

Why Certain Gifts Are Great to Give But Not to Get: A Framework for Understanding

Errors in Gift Giving (*forthcoming at CDPS*)

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Givers → Give gifts that are great when opened.

Recipients → Want gifts that are great during ownership.

Possible Mechanisms: 1) Focalism; 2) Unintentional miscalculation; 3) Intentional error.

Aspect	Givers	Recipients
Aspects of the Gift	Desirable Gifts	Feasible Gifts ¹
	Lesser but Complete Gifts	Better and Incomplete Gifts ²
	Material Gifts	Experiential Gifts ³
Aspects of the Giver	Unrequested Gifts	Requested Gifts ⁴
	Thoughtful and Expensive Gifts	Thoughts and Price are Unimportant ⁵
Aspects of the Recipient	Specific and Unique Gifts	General Gifts and Gifts That Reflect Most Important Interests ⁶
	Socially Responsible Gifts	Traditional Gifts ⁷

Errors in Gift Giving: Select Examples of How Givers Focus on the Moment of Gift Exchange, but Recipients Focus on Gift Ownership

THE GIFT

RULE Gifts should be desirable

ERROR Givers want to wow the recipient, but recipients want to be able to actually use the gift

THE GIVER

RULE Givers should be surprising

ERROR Givers give unrequested gifts to surprise the recipient, but recipients prefer gifts that they actually asked for and desire

THE RECIPIENT

RULE Gifts should symbolize the giver-recipient relationship

ERROR Givers think that recipients will value socially responsible gifts because recipients will feel a 'warm glow' when they receive it, but recipients get little ownership value from such gifts

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