

Why do you always feel the way back is shorter than the road?

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Many people think that we have that feeling because of **hallucinations** . But scientists have done a lot of research, experiments and come to the conclusion that it's not the shirt and name it "**the way back effect**" - "return trip effect".



There are two hypotheses given, the hypothesis of familiarity and of our own expectations for this phenomenon.

About **the "familiarity"** , like the daily work that makes us spend less energy to improve on the new things that started working, the familiar paths we will make us feel less needful More time to go.

As for **the "expectation"** , if the path is longer than we thought, we will also think that it is expected that the way back will "not be that long", and that thought makes us feel that the way Come back as far as I thought.

In 2011, social psychologist Niels van de Ven at Tilburg University in the Netherlands and his team conducted experiments to explore two hypotheses about "road effects".

In the first study:

69 people took the trip and went back by bus at an amusement park. The results show that all 69 have "return effects", they feel that the way back is shorter than the way.

Their effect is exactly what the hypothesis of expectation suggests: **those who think the longer journey they think feels the way back is not that long.**



In the second study:

93 volunteers traveled by motorbike on the way to and from, including some going and returning. But everyone undergoes a "backlash effect" when returning. They estimated that the route cost an average of 44 minutes, while the return route was only 37 minutes, although it was not different.

Going and going on different roads will not feel familiar. The fact that they all had the "road effect" helped the "expect" hypothesis have more evidence to support it.

Final research:

139 volunteers sat watching a video of a person going from home to your house and returning. The exact travel time is 7 minutes, although there are other road users to return to their homes.

The "way back effect" happened again, the volunteers estimated the journey took about 9 minutes and the return road took only 7 minutes.

Once again, the familiarity hypothesis is not present, since the estimated time of return is not different between two different routes. It is the expectations of the experimental participants that have the most influence on the "road effect".



More specifically, when some participants were told that the route would be longer than the way back (though not so), the "road effect" completely disappeared. This shows that, when they are informed that the road goes further, one will no longer feel depressed with the long distance and will be more accurate when estimating the way back.

Although Ven and his colleagues did not completely rule out the familiarity of the "road effect", they argued that "expectation" played a more important role. They concluded that:

"The return effect is affected by the interference in our expectations. Participants feel that the path is longer than expected, they will raise the expectations in the return distance. And when compared to The expectation of the road will be so long, they will feel the way back much shorter . "

There are many factors that influence this strange effect from psychology, emotion . And the most accurate answer is still in our own brains, but to understand we must rely on scientists with future experiments.

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