

# Encouraging Positive Human Behavior



**Ayelet Gneezy**

Associate Professor, Behavioral Sciences and Marketing  
Assistant Professor, Behavioral Sciences and Marketing

## CURRENT RESEARCH

Tackling society's ills by learning why we behave the way we do

Dr. Ayelet Gneezy of the Rady School of Management at University of California, San Diego, leads a myriad of human behavior research programs focusing on understanding the factors and motivations underlying undesired behaviors such as lack of savings, poor nutrition and health, and waste. She then uses her research findings to design and test ways to promote positive behavior that would improve the well-being of individuals from all walks of life. Her interest covers a wide area of behaviors and challenges such as poverty, preventative healthcare, sustainable behavior and prosocial behavior/charitable giving. Her research also explores means to increase the effectiveness of programs aimed to address various social challenges both in the US and in the developing world.

- Dr. Gneezy has found that although equipped with the best intentions, charitable organizations and nonprofits often time launch programs that do not take into consideration the human factor--discovering why people behave as they do and what are the barriers for changing those behaviors.
- As part of her research, Dr. Gneezy is exploring ways to increase individuals' engagement in charitable giving and boost the effectiveness of these nonprofit programs. She recently published a paper in which she shows that potential donors tend to avoid charities that dedicate a high percentage of expenses to overhead costs, which in turn limits the ability of nonprofits to be effective. Importantly, her findings show that this 'overhead aversion' is driven by individuals' decreased sense of impact when their donations cover various administrative costs instead of funding the 'actual' cause. Using a laboratory and a...

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## AFFILIATION

 University of California, San Diego

## EDUCATION

- Ph.D. in Graduate School of Business 2007, University of Chicago
- M.B.A. in Business 1997, University of Teesside, UK
- D.M.S. in Business 1996, University of Teesside, UK

## AWARDS

- MSI Young Scholar, 2013
- Winner: Robert B. Cialdini Award, 2012
- Best Student Paper Award, Dead Sea conference, December 2006

## RESEARCH AREAS

Education, Behavioral & Development

## FUNDING REQUEST

Dr. Gneezy runs a variety of human behavior studies, which require \$80-200,000 to pay for high quality research assistants, compensation and incentives for lab study participants, travel, and equipment. Your donations will fund exciting research that investigates methods that benefit individuals and society as a whole.