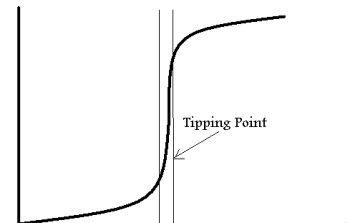
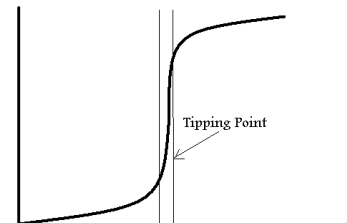PAW Consulting©, 2007

Tipping Point

The Tipping Point

Malcolm Gladwell
2000

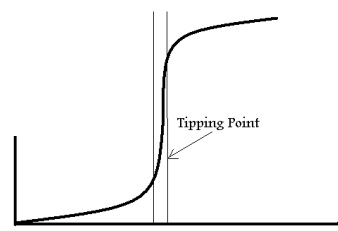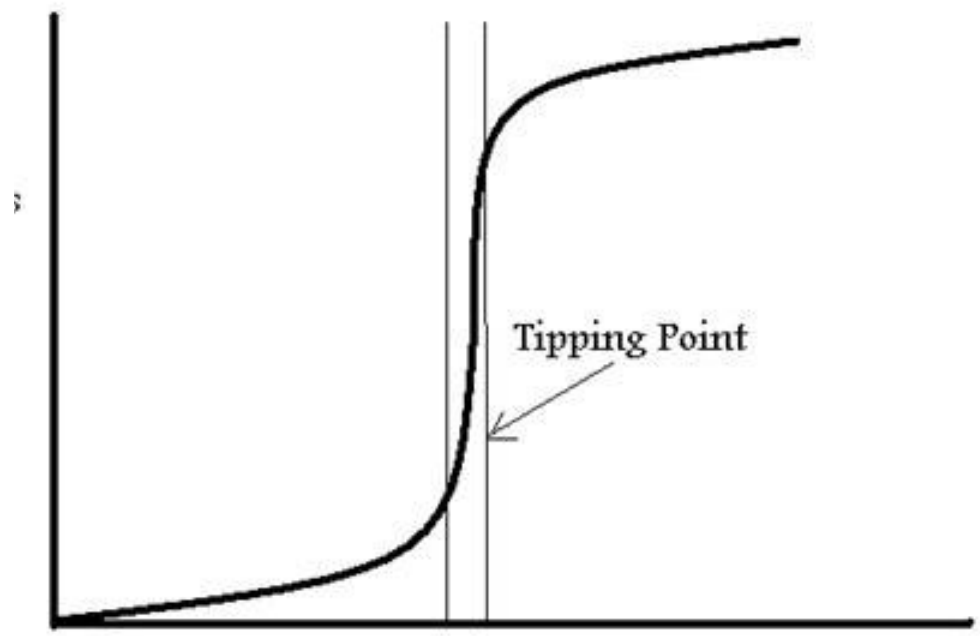Peter Weinstein, DVM, MBA

949-857-6240

PeterW2@aol.com

Tipping Point-definition-Epidemiology

The concept that small changes will have little or no effect on a system until a critical mass is reached. Then a further small change tips the system and a large effect is observed.
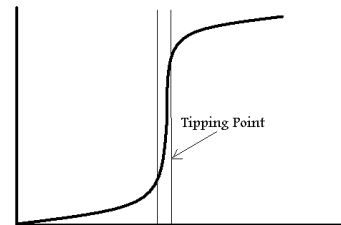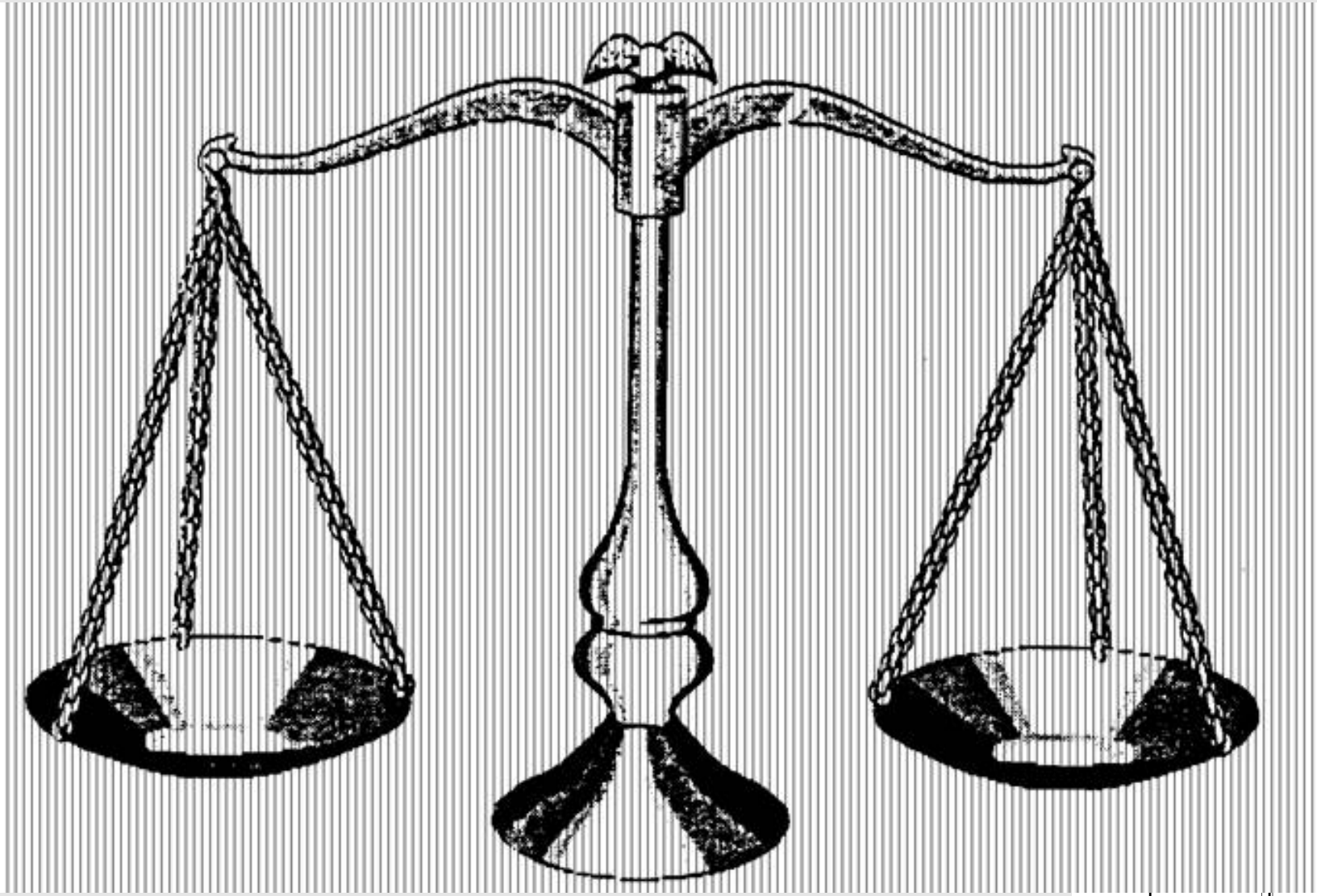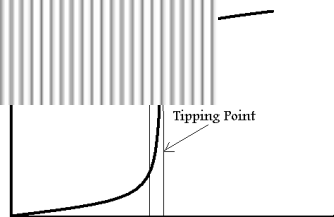
Tipping Point

Tipping Point-Physics

The point where when a small amount of weight is added to a balanced object, it will cause it to suddenly and completely topple.
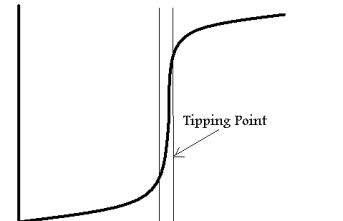
Tipping Point
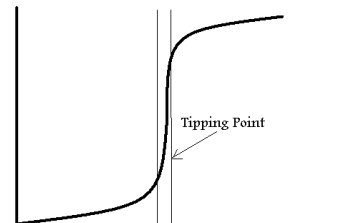
Tipping Point

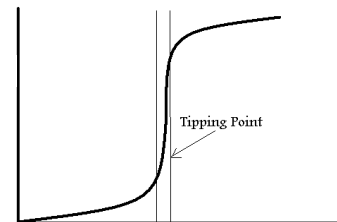PAW Consulting©, 2007

Tipping Point- sociology

Morton Grodzins, early 1960s: the event of a previously rare phenomenon becoming rapidly and dramatically more common.
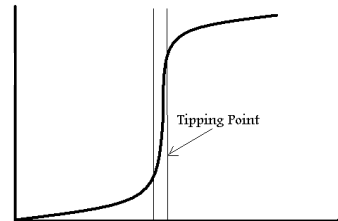
White Flight

- Integration, 1960s
- White families would stay as long as number of black families was small.
- One too many black families and white families would leave en masse
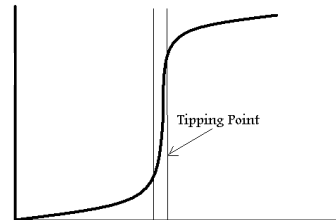

Tipping Point

Tipping Point

- Threshold
- Boiling point
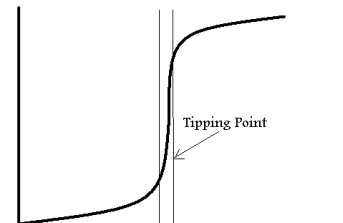- Where unexpected becomes expected

This session:

- What is the Tipping Point?
- What is the Law of the Few? The Stickiness Factor? The Power of Context?
- What are Connectors, Mavens, and Salesmen?
- Is there an application in our lives?

Tipping Point

Epidemics

Ideas, products, messages, and behaviors spread just like viruses do.

Social Epidemics

- Word of mouth is the most important form of human communication
- Rumors are the most contagious of all social messages
- There are a few people that can start an epidemic
- The tiny majority (Typhoid Mary) do all the work.
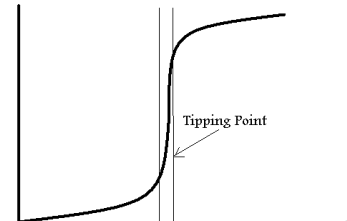- Who are the messengers?
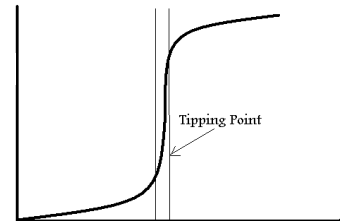
Who are the messengers?

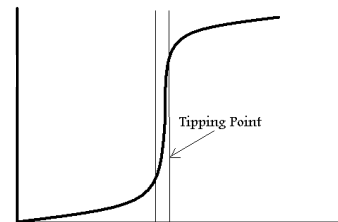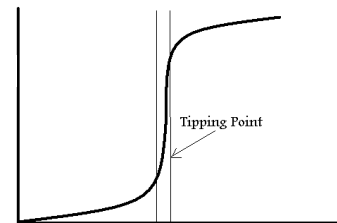Connectors

Mavens

Salesman

Connector

- Sociable personalities who bring people together
- Know a lot of people
- Make friends and acquaintances easily
- Cover many different worlds-social,professional, etc.
- Spread the message

Tipping Point

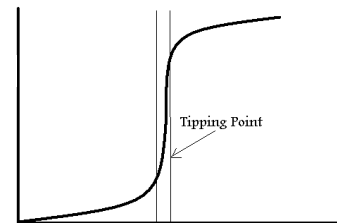# William Dawes

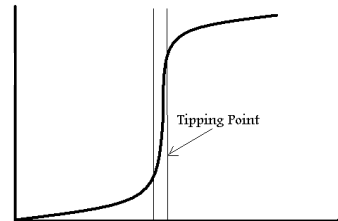PAW Consulting©, 2007

Paul Revere-Knew everybody

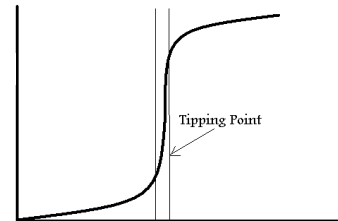PAW Consulting©, 2007

Connectors

- Six Degrees of Separation
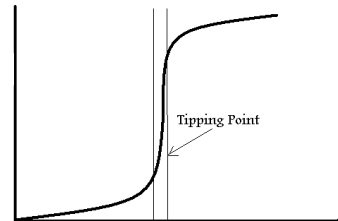- Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon
    - Rod Steiger

Maven

- Information specialists; data banks
- They figure out how to get the great deal and then want to tell EVERYBODY about it.
- Solves their own problems by solving everybody elses.
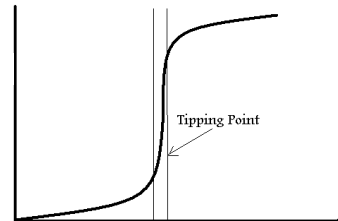- Knowledge and social skills to start an epidemic

Tipping Point

Maven

- People who like to pass along knowledge.

- Paul Revere had gathered extensive information about the British. He knew WHAT was going on and he knew exactly WHO to tell.
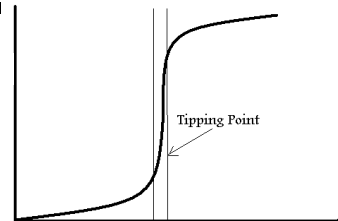
Tipping Point

Salesmen

- Skills to persuade
- Adept at persuading the unenlightened.
- Little things are as important as small ones.
- Enter into a harmony with contacts
- Emotionally contagious

The Law of the Few

- To start word-of-mouth epidemics, you need:
  - Connectors
  - Mavens
  - Salesmen
- So, to start word-of-mouth epidemics, focus your resources on the above.

Word of mouth Epidemics

- When small numbers of people start behaving differently, that behavior can ripple outward until a critical mass or tipping point is reached thus changing the world!
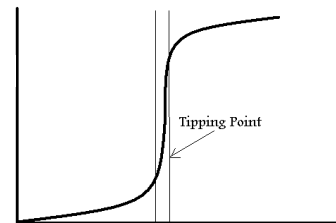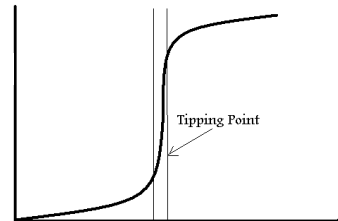
Tipping Point

The point during the spread of an epidemic or a fad at which a certain critical mass is met and after which, more or less, all hell breaks loose.
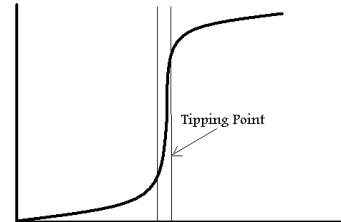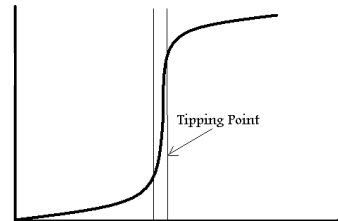
Tipping Point

Tipping Point

- Hush Puppy shoes
- Drop in violent crime in NYC
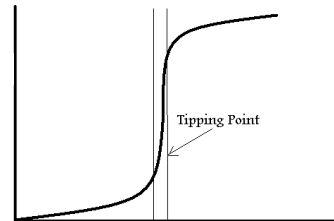- Teenage suicide patterns

Hush Puppy Shoes

Tipping Point

Stickiness of Ideas

- How can you package an idea or information so that it becomes irresistible and compels a person into action?

- To be sticky, ideas have to be memorable and move us to action.

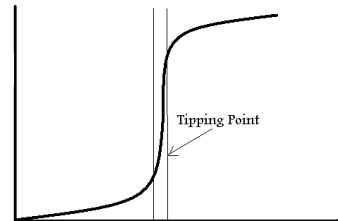- The content matters.

The 'How' of Stickiness:

- Subtle but significant change in presentation
  - Winston
- Stickiness is based upon small elements more so than big ones
  - Sesame Street--Muppets vs. People
- Clutter has made it challenging to be sticky
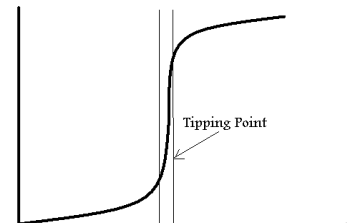 - Coupons; the internet; magazines; TV; etc.
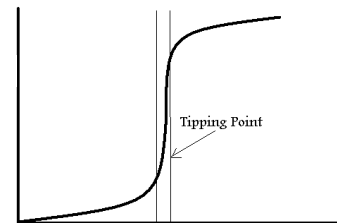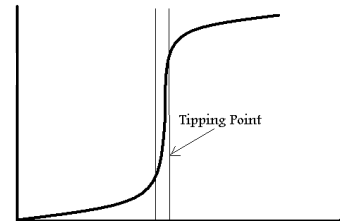
Effect of Population Size on Information Dispersal

Tipping Point

Little Changes can have

Big Effects

Tipping Point

- PEOPLE: The Law of the Few:
  - The people that are critical in spreading information

- CHARACTERISTICS: Stickiness
  - Ideas have to be memorable and move us to action
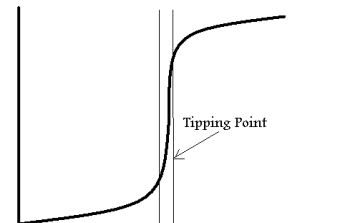
- CONDITIONS/CIRCUMSTANCES: Context

The Power of Context

Epidemics are sensitive to the conditions and circumstances of the times and places in which they occur (environment).
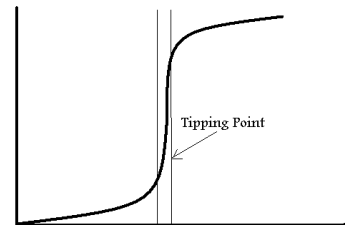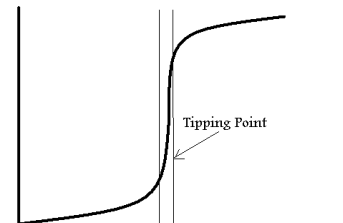
Context

We are EXQUISITIVELY sensitive to changes in context and the types of changes are unexpected
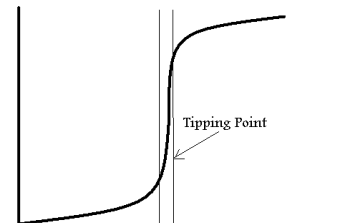
Tipping Point

Broken Window Theory

Says crime is contagious and can start from a broken window and spread to an entire community.
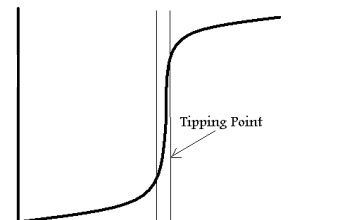
Broken Window Theory

Engaging in a certain behavior is not from a certain kind of person BUT from a feature of the environment.
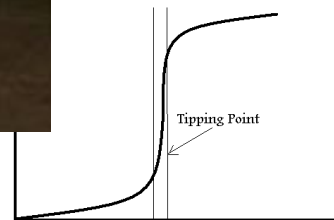
New York City Subway
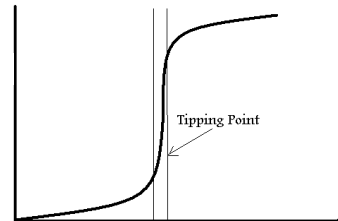

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Fare beaters

Quality of life crimes
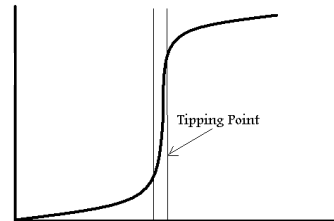
Tipping Point

Broken Windows

- Subways
- Fare Beaters
- Quality of life crimes

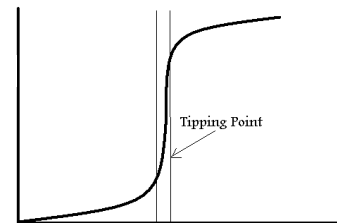- The above are TIPPING POINTS for violent crimes

Tipping Point

Broken Windows = Context

An epidemic can be reversed and tipped by changing even the smallest details of the environment.

Tipping Point

Kitty Genovese

Tipping Point
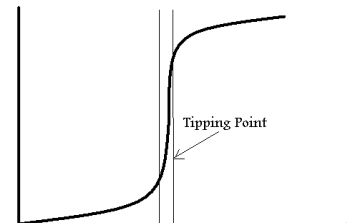
Kitty Genovese

- 1964-stabbed to death
- Chased and attacked three times over half hour
- 38 eyewitnesses
- NONE called the police
- WHY?

The By Stander Problem

- No one called the police despite 38 people heard her screams and saw her attack. Actually,
- No one called the police BECAUSE 38 people heard her scream…
- If she had only one eyewitness…
- Context, in this case the environment, is extremely sensitive for human beings.

Tipping Point
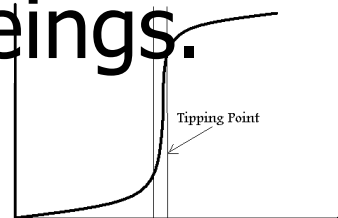
Power of Context

- What really matters is the little things
- You don't have to solve the big problems to solve the problem
- Our inner states are the result of our outer circumstances.

Fundamental Attribution Error

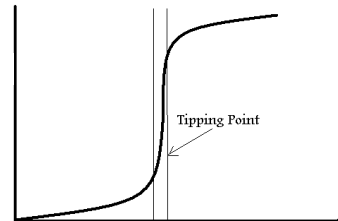- When it comes to interpreting other people's behavior, we tend to overestimate the importance of fundamental character traits and underestimate the importance of situation and context.
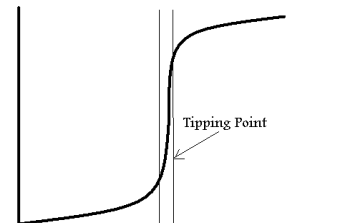
- Disposition over context!

Tipping Point

Consider this…

- The convictions of your heart and the actual contents of your thoughts are less important, in the end, in guiding your actions than the immediate context of your behavior.
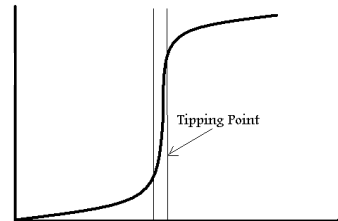
Environmental Tipping Points

Things we can change and effect a significant response.
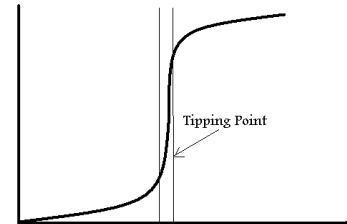
Research shows:

- Peer and community influence are more important than family influence in determining how children turn out.

- A child is better off in a good neighborhood with a troubled family than in a troubled neighborhood with a good family.
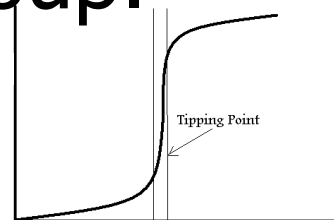
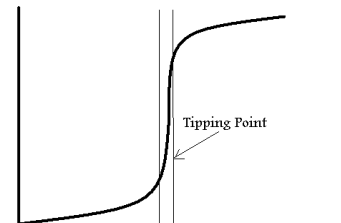Tipping Point

Power of Context

Effect of Groups

Ever notice:

- Size of crowd effects how good a movie is in a theater
  - Comedies are funnier
  - Horror movies are more horrific
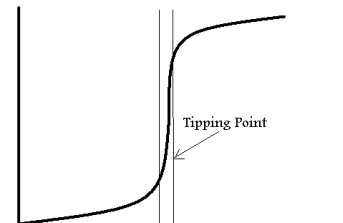- When asked to come to a conclusion by yourself, you come to a different conclusion by yourself than in a group.

Tipping Point

Rule of 150

Channel Capacity:
## Amount of space in our brain

Tipping Point

150

150 represents the MAXIMUM number of individuals with whom we can have a genuinely social relationship, the kind of relationship that goes with knowing who they are and how they relate to us. The number of people you would not feel embarrassed about joining uninvited for a drink if you bump into them at a bar.
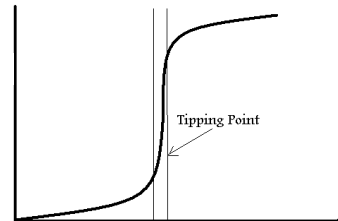
Tipping Point

Why do phone numbers only have 7 digits?
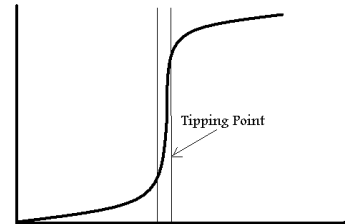
Gore Associates

- No unit has more than 150 people
- No building has more than 150 people in it.
- No titles
- No office better than another
- Peer pressure acts more powerfully than a boss

Transactive Memory aka Memory Sharing

When people know each other well, they create a joint memory system based upon who is best suited to remember what kinds of things.
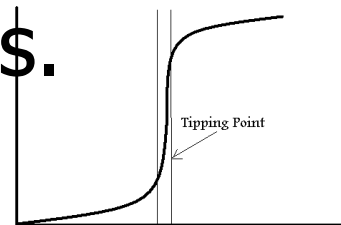
Can we use Memory Sharing?

- If it's knowing someone well enough to know what they know, and knowing them well enough so you can TRUST them to know things in their area of expertise/interest.
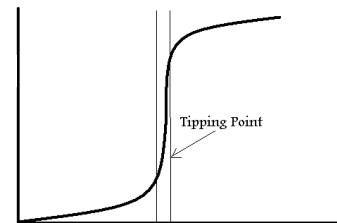
- Can you take this concept from family to Business?
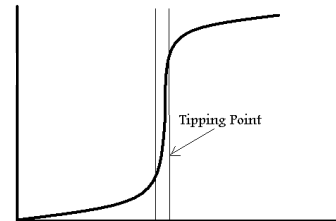
Social Epidemics

Need to reframe the way we think about the world. We have trouble estimating and accepting dramatic, exponential change.
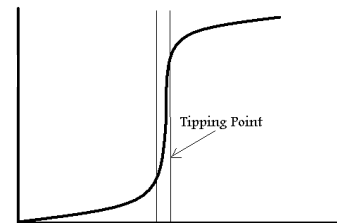

Tipping Point
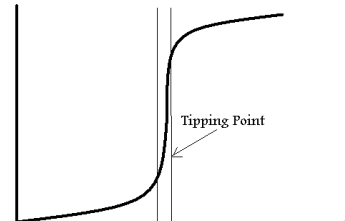
There are limitations to:

- The number of cognitive categories we can make

- The number of people we can care about or love.

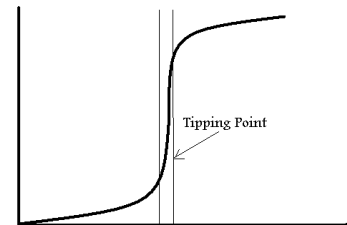- The number of acquaintances we can truly know.
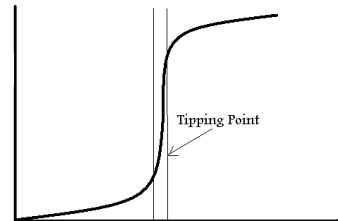
Social Epidemics require:

- An understanding of the influence of context.

- An understanding that human communication has its own set of very unusual and counterintuitive rules.

Summary thoughts

Tipping Point

- The Tipping Point is that dramatic moment when a little push drives the unexpected to become expected and propels the idea of radical change to certain acceptance.

- The Tipping Point is a function of:
  - The Law of the Few: small number of people do the majority of the work to build momentum.
  - The Stickiness Factor: Stickiness means the message makes an impact, it's memorable.
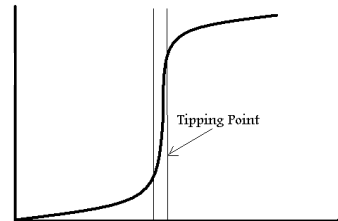 - The Power of Context: human beings are a lot more senstive to their environemt than they seem.

Tipping Point
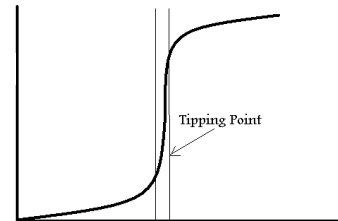
Can you apply these concepts to your practice? Or your profession?
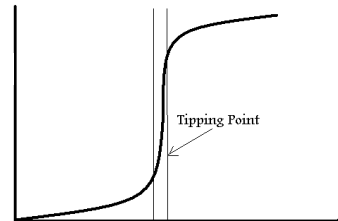
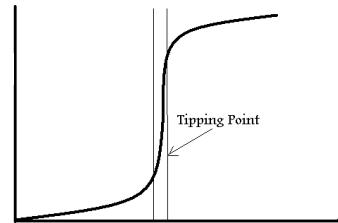Tipping Point
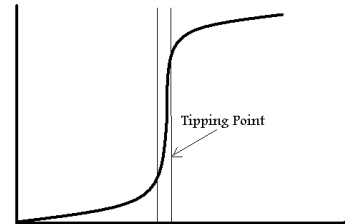
Think about TP for:

- Internal marketing-Mavens? Connector? Salespeople?
- Stickiness of your messages to clients?
- Context--how, when, where, messages are presented to clients?
- For the profession: women; small animal; prescription flea control; insurance?

Tipping Point
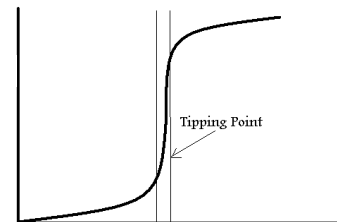
Questions

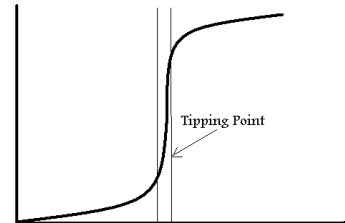- Break and then BLINK

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Social epidemics:

- Require concentrating resources on a few key areas
 - Connectors, Mavens, Salesman

Social Epidemics

Those who are successful at creating social epidemics do NOT just do what they think is right. They test their intuitions.
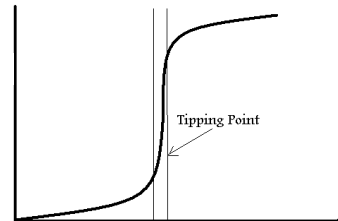
Bottom line belief:

- For successful social epidemics, you must believe that people can radically transform their behavior or beliefs in the face of the right kind of impetus.

- We are actually powerfully influenced by our surroundings, our immediate context, and the personalities of those around us.
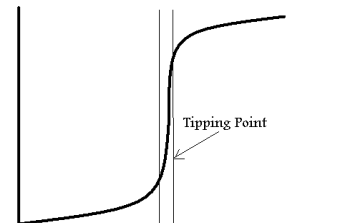
Tipping Point
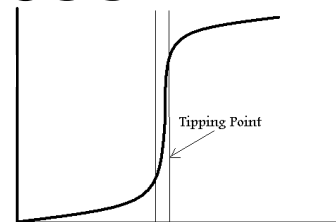
Social Epidemics

- Starting epidemics requires concentrating your resources on a few key areas:
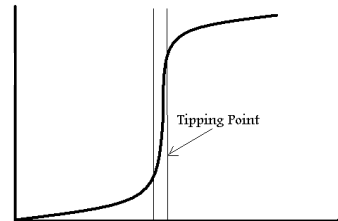
Band Aid Solutions

Inexpensive, convenient and remarkably versatile solution to an astonishing array of problems

Tipping Point

Band Aid Solutions
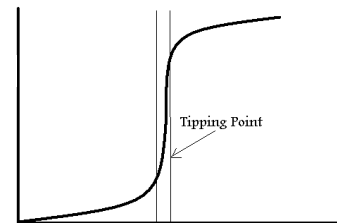
- Solves a problem with
  - Minimal amount of effort
  - Minimal amount of time
  - Minimal amount of cost

- Provides a convenient shortcut

Tipping Point

The Bacon Factor

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Gaetan Dugas