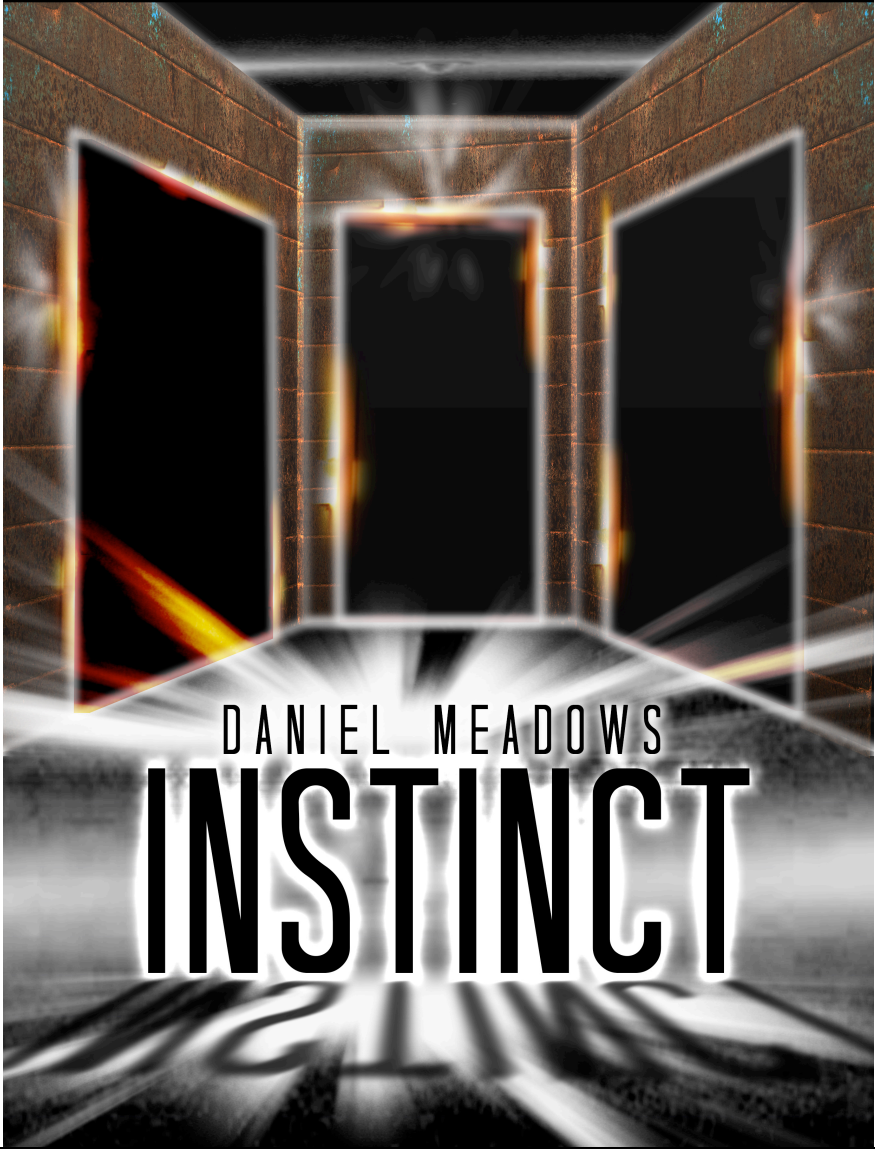


MAGICWORLD.CO.UK



DANIEL MEADOWS  
**INSTINCT**

# INSTINCT

---

Daniel Meadows

## **Acknowledgements:**

Paul Fitzgerald for his encouragement to develop and work on Instinct

Phill Smith for the feedback that led to a breakthrough

Michael Murray for being his usual supportive and creative self

Raven Gairloch for road-testing, feedback, proof-reading and supplying extra ideas!

Copyright © 2015 by Daniel Meadows

All rights reserved. These instructions or any portion thereof may not be reproduced or used in any manner whatsoever without the express written permission of the publisher.

First Printing: 2015

[www.MagicWorld.co.uk](http://www.MagicWorld.co.uk)



# INSTINCT

---

**Plot:** A three envelope bank night

**Effect:** The participant, acting as a fire fighter in a crisis, uses their intuition and manages to locate and save the performer's loved one from a burning building.

## **Introduction:**

Just Chance, or Bank Nite, routines often lack any real surprise. *'I'm going to win the money'* is the claim. And then you do. Most seem to revel in making the participants the losers. I wanted to inject some 'inevitable surprise' into the ending. No 'Deus Ex Machina', no non-sequitur, no crowbarred ending that hadn't been foreshadowed. The ending had to make sense and it be instantly recognised that I was having a bit of fun all along.

The final piece dropped into place at Michael Murray's 2MINDS convention in Newcastle in July 2015. From feedback it was quite clear that I wasn't setting the initial

premise correctly in order to get the desired pay-off. Based on the feedback I tweaked the script and it started landing in the way I desired. The fact that they will pick the right envelope is rarely in doubt. But the ending always delivers a wry laugh when they make the connection.

No claim is made as to originality of the method, and full credits are given at the end. I hope the presentational twist given justifies the release.

I was fortunate enough to be able to bounce these instructions off Raven Gairloch (You may only currently know him as co-creator of the excellent memorized deck 'The Solution', along with Atlas Brookings. You will definitely know more about him soon!). Raven's useful interjections are borne out of his experience with Instinct.

## Presentation:

---

Daniel sits across from Adam at a table. The discussion turns to decision-making.

*'I'm fascinated by how we make decisions under pressure. After major incidents, where the stakes are high, people can rarely explain why they made the decision they did: why left and not right? This and not that? Here and not there?'*

*During debriefs with soldiers, police officers, and fire fighters they can't put it into words. It just felt right. They had a hunch.*

*'Have you ever tested your intuition?'* Adam shakes his head.

*'No. Then let's put it to the test!'*

Daniel removes three numbered manila pay envelopes from his pocket and displays them individually.

*'You are a fire fighter. Here is a building'.* Daniel gestures to the small stack of envelopes in his hand.

*'The building has three rooms'.* Daniel clearly displays the 3 numbered envelopes.

*'They all pretty much look the same. But inside one of these rooms is a woman, trapped. A woman that means a lot to me. A woman I need you to save. I can't afford to lose her so I need you to rescue her and return her to me*

*The building is on fire and you don't have time to wait for back up. You only have time to enter and search one room. One. So two rooms need to be eliminated.*

*You can do this. Use your intuition. You can save her. I believe in you. Give me a number now.'*

*'3?'*

Daniel slowly and carefully places the envelope marked 3 on the table, and passes envelope 1 to Adam.

*'So you didn't get chance to search rooms 1 and 2. Let's see what was inside room 1'*

Adam reaches inside envelope 1 to find a single piece of paper. Adam unfolds the paper to see the words 'EMPTY ROOM'.

*'Well done. That is a good start'*

Daniel tips a single piece of paper out of envelope 2 into Adam's hands. Adam again unfolds the paper to see the familiar words 'EMPTY ROOM'.

Daniel picks up envelope 3 that has been left on the table and tips the contents into Adam's hands...

*'I think this means that you have good instincts and can rely on your gut feeling under pressure. I'm also thankful that you managed to save the lady that means a lot to me, after all you did promise to return her safely to me'*

A folded £20 note falls into Adam's hands showing the Queen's face staring back at him. Daniel scoops her up and kisses her.

*'I wouldn't have known what to do if I had lost her!'*



## Method:

---

### Preparation:

Only three manila pay envelopes are required. Some are included (Kraft #3) so that you can get started straight away. You might find a preference for another brand once you have experimented with them.

I find the thicker stock is slightly better for limiting the bleed through from writing the number on. I use top opening coin envelopes so that both sides of the envelope look similar (the envelope seam isn't an issue). This also facilitates the only real move in the routine. The size of the envelope is down to personal preference.

The first envelope (A) is marked with a big **1** on both the front and back. This envelope is essentially un-gimmicked and will be the one handed to the participant to handle freely. Inside this envelope is a piece of paper with the words 'Empty Room'.

The second envelope (B) is marked with a **2** on the front and a **3** on the back. Inside this envelope is a £20 folded so that you can see the Queen's face.

The third envelope (C) is marked with a **3** on the front and a **2** on the back. Inside this envelope is also a piece of paper with the words 'Empty Room'.

I find tucking the flap inside the envelope makes for extracting the contents easier at the end. I give the envelopes a slight buckle at the sides and then drop the correct paper into each envelope. I find the folded notes sit about half way down (not at the bottom). This allows them to be turned upside down and squeezed and the note falls out. Searching inside the envelope to extract the note tends to slow the pacing down and makes it seem a bit fishy.

***Raven note:** this is a very simple set up you can make up in seconds, calling it arts and crafts is an overstatement. I find that ensuring the envelopes look like you've literally just picked up 3 envelopes and scribbled on the numbers is par-amount to its deceptiveness.*

*I've considered using stickers on the envelopes to limit the bleed through, but this alludes to you having taken time to prepare these envelopes. The ones I currently use are the ones I made up and have carried around in my wallet since Daniel showed me this effect.*

*They look at bit battered and inconspicuous. Don't over think making the envelopes up and don't make them look too aesthetically pleasing.*

*My only additional point to writing on the numbers is I ensure I write the 3 in a very rounded way as to mimic the top curve of the number 2, as opposed to a straight edged 3 at the top. This means that if any bleed through happens the top few centimetres of the inside of the envelopes are indistinguishable as to whether it is a 2 or a 3 further down.*

### **Set-up:**

Place envelope C on the table with the 3 facing you, place envelope B on top of C with the 2 facing you, place A on top of B. You have a stack of 3 envelopes in the order 1, 2, 3 and the money is in the middle. Ensure your envelopes are all orientated in the same way, i.e. all numbers written on the front of each.

## **Method:**

---

### **Routine:**

The envelopes are removed from a pocket and displayed while explaining about the burning building. They can be held loosely in a dealing type grip and displayed individually.

The participant can see all 3 numbered envelopes separately during the display (orientated with the numbers facing the participant – open ends towards you).

Now, we come to the crux of the routine – the participant names a number. The ending relies on multiple outs and must appear to be the only natural option/process that could have been followed.

Technically, there are 4 outs but fortunately they are all easy and intuitive.

## **i) Participant names '2':**

Bingo! This is the best outcome.

We already know it is in the envelope that they think is labelled envelope 2. Very carefully separate the three envelopes, lay envelope 2 on the table, and hand envelope 1 to the participant.

Ask the participant to remove the contents of envelope 1 to see what has burnt. Squeeze envelope 3 over the participant's cupped hands to empty the contents. Quickly flash the insides of your envelope to the participant so they can see that nothing else was 'trapped in the room'.

Pick up the tabled envelope 2 and while re-iterating your opening remarks about 'the lady who means a lot to you' drop the £20 note into their cupped hands.

## ii) Participant names '3':

So now we need to get the money into envelope 3.

As you hand envelope 1 to the participant to be opened, your hand rotates palm down turning over the two envelope stack. The cover is a pointing action towards envelope one.

When your hand returns to the normal position, the new envelope 2 on the top of the packet is an 'empty room'. The new envelope 3 (with the money) is dropped to the table, and you continue as above. The turnover facilitates the money shifting into envelope 3.

***Raven note:** this is the classic 'the big action covers the small action' - don't think of this as a move or rush to do it guiltily, simple place the envelopes onto the table as you turn them over, handing them the number 1 envelope.*

So we know what happens if they name a 2, and we can shift the money into an envelope with the 3 on it if they name a 3. What if they name a 1 first?

### iii) Participant names '1', then a '3'

If they name a '1' first then you change the game to them eliminating rooms that won't be searched, and quickly ask them for another room.

The emphasis at the set-up was that you can only search one room, and two rooms wouldn't be searched.

They only have time to search one room. No mention is made of 'selecting' or 'choosing' a room which leaves you free to switch the process as you require. This equivoque will be discussed further later and some resources listed.

***Raven note:*** *the language you use should make it feel as though this was always the way the demonstration was going to happen.*

*At this point I say "perfect, now imagine you carry on walking down the corridor, name the next room you will walk past to eliminate."*

*This reframes your original question and now is a statement as to which one they will eliminate. It will also help to create the false*

*memory that you asked the same the first time around.*

*By asking them to walk past a room in my experience they mentally 'walk' past 2 and then name the number 3, probably because 2 is psychologically appealing to leave at this point and they named an odd and is logical to name an odd again if you think about how hall ways are number, odds on one side and evens on the other.*

Once they have named the '1' and their second number (in this case a '3'), you are free to end as in (i) above. The 1 envelope is eliminated and passed to the participant. The 2 envelope is placed on the table. The 3 envelope is tipped open into their hands. Same destination; just a different route.

#### **iv) Participant names '1' then '2'**

Again, once a '1' is named you quickly ask for another room not to be searched, and make it seem like that was always your intention. You now need the money in an envelope with a '3' on it so you do the turnover as you pass envelope 1 and point. End as (ii) above.

#### **Summary:**

In simple terms, the money is in the middle envelope that can be shown as a number 2, or flipped over to show a number 3. If the participant chooses a 2 or 3 then proceed as above.

If the participant names a number 1 first then you will move to eliminate numbers instead, and make sure you keep the money envelope safe.

A few run throughs of the 4 possible outcomes with envelopes in hand will help you see what is happening if you are struggling.

## Credits:

Invented by Tom Sellers and published in his 1935 booklet 'Novel Necromancy' under the title 'It's Only Chance'.

Floyd Thayer later published his version of the Sellers effect in Genii, Vol. 1 No. 2, Oct. 1936, p. 7, under the name 'Bank Night' and the plot is generally now known under this name. (Information courtesy of Conjur-ingCredits.com)

The core method (mis-numbered envelopes) used to enable the effect here was first published in Ted Karmilovich's 'Burned' effect in issue 486 (1993) of Bascom Jones' 'Magick' magazine. The effect is very direct: Ted's pay-check is on the line and the eliminated envelopes are burnt. Ted removes his pay check from the remaining envelope.

In the following issue of Magick, issue 487, Scott Davis presents a presentational twist to Ted's effect using a picture of a baby and 2 of magazine clippings.

Instinct relies on Ted's core method and Scott's fire-fighter scenario and then tries to add an inevitable surprise.

## Discussion:

---

For me, the purpose of the routine is to have some fun together, without it being at anyone's expense. Part of my studies really have been based on decision-making in crises and so I can easily sell my fascination with the subject. The build-up can be played quite straight and serious, and then the reveal adds the wry humour.

If you need to adapt the routine to fit you, then a useful starting point would be to consider the diagram on Doug Dymont's Deceptionary website (<http://www.deceptionary.com/performance.html>).

What is right for your character? What is the purpose of the effect? What are you trying to communicate? Why are you showing someone this effect? When you know who you are and what you are trying to do, you will have an easier time tailoring it to fit.

***Raven note:** not only can the presentation be adapted but also the scale, this type of effect will work well with large envelopes on stage. The necessary turn over can be achieved by simply dropping the envelopes down by your*

*side from holding them face out towards the audience. This will flip the positions of envelopes 2 and 3 as you lift 1 away from the pile.*

***My currency doesn't have a female on it. What do I do?***

Adapt as best you can. If you don't have the person of the right gender to be your partner or loved one, then you can adapt the premise to say 'someone you care deeply about, almost more than life itself'. (That should cover the US bills)

If your bank notes don't have people on at all (I'm looking at you Euros), then you can draw one on. A basic smiley face can suffice. Your focus is on the representation of the person. The fact it is drawn on a bank note is incidental. If it is illegal to deface your notes then draw on a post-it note and attach that. You get the gist of it.

***Raven note: I was recently out in America for a few weeks and was often asked to perform something informally; this was one of my 'go-to' effects. I used a British £10 note in my envelope, American's loved this as they weren't expecting the ending, plus the special someone***

*was the Queen and they got to see our English money; which was a bonus surprise.*

*With a presentational twist you could always use a British note if your currency doesn't fit the bill (pun intended).*

***What are some good resources if I wanted to know more about the research into this kind of decision-making?***

Anyone interested in decision-making might look into Gary Klein's 'Recognition-Primed Decisions' theory (a 'lite' version of his theory was the basis for this routine), or Daniel Kahneman's book 'Thinking, Fast and Slow'. Either would give you more than enough to add convincingly to the presentation.

***Any tips on equivocate?***

I'm certainly no authority on equivocate. The key parts to the equivocate or multiple-out endings should have been included in sufficient detail above. Essentially, you are avoiding the problem of asking the participant to 'choose or select a room', only for them to choose the only number that they can't have (number 1).

If you were to turn around and say 'ok, so we've eliminated room one' then it can cause a moment of cognitive dissonance as the participant thinks 'but I wanted that one and you've eliminated it'.

Instead, they are 'naming a room number' which allows you to post-justify the process you need to follow (of either selection or elimination).

***Raven note:*** *the key to well executed equivocate is to ensure that the process sounds as though it would never have gone any other way and then reframe it to reiterate that fact.*

*So if they name the number 2 or 3 first, you say "so that's the room you go into" framing that as their selection and decision, once you've placed it on the table.*

*If they name 1 you continue to ask them to name the next number and reframe the whole process "so you walked past these two rooms" pointing to the two which were eliminated, continuing placing your hand on envelope B with the money in "and your gut instinct led you to check this room."*

Further tips on equivocate can be found in either of the below resources:

Jheff Poncher – Heads I Win, Tails You Lose (Book)

Max Maven – Multiplicity (DVD)

***Why are there 5 envelopes included?***

Option A – Spares in case you make a mistake

Option B – So you can make up a spare set

Option C – So you can make up regular envelopes for 2 and 3, and pocket switch them, so that everything is examinable at the end

Choose the option that works for you!

Finally, thank you very much for purchasing Instinct!

If you have any ideas or suggestions you can find me on Facebook or at [TheFreakonomist@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:TheFreakonomist@yahoo.co.uk)

