

Representativeness Heuristic

Representativeness is the tendency to over/underestimate based on generalizations or imprecise deductive reasoning, or where certain important pieces of information are overlooked. The Representativeness heuristic is commonly used when making judgments about the probability of an event under uncertainty.

Tversky and Kahneman defined representativeness¹ as "the degree to which an event:

- is similar in essential characteristics to its parent population, and
- reflects the salient features of the process by which it is generated."

When people rely on representativeness to make judgments, they are likely to judge wrongly because the fact that something is more representative does not actually make it more likely.²

Next: [Counterproductive strategies](#)

¹ Kahneman & Tversky 1972

² Tversky & Kahneman 1982

Also: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Representativeness_heuristic