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Alex Gendler: How one design flaw almost toppled a skyscraper | TED Talk

https://www.ted.com/talks/alex_gendler_how_one_design_flaw_almost_toppled_a_skyscraper

Advanced Words Only

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Session 1: Word List

skyscraper

n. a very tall building, typically one in a city

synonym: high-rise, tower

(1) **skyscraper** apartment house, (2) steel-framed

skyscraper

The 50-floor **skyscraper** loomed over the city, dwarfing the other buildings.

midtown

n. the central area of a city or town, typically a busy commercial or business district

synonym: downtown, city center, central business district

(1) **midtown** traffic, (2) **midtown** coffee shop

The conference is being held in **midtown** Manhattan.

pore

n. a tiny hole in the skin of people or other animals that sweat can pass through; (verb) to read carefully or study attentively

synonym: stoma, foramen

(1) woody **pore** fungi, (2) **pore** over reference books

I was sweating at every **pore**.

stumble

v. to miss a step and fall or nearly fall; to walk unsteadily

synonym: bumble, struggle, misstep

(1) **stumble** financially, (2) **stumble** through life

She **stumbled** over the tree root.

topple

v. to cause to lose balance and fall over, especially by pushing

synonym: overturn, capsize, upset

(1) **topple** communist rule, (2) **topple** off a ledge

The statue was old and unstable, so it easily **toppled** over.

skyline

n. the outline of buildings and other structures against the sky, especially when viewed from a distance

synonym: silhouette, cityscape, horizon

(1) **skyline** view, (2) downtown **skyline**

The **skyline** of the city was dotted with tall buildings.

stilt

n. a tall, narrow pole used as a support for a building, bridge, or other structure; a pair of long, slender poles with footrests used to elevate someone above the ground

synonym: pole, post, long-legs

(1) **stilt** grass, (2) **stilt** walking

The archeologists found ancient **stilt** houses that were preserved under the water.

unheard

adj. not heard, listened to, or noticed; not having been brought to public attention

synonym: unknown, obscure

(1) an **unheard** story, (2) previously **unheard-of** economic development

The **unheard** melody was beautiful and touched everyone's hearts.

precaution

n. a measure taken in advance to prevent harm, danger, or injury; foresightfulness

synonym: safeguard, measure, provision

(1) airborne **precaution**, (2) take extra **precautions**

As a **precaution**, the company locked all of its doors after a threat was made.

chevron

- n.* a V-shaped pattern of decorative lines or stripes found in various types of fabrics, such as tweed or herringbone; (of a military) a symbol worn on the sleeve or shoulder of a uniform to indicate rank or length of service consisting of one or more V-shaped stripes, with the number of stripes indicating the level of rank

synonym : zigzag, v-shape, stripe

- (1) **chevron** pattern, (2) **chevron** stripes

The soldier's uniform had a **chevron** patch on the sleeve.

exoskeleton

- n.* a hard, external protective covering or framework that supports and gives shape to the body of an invertebrate animal, such as an insect or crab

synonym : chitin, exocuticle, carapace

- (1) **exoskeleton** suit, (2) robotic **exoskeleton**

The **exoskeleton** of the crab protects it from predators and environmental changes.

counterweight

- n.* a weight that balances or opposes another weight to achieve stability or equilibrium; a weight that is used to offset the weight of another object or to provide mechanical advantage

synonym : balance, counterbalance, counterpoise

- (1) **counterweight** system, (2) **counterweight** balance

The **counterweight** on the suspension bridge helped keep it stable during windy conditions.

counteract

- v.* to act against something to reduce its bad or harmful effects or neutralize it

synonym : balance, offset, compensate

- (1) **counteract** the effect of poison, (2) **counteract** global warming

Our body's immune system produces antibodies to **counteract** disease.

sway

- v.* to move back and forth or side to side gently, often in response to external factors such as wind or water; to influence or persuade someone to do something; to

control or dominate something

synonym : swing, oscillate, influence

(1) **sway** back and forth, (2) **sway** to the rhythm

The politician tried to **sway** public opinion in his favor, but his arguments fell flat.

unaccountable

adj. not able to be explained or justified, often in a way that suggests something suspicious or dishonest is going on; not responsible or answerable for one's actions or behavior

synonym : unexplainable, inexplicable, mysterious

(1) **unaccountable** behavior, (2) **unaccountable** decision

The **unaccountable** disappearance of funds led to an investigation.

alarming

adj. causing concern or apprehension; causing a feeling of danger, harm, or emergency; unsettling or disturbing

synonym : forbidding, concerning, disturbing

(1) **alarming** news, (2) **alarming** statistics

The sudden rise in crime rates in our neighborhood is quite **alarming**.

weld

v. to join two or more pieces of metal together by heating their edges until they melt and fuse

synonym : fuse, join, bond

(1) **weld** a team of such people, (2) **weld** two broken pipes

He learned how to **weld** metal in his high school shop class.

uncover

v. to remove the cover from something; to discover something previously unseen or hidden

synonym : disclose, reveal, unveil

(1) **uncover** a potential problem, (2) **uncover** the truth

He continued his investigation and soon **uncovered** another crime.

august

adj. having a majestic or prestigious quality, inspiring awe or admiration; relating to or happening in August

synonym : majestic, grand, impressive

(1) **August** weather, (2) **august** mountains

The **august** palace stood tall and proud, a testament to the royal family's power.

evacuate

v. to remove people or things from a place of danger or threat; to leave or abandon a place or situation, often due to fear or risk

synonym : empty, clear out, vacate

(1) **evacuate** the building, (2) **evacuate** civilians

The town was forced to **evacuate** due to the hurricane approaching.

veer

v. to change direction suddenly or sharply; to turn or swerve from one course or direction to another

synonym : swerve, diverge, shift

(1) **veer** toward danger, (2) **veer** to the left

The car **veered** off the road and crashed into a tree.

covert

adj. kept secret or concealed; not openly practiced or engaged in

synonym : secretive, hidden, disguised

(1) **covert** negotiations, (2) **covert** mission

The government was conducting a **covert** operation to gather information on the enemy.

unnoticed

adj. not seen or noticed

synonym : ignored, overlooked, unrecognized

(1) **unnoticed** by all, (2) go **unnoticed** for a long period

His research went largely **unnoticed** until a prominent researcher cited it.

rev

n. a measure of the rate at which an engine or motor rotates, often expressed in revolutions per minute (RPM); (verb) to increase the number of rotations per

minute

synonym : revolution, RPM, speed

(1) low- **rev** engine, (2) **rev** up the crowd

He stepped on the gas pedal, and the engine released a loud **rev**.

creditor

n. a person, company, etc. to whom a debtor owes money

(1) the **creditor's** claims, (2) bankrupt **creditor**

I asked the lawyer to initiate **creditor** negotiations for voluntary liquidation.

Session 2: Spelling

1. al____ng statistics *adj.* causing concern or apprehension; causing a feeling of danger, harm, or emergency; unsettling or disturbing
2. go un_____ed for a long period *adj.* not seen or noticed
3. the cr____or's claims *n.* a person, company, etc. to whom a debtor owes money
4. co____t negotiations *adj.* kept secret or concealed; not openly practiced or engaged in
5. previously un_____d-of economic development *adj.* not heard, listened to, or noticed; not having been brought to public attention
6. au____t mountains *adj.* having a majestic or prestigious quality, inspiring awe or admiration; relating to or happening in August
7. airborne pre_____on *n.* a measure taken in advance to prevent harm, danger, or injury; foresightfulness
8. v__r to the left *v.* to change direction suddenly or sharply; to turn or swerve from one course or direction to another
9. ch____n stripes *n.* a V-shaped pattern of decorative lines or stripes found in various types of fabrics, such as tweed or herringbone; (of a military) a symbol worn on the sleeve or shoulder of a uniform to indicate rank or length of service consisting of one or more V-shaped stripes, with the number of stripes indicating the level of rank

ANSWERS: 1. alarming, 2. unnoticed, 3. creditor, 4. covert, 5. unheard, 6. august, 7. precaution, 8. veer, 9. chevron

10. st____e financially *v.* to miss a step and fall or nearly fall; to walk unsteadily
11. al____ng news *adj.* causing concern or apprehension; causing a feeling of danger, harm, or emergency; unsettling or disturbing
12. w__d two broken pipes *v.* to join two or more pieces of metal together by heating their edges until they melt and fuse
13. robotic exo____on *n.* a hard, external protective covering or framework that supports and gives shape to the body of an invertebrate animal, such as an insect or crab
14. una____ble behavior *adj.* not able to be explained or justified, often in a way that suggests something suspicious or dishonest is going on; not responsible or answerable for one's actions or behavior
15. v__r toward danger *v.* to change direction suddenly or sharply; to turn or swerve from one course or direction to another
16. sky____er apartment house *n.* a very tall building, typically one in a city
17. st__t walking *n.* a tall, narrow pole used as a support for a building, bridge, or other structure; a pair of long, slender poles with footrests used to elevate someone above the ground
18. sk____e view *n.* the outline of buildings and other structures against the sky, especially when viewed from a distance

ANSWERS: 10. stumble, 11. alarming, 12. weld, 13. exoskeleton, 14. unaccountable, 15. veer, 16. skyscraper, 17. stilt, 18. skyline

19. steel-framed sky_____er *n.* a very tall building, typically one in a city
20. woody p__e fungi *n.* a tiny hole in the skin of people or other animals that sweat can pass through; (verb) to read carefully or study attentively
21. una_____ble decision *adj.* not able to be explained or justified, often in a way that suggests something suspicious or dishonest is going on; not responsible or answerable for one's actions or behavior
22. cou_____ct global warming *v.* to act against something to reduce its bad or harmful effects or neutralize it
23. take extra pre_____ons *n.* a measure taken in advance to prevent harm, danger, or injury; foresightfulness
24. downtown sk_____e *n.* the outline of buildings and other structures against the sky, especially when viewed from a distance
25. to___e communist rule *v.* to cause to lose balance and fall over, especially by pushing
26. st_____e through life *v.* to miss a step and fall or nearly fall; to walk unsteadily
27. r_v up the crowd *n.* a measure of the rate at which an engine or motor rotates, often expressed in revolutions per minute (RPM); (verb) to increase the number of rotations per minute
28. mi_____n traffic *n.* the central area of a city or town, typically a busy commercial or business district

ANSWERS: 19. skyscraper, 20. pore, 21. unaccountable, 22. counteract, 23. precaution, 24. skyline, 25. topple, 26. stumble, 27. rev, 28. midtown

29. to___e off a ledge v. to cause to lose balance and fall over, especially by pushing
30. s__y back and forth v. to move back and forth or side to side gently, often in response to external factors such as wind or water; to influence or persuade someone to do something; to control or dominate something
31. ev_____te civilians v. to remove people or things from a place of danger or threat; to leave or abandon a place or situation, often due to fear or risk
32. un_____ed by all *adj.* not seen or noticed
33. an un_____d story *adj.* not heard, listened to, or noticed; not having been brought to public attention
34. un_____r the truth v. to remove the cover from something; to discover something previously unseen or hidden
35. Au____t weather *adj.* having a majestic or prestigious quality, inspiring awe or admiration; relating to or happening in August
36. ev_____te the building v. to remove people or things from a place of danger or threat; to leave or abandon a place or situation, often due to fear or risk
37. p__e over reference books *n.* a tiny hole in the skin of people or other animals that sweat can pass through; (verb) to read carefully or study attentively

ANSWERS: 29. topple, 30. sway, 31. evacuate, 32. unnoticed, 33. unheard, 34. uncover, 35. august, 36. evacuate, 37. pore

38. s__y to the rhythm *v.* to move back and forth or side to side gently, often in response to external factors such as wind or water; to influence or persuade someone to do something; to control or dominate something
39. un____r a potential problem *v.* to remove the cover from something; to discover something previously unseen or hidden
40. st__t grass *n.* a tall, narrow pole used as a support for a building, bridge, or other structure; a pair of long, slender poles with footrests used to elevate someone above the ground
41. mi____n coffee shop *n.* the central area of a city or town, typically a busy commercial or business district
42. w__d a team of such people *v.* to join two or more pieces of metal together by heating their edges until they melt and fuse
43. cou____ght balance *n.* a weight that balances or opposes another weight to achieve stability or equilibrium; a weight that is used to offset the weight of another object or to provide mechanical advantage
44. cou____ght system *n.* a weight that balances or opposes another weight to achieve stability or equilibrium; a weight that is used to offset the weight of another object or to provide mechanical advantage

ANSWERS: 38. sway, 39. uncover, 40. stilt, 41. midtown, 42. weld, 43. counterweight, 44. counterweight

45. cou_____ct the effect of poison *v.* to act against something to reduce its bad or harmful effects or neutralize it
46. ch_____n pattern *n.* a V-shaped pattern of decorative lines or stripes found in various types of fabrics, such as tweed or herringbone; (of a military) a symbol worn on the sleeve or shoulder of a uniform to indicate rank or length of service consisting of one or more V-shaped stripes, with the number of stripes indicating the level of rank
47. bankrupt cr_____or *n.* a person, company, etc. to whom a debtor owes money
48. co_____t mission *adj.* kept secret or concealed; not openly practiced or engaged in
49. exo_____on suit *n.* a hard, external protective covering or framework that supports and gives shape to the body of an invertebrate animal, such as an insect or crab
50. low-r_v engine *n.* a measure of the rate at which an engine or motor rotates, often expressed in revolutions per minute (RPM); (verb) to increase the number of rotations per minute

ANSWERS: 45. counteract, 46. chevron, 47. creditor, 48. covert, 49. exoskeleton, 50. rev

Session 3: Fill in the Blanks

1. The _____ of the city was dotted with tall buildings.
 - n.* the outline of buildings and other structures against the sky, especially when viewed from a distance

2. He continued his investigation and soon _____ another crime.
 - v.* to remove the cover from something; to discover something previously unseen or hidden

3. The _____ of the crab protects it from predators and environmental changes.
 - n.* a hard, external protective covering or framework that supports and gives shape to the body of an invertebrate animal, such as an insect or crab

4. The politician tried to _____ public opinion in his favor, but his arguments fell flat.
 - v.* to move back and forth or side to side gently, often in response to external factors such as wind or water; to influence or persuade someone to do something; to control or dominate something

5. The car _____ off the road and crashed into a tree.
 - v.* to change direction suddenly or sharply; to turn or swerve from one course or direction to another

6. The _____ palace stood tall and proud, a testament to the royal family's power.
 - adj.* having a majestic or prestigious quality, inspiring awe or admiration; relating to or happening in August

7. The town was forced to _____ due to the hurricane approaching.
 - v.* to remove people or things from a place of danger or threat; to leave or abandon a place or situation, often due to fear or risk

ANSWERS: 1. skyline, 2. uncovered, 3. exoskeleton, 4. sway, 5. veered, 6. august, 7. evacuate

8. The sudden rise in crime rates in our neighborhood is quite _____.
- adj.* causing concern or apprehension; causing a feeling of danger, harm, or emergency; unsettling or disturbing
9. I was sweating at every _____.
- n.* a tiny hole in the skin of people or other animals that sweat can pass through; (verb) to read carefully or study attentively
10. The soldier's uniform had a _____ patch on the sleeve.
- n.* a V-shaped pattern of decorative lines or stripes found in various types of fabrics, such as tweed or herringbone; (of a military) a symbol worn on the sleeve or shoulder of a uniform to indicate rank or length of service consisting of one or more V-shaped stripes, with the number of stripes indicating the level of rank
11. He stepped on the gas pedal, and the engine released a loud _____.
- n.* a measure of the rate at which an engine or motor rotates, often expressed in revolutions per minute (RPM); (verb) to increase the number of rotations per minute
12. He learned how to _____ metal in his high school shop class.
- v.* to join two or more pieces of metal together by heating their edges until they melt and fuse
13. I asked the lawyer to initiate _____ negotiations for voluntary liquidation.
- n.* a person, company, etc. to whom a debtor owes money
14. The conference is being held in _____ Manhattan.
- n.* the central area of a city or town, typically a busy commercial or business district

ANSWERS: 8. alarming, 9. pore, 10. chevron, 11. rev, 12. weld, 13. creditor, 14. midtown

15. The statue was old and unstable, so it easily _____ over.
v. to cause to lose balance and fall over, especially by pushing
16. As a _____ the company locked all of its doors after a threat was made.
n. a measure taken in advance to prevent harm, danger, or injury; foresightfulness
17. The archeologists found ancient _____ houses that were preserved under the water.
n. a tall, narrow pole used as a support for a building, bridge, or other structure; a pair of long, slender poles with footrests used to elevate someone above the ground
18. The government was conducting a _____ operation to gather information on the enemy.
adj. kept secret or concealed; not openly practiced or engaged in
19. Our body's immune system produces antibodies to _____ disease.
v. to act against something to reduce its bad or harmful effects or neutralize it
20. His research went largely _____ until a prominent researcher cited it.
adj. not seen or noticed
21. The 50-floor _____ loomed over the city, dwarfing the other buildings.
n. a very tall building, typically one in a city
22. The _____ melody was beautiful and touched everyone's hearts.
adj. not heard, listened to, or noticed; not having been brought to public attention
23. She _____ over the tree root.
v. to miss a step and fall or nearly fall; to walk unsteadily

ANSWERS: 15. toppled, 16. precaution, 17. stilt, 18. covert, 19. counteract, 20. unnoticed, 21. skyscraper, 22. unheard, 23. stumbled

24. The _____ on the suspension bridge helped keep it stable during windy conditions.

- n.* a weight that balances or opposes another weight to achieve stability or equilibrium; a weight that is used to offset the weight of another object or to provide mechanical advantage

25. The _____ disappearance of funds led to an investigation.

- adj.* not able to be explained or justified, often in a way that suggests something suspicious or dishonest is going on; not responsible or answerable for one's actions or behavior

ANSWERS: 24. counterweight, 25. unaccountable