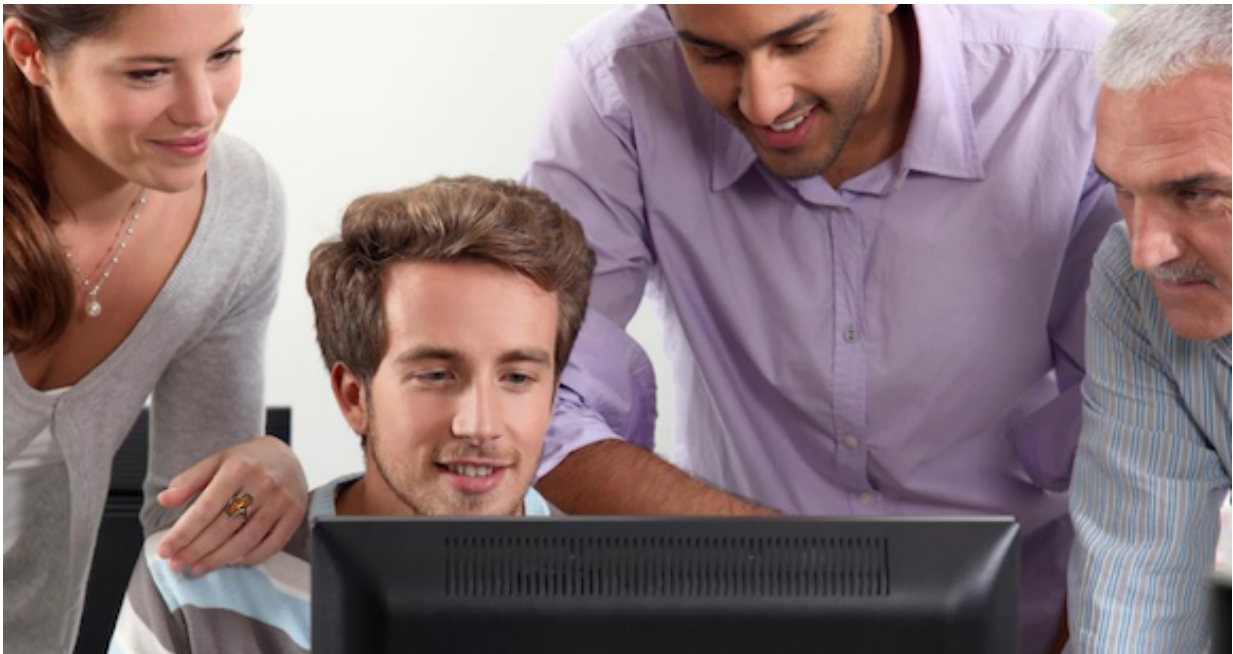


# The 'recipe' for a video to go viral—research identifies four key ingredients

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Consumer psychologist Dr Brent Coker from the University of Melbourne has identified four key elements present in viral videos.

Dr Coker's research included analyses of viral video content and experiments showing viewers a range of clips.

This revealed four common factors:

- 'Sharability' on social media. The video content must make the sharer look good to their peers.
- Viewers must be able to connect to the content. Activating memories via music and nostalgia are key to getting the audience to connect to the video.
- Large emotional range. Clips that quickly take the viewer from an emotional low (sadness or unfairness) to an emotional high (joy, love or justice) are more likely to go viral.
- 'Frisson' or primitive feeling of excitement or thrill. There is often a physical response to a viral video, hairs standing on the back of the neck and goosebumps.

"We understand that people watching a successful, emotive video with these four factors have the same biological response as when someone is faced with a predator and instinctively the body goes into fight or flight mode," said Dr Coker.

"My research found that this release of adrenaline and endorphins, when combined with certain memories, makes a viewer far more likely to share a video and therefore make it go viral."

"Shifting people rapidly across certain emotions is a highly successful tactic which also makes people highly likely to share [content](#) on their [social media](#) channels," he said.

The research findings, released today in the book, *Going Viral*, will have wide ranging impact for both marketing practice as well as understanding how pop culture and [viral videos](#) are experienced by the public.

"These 'ingredients' are helpful pointers to people seeking to create a

viral video, whether for an organisation's advertising or a home video put on YouTube," said Dr Coker.

Provided by University of Melbourne

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