

## Two Systems of Thinking

Hey, leader. Let's keep it real. You're running a resort, managing people, guests, chaos, and the occasional curveball from Mother Nature. Leadership isn't just about diving deep—it's about thinking smart.

The way you think drives everything you do. And the way your **team** thinks drives everything they do.

Daniel Kahneman cracked the code with two simple systems:

- **System 1:** Fast, automatic, gut-instinct.
- **System 2:** Slow, deliberate, logical thinking.

Knowing how these systems work is your cheat code. Because here's the truth: **most of your mistakes (and your wins) come down to which system you're leaning on.**

## The Fast vs. The Slow

### System 1: The Fast Lane

This is your autopilot. It's the part of your brain that:

- Reacts without thinking.
- Handles familiar, low-stakes decisions.
- Runs on instincts and snap judgments.

#### Examples at Atlantis Dive Resort:

- A guest walks in angry, and your instinct is to defuse the situation with a quick apology.
- You immediately know which dive instructor to send when someone asks, "Who's your best with first-timers?"

System 1 is fast and efficient. **But it's lazy.** It cuts corners. It's where all those sneaky biases live.

## System 2: The Slow Burner

This is your brain's CEO. It steps in when things get complicated:

- Crunching numbers for next quarter's budget.
- Deciding how to resolve tension between two team members.
- Planning a new strategy for peak season.

System 2 is thoughtful. It's careful. It's where the *real* work happens.

But here's the kicker: **it's exhausting**. Your brain doesn't want to use it unless it absolutely has to.

## Here's Why This Matters to You

### 1. Most of Your Mistakes Come from System 1

System 1 is quick, but it's reckless. It's where your **biases** live:

- You trust the loudest team member because they're *charming*. (Halo effect.)
- You stick with a failing strategy because you've already invested time. (Sunk cost fallacy.)
- You jump to conclusions when a guest says, "Your prices are too high." (Availability bias.)

### 2. System 2 is the Fixer, But It's Slow

System 2 is your safety net. It steps in to slow you down. To check the facts. To ask, "*Wait, am I making this decision because it's easy or because it's right?*"

But you can't run everything through System 2. You'd burn out. Decision fatigue is real.

### **3. The Magic is Knowing When to Use Each One**

- System 1 is great for speed: handling emergencies, routine tasks, gut calls.
- System 2 is for strategy: big decisions, solving problems, building systems.

When you know which system to lean on, you avoid the chaos of bad calls, rushed fixes, and overthinking.

### **Why This Makes You a Better Leader**

Knowing your two systems doesn't just make you sharper—it changes the game for how you lead your team.

**Here's how:**

#### **1. You Catch Your Own Blind Spots**

- You pause before reacting: *"Is this System 1 rushing me?"*
- You spot biases like confirmation bias, where you only notice what supports your opinion.
- You don't just react—you respond intentionally.

#### **2. You Understand Your Team Better**

Your team? They're stuck in these systems too.

- That dive instructor who froze during an emergency? They got stuck in System 2, overthinking.
- The front desk staff who snapped at a guest? System 1 hijacked them.

When you understand how these systems work, you stop labeling people as “lazy” or “emotional.” You start leading with empathy and coaching them through their decision-making.

### **3. You Solve the Right Problems**

Fast thinking loves bandaid fixes. Slow thinking asks: *“What’s really going on here?”*

- A guest complains about wait times. System 1 says: *“Give them a discount.”*
- System 2 says: *“Is our staffing schedule the problem?”*

System 2 solves the root cause so you don’t have to keep putting out the same fire over and over.

## How to Use This Today

### 1. **Pause Before Big Decisions.**

When something feels “obvious,” stop. Ask: *“Is this System 1 jumping in?”* Let System 2 have a say.

### 2. **Debrief Your Mistakes.**

After every misstep, ask: *“Was I thinking fast when I should’ve been thinking slow?”*

### 3. **Teach This to Your Team.**

Explain the two systems to your staff. Help them recognize when they’re rushing decisions or overthinking. Build a culture of thoughtful action.

## Final Thought

You don't have to be perfect. You're going to overthink when you should act, and you're going to act when you should pause. That's life.

But knowing about these two systems? That's your edge. Because the best leaders don't just lead their teams—they lead their own thinking.

The next time you're deciding whether to react or reflect, remember: **Fast is good. Slow is smart. The magic is knowing when to switch.**

Now go lead like you mean it.