

Review by Michael Olsen, Royal Australian Air Force
Posted on fsae.com

So I just finished reading **Think Fast**. It is just the book I have been looking for and fits really well the C. Smith "to Win" series of books. I had been thinking the last couple of years that what we need is a 21st century update to C. Smith's books and **Think Fast** is full of the practical tips and pieces of experience that I was craving. I agree very strongly with the notion of learning from other peoples experience and mistakes but this is only possible if people are willing to take the time and be humble enough to write it all down. I just hope that when Neil is finally finished with designing race cars he can find the time and sit down to write "Design Fast" or whatever it should be called.

I liked the way the book was arranged which made it very easy to digest. The concise delivery of "golden nuggets" ensured that I wanted to keep reading, wondering what the next nugget would cover. I don't think it is a starters book because there is a reasonable level of assumed knowledge (as stated in the opening) but once you've read the "to Win" series and some of the more academic books on the topic, **Think Fast** makes a great way of tying it all together with shared practical experience. Neil's career achievements to date and his role as advisor to Texas A&M certainly help to build credibility in a topic area that is often full of contradictions and old wives tales.

I think my favourite chapter was 18 "The Race Car Recipe", to me this is where the gold is for Formula SAE competitors and aspiring design engineers. I agree emphatically with the comments about the need for a Chief Engineer and the qualities they should have. One of the big challenges for FSAE teams is to develop a chief engineer along these lines (hopefully each FSAE chief engineer is well supported by some knowledgeable and interested academic advisers or industry advisers in Neil's case).

Finally the personal anecdote given in the postscript is very similar to nearly all my experiences at FSAE competitions. The willingness of teams and organizers to help each other out when faced with adversity is one of the real highlights of being involved in FSAE.

So thanks for putting it together Neil, **Think Fast** will definitely be listed in our essential reading list.