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The Shared Secrets Lab

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The Errors of Gift-giving

With gift-giving comes errors that should be avoided to make sure the best gift is being gifted. It comes as a shock when the thought of errors in gift-giving is brought to attention because how can there be errors when giving someone a gift? Although there aren't universal rules when it comes to giving someone a gift, there are a good amount of errors when giving someone a gift. Errors occur when the gift-giving becomes too much of an obligation to fulfill and are transactional, rather than it being personal and thoughtful. The most common errors that have been observed in gift-giving are the type of gift that is being given, the price tag of the gift, and the appropriateness of the gifts.

The type of gift you give is the most common error that is experienced. When getting someone a gift it is important to make sure that the gift is a reflection of the interests of the person receiving it, rather than yours. According to People.com, it states that 62% of Americans have lied about liking a gift that they got. This branches off to the reasonings as to why they didn't like the gift, and the main one being that it was more so a gift that the other person would like, rather than themselves. This phenomenon is seen very frequently in television shows when a mother-in-law gives her daughter-in-law a gift and the daughter-in-law hates it, however, makes sure to display or have on the gift given by the mother-in-law whenever she's around to please the mother-in-law. Studies have shown that out of 2,000 Americans, 52% will display the gift in their home before the arrival of the gift-giver. The majority of the time the gift is not liked because the gift is in the interest of the gift-giver rather than the person that is receiving the gift.

Another case of the type of gift being an error is the actual gift itself going along with the occasion of the gift. As mentioned before, there are times when gifts become a gesture of transaction, especially when the gift giver does not share a close relationship with the recipient.

That tends to create situations where the gift that is being given is not always appropriate to the occasion due to the distance in the interpersonal relationship. That is a recipe for a bad gift being given. For instance, attending a baby shower of a mutual friend and getting a gift that's a barbeque set. That would be a gift-giving error because it emphasizes that the gift was transactional as well as it is inappropriate to receive at a baby shower. [Social psychology](#) states that transactional relationships are built on an expectation of reciprocation. Using that and applying it to the situation we have where there is a distance between the giver and the recipient, the relationship is transactional and the individuals are self-serving and have to fulfill an obligation.

Another error of gift-giving that needs to be taken into consideration is the price of the gift that is being given. There are times when people fall into this narrative to buy expensive gifts for someone because they want to either show the other person how much they mean to them, or because they get the ego boost of giving an expensive gift to someone. Regardless of which way it goes, it creates gift guilt for the recipient. As mentioned before, to avoid error, you want to make sure that the gift is appropriate and take other factors into account such as the occasion. Many times there isn't a specific occasion in place, and we want to give someone something, however, we can sometimes disregard the price of the gift.

This experience is most common when gift guilt is present since the gift was unexpectedly received, thus the recipient was not ready to reciprocate, the gift was expensive and they aren't too fond of the gift itself, and the recipient may feel indebted to the person due to the monetary value of the gift is at a higher value than they are comfortable with. [Studies](#) show that 46% of gift recipients have felt guilt when someone has gifted them a more expensive gift than

they gave in return. Also, there is the other end of the spectrum where you don't want to give a cheap gift to someone either.

Cheap gifts can be an error if done incorrectly and inappropriately. For instance, getting a gift solely due to the low price tag can lead to the quality of the gift not being that good or appropriate because the main focus of purchasing the gift was due to the price tag. However, there are cases where items do go on sale for a cheaper price, in that case, if all the other factors were considered, then there being an error in giving that as a gift is not significant. A lot of times cheap gifts can be an error in gift-giving because they can come across as inconsiderate and more self-serving to the giver of the gift than the recipient of the gift.

The errors of gift-giving can lead many down a cycle of bad gift-giving, however, once acknowledged and avoided, it can help make sure that the gift that is being given is appropriate and good. Even though the act of gift-giving is an expression of thoughtfulness and appreciation, it is important to have the gifts be able to deliver those intentions appropriately. Although there aren't rules to gifts given, there are certain factors that need to be taken into consideration to avoid coming across any errors when giving gifts and to make sure it aligns with the intentions of the gift given. Whether it be a gift to someone very close in relation or someone distant there are still errors that can come up and should be avoided when getting a gift. The recipient of the gift must be actually enthusiastic about the gift rather than faking the enthusiasm.

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