


Krishna, I had a strange experience during our college group project. We chose this guy, Rohan, as our leader because he seemed really confident. But it turns out, he had no idea how to manage the project. How did we all get it so wrong?





Interesting situation, Arjun. Let's think about it. What was it about Rohan that made you all choose him?

MATHURA CAFE

An illustration of two children sitting at a round wooden table in a cafe. The child on the left has orange skin and is wearing a red apron over a yellow shirt, looking surprised with a wide-open mouth. The child on the right has blue skin and is wearing a yellow shirt over a blue long-sleeved shirt, smiling. The background features a light green brick wall, three purple pendant lights, a bookshelf with books and plants, and a shelf with a Greek letter Psi symbol, books, and a vase. A brown text box is centered over the children.


Well, he speaks really well  
and seemed so sure of  
himself. We just assumed he  
would be good at leading the  
team



Ah, I see. Do you remember if he had any past experience or achievements in managing projects?


MATHURA CAFE






Not really. We just went by his personality. But why did we all make that assumption?

It sounds like you might have fallen prey to a common cognitive bias. When we see one positive trait in a person, like confidence, we often assume they possess other unrelated positive traits as well.



You mean, we thought just because he was confident, he'd be a good leader too?

Exactly. It's called the halo effect. Our overall impression of a person, influenced by one prominent trait, affects our judgment of their other traits.

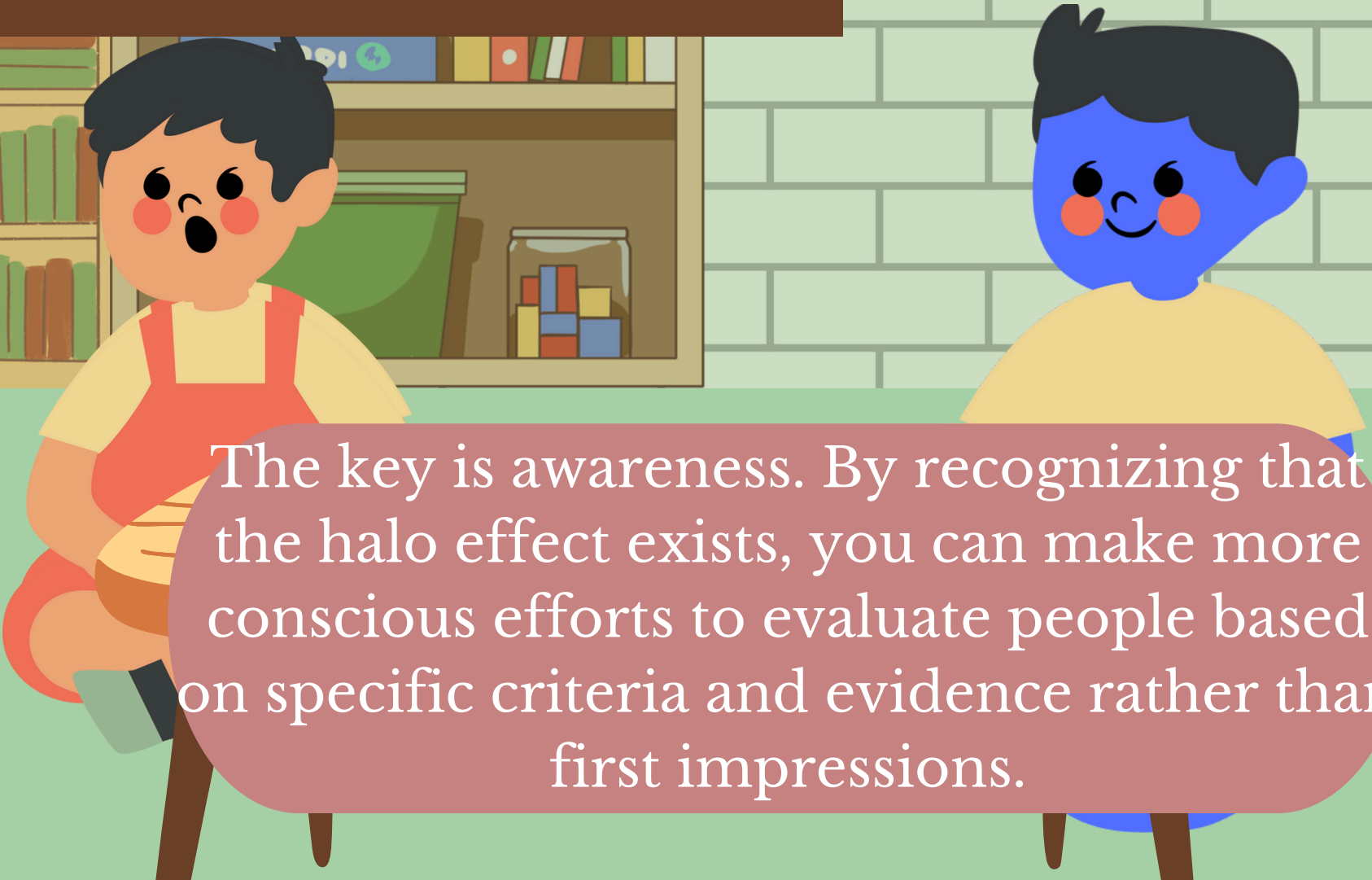
The background is a light green brick wall. Three purple pendant lights hang from the ceiling, casting a warm glow. On the left, a wooden bookshelf is filled with books and small potted plants. In the center, a brown rectangular box contains the first text. To the right, a shelf labeled 'MATHURA CAFE' holds a stack of books, a small statue, and a vase with flowers. A large Greek letter Psi (Ψ) is mounted on the wall above the cafe shelf. In the foreground, two children sit at a wooden table. The child on the left has orange skin and is wearing a red apron. The child on the right has blue skin and is wearing a yellow shirt. A pink speech bubble containing the second text is positioned in front of them.

So, the halo effect made us overlook his actual abilities?


Yes, and it's quite powerful. It can impact how we perceive people in many areas, from school and work to personal relationships.

The background is a light green brick wall. Three purple pendant lights hang from the top, casting a warm glow. To the left, a wooden bookshelf is filled with books, a small potted plant, and a green storage bin. To the right, a shelf holds a stack of books, a small Buddha statue, a vase with flowers, and a bottle. Above this shelf is a large, stylized Psi symbol (Ψ). A sign on the shelf reads "MATHURA CAFE".

How can we avoid this in the future?

Two children are sitting at a wooden table. The child on the left has orange skin, black hair, and is wearing a red apron over a yellow shirt. The child on the right has blue skin, black hair, and is wearing a yellow shirt. Both have rosy cheeks and are looking towards the camera.


The key is awareness. By recognizing that the halo effect exists, you can make more conscious efforts to evaluate people based on specific criteria and evidence rather than first impressions.



So, next time, we should look at actual achievements and skills, not just confidence.

Precisely. This way, your decisions will be based on a more accurate assessment of their abilities.





Thanks, Krishna. This really helps. I'll make sure to keep the halo effect in mind next time.

Glad to hear that, Arjun. Understanding these psychological principles can greatly improve our decision-making.