

Handbook on Persuasion Skills

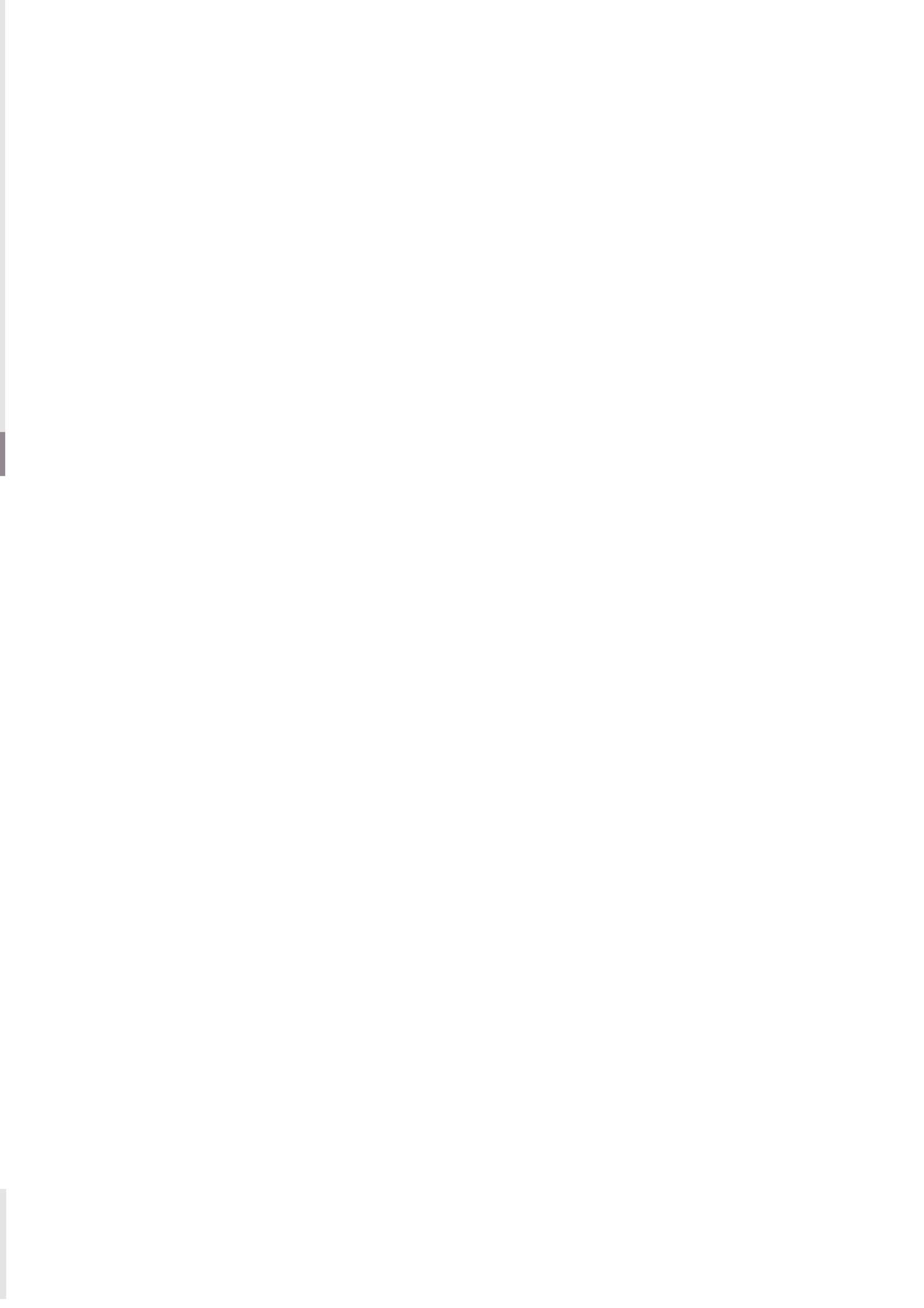


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Purpose of this Handbook

The handbooks, developed by Centre for Good Governance, are intended primarily for personnel in public administration. They offer an overview of some of the principal skills that are essential for effective performance.

They draw heavily upon existing literature and current best practices in public and private organizations around the world and include numerous references and links to useful web resources.

They are not comprehensive 'guides' or 'how to' booklets. Rather, they incorporate the perspectives of experts in the specific domains whose knowledge, insights, advice and experiences prove handy in honing skills, essential for strengthening the capacity for effectiveness of public service delivery at all levels of government.

This handbook, Persuasion Skills, focuses on how the personnel in the public administration can develop approaches and strategies that will enable them to deal with stress in a variety of contexts.

1. Understanding Persuasion

“Few are open to conviction, but the majority of men are open to persuasion”

- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Smart managers know that managing by decree does not work with baby boomers and Gen-Xers, who will not tolerate the unquestioned authority of the old command-and-control environment. Work gets done by people who do not just ask: “What should I do?”, but who ask: “Why should I do it?” Answering these ‘why’ questions requires persuasion—a conversational art worth developing.

Effective persuasion is a process which involves negotiating and learning through which a persuader leads colleagues to a problem’s shared solution. It incorporates discovery, preparation and dialogue. It is about testing and revising ideas in concert with one’s colleagues’ concerns and needs.

The principal purpose of persuasion can be defined as being able to influence or change one’s **attitudes, beliefs** or **values** towards a particular subject/object, so that these will merge and finally equal the persuader’s thoughts and feelings.

- **Attitude** = A predisposition to respond to people, ideas, objects, or events in evaluative ways

Beliefs = The ways people perceive reality to be; our conceptions about what is true and what is false

Values = People’s most enduring judgements about what’s good and bad in life

The objective of persuasion may range from slight shifts in opinion to complete change in behavior. But, how does one determine whether one’s goals are persuasive?

The goals are persuasive —

- when one seeks to influence an audience’s attitudes about an issue

- when one seeks to influence an audience's beliefs or understanding about something
- when one seeks to influence an audience's behavior
- when one seeks to reinforce an audience's existing attitudes, beliefs or behaviors

Persuasion and Attitude Change

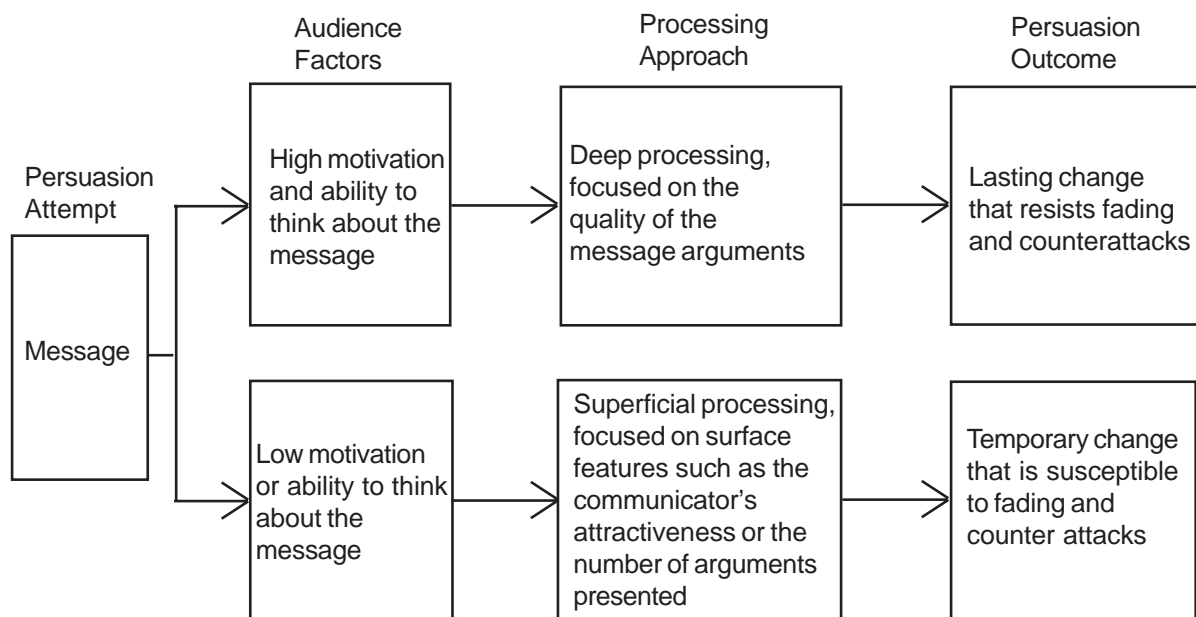
Formation and change of attitude are not two separate things - they are interwoven. People are always adopting, modifying or relinquishing attitudes to fit their ever-changing needs and interests. Acceptance of new attitudes depends on who is the communicator, how the communication is presented, how the communication is perceived by the message receiver, the credibility of the communicator, and the conditions under which the knowledge was received.

Attitudes change when:

1. A person receives new information from others or media - Cognitive change
2. Through direct experience with the attitude object - Affective change

Force a person to behave in a way different than normal - Behavioral change

DUAL ROUTES TO PERSUASION



Attitudes change, based on how a person perceives the communication and the communicator. Less committed people will change ideas more frequently. Attitude change also has to do with other personality characteristics such as susceptibility to persuasion, intelligence, readiness to accept change, etc. People are more likely to accept information if they feel the communicator has no intent to change our attitudes and opinions.

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly Influence

The outcomes of persuasion could be good, bad or ugly depending on the modes of tactics and contexts in which they are employed:

- Ugly influencers push and shove others into decisions. They use intimidation: “My way or no way.” Their style leaves others feeling powerless and resistant to innovation or change.
- Bad influencers might work hard to achieve legitimate and desirable goals, but lack the skills to influence effectively. “Do what I say and not what I do.” This person renders himself unbelievable, provides no model for what should or could be, and is unable to show others how change will benefit them. Their style causes people to feel they are being punished or cutting through red tape, all to please someone who appears ineffective.
- Good influencers get people to focus on an issue that is clearly and simply stated, finds out what the emotional value of the issue is to the people involved, and seeks solutions that satisfy the people who are needed to make the solution work. Their style is to “walk the talk” because what they say is congruent with what they do. Good influencers are effective because they create trust, which enables others to take risks. Their habit of communicating, informing and including others builds loyalty.

Symptoms of Hardening of the Attitudes

Anger and impatience, and challenges often mask:

- Fear
- Disappointment
- Embarrassment
- Afraid of losing: money, power, prestige, opportunity, effort, time, love

People feel personally affronted when someone:

- Ignores
- Judges
- Is sarcastic
- Lectures
- Is impatient
- Complains

People feel devalued when someone:

- Avoids accountability
- Delays action
- Over-explains
- Blames
- Uses technical language

Persuasiveness: A Self-Test

To what extent do you do the following things when you urgently want to persuade somebody of something and he/she appears resistant? (Consider your behavior both at work and in your private life.) Use the following scale:

0= never 1=sometimes 2=often or always

1. Repeat points____
2. Get louder____
3. Use more forceful language____
4. Talk at great length____
5. Become insulting____
6. Spell out the logic of your arguments____
7. Interrupt objections or explanations of the other person ____
8. Immediately argue against objections ____
9. Accuse the other person of improper motives for resisting or disagreeing ____
10. Ask loaded (rhetorical) questions (“Don’t you think...,” “Why would anybody...?” etc.)_
11. Pout, look hurt or exasperated, etc.____
12. Bring up past (related or vaguely related) incidents or non-compliance____
13. Empathize or sympathize (“I can see what you mean...,I’d feel the same if I were in your position.”) etc. ____
14. Listen to each point or objection____
15. Speak enthusiastically, but without “railroading” or overwhelming the listener ____
16. Watch your own body language to avoid signals of aggression or wimpiness
17. Be brief in making your points and stop often to check for concurrence with your listeners ____

18. Watch the other person's body language for signs of disagreement_____

19. Ask focused questions aimed at:

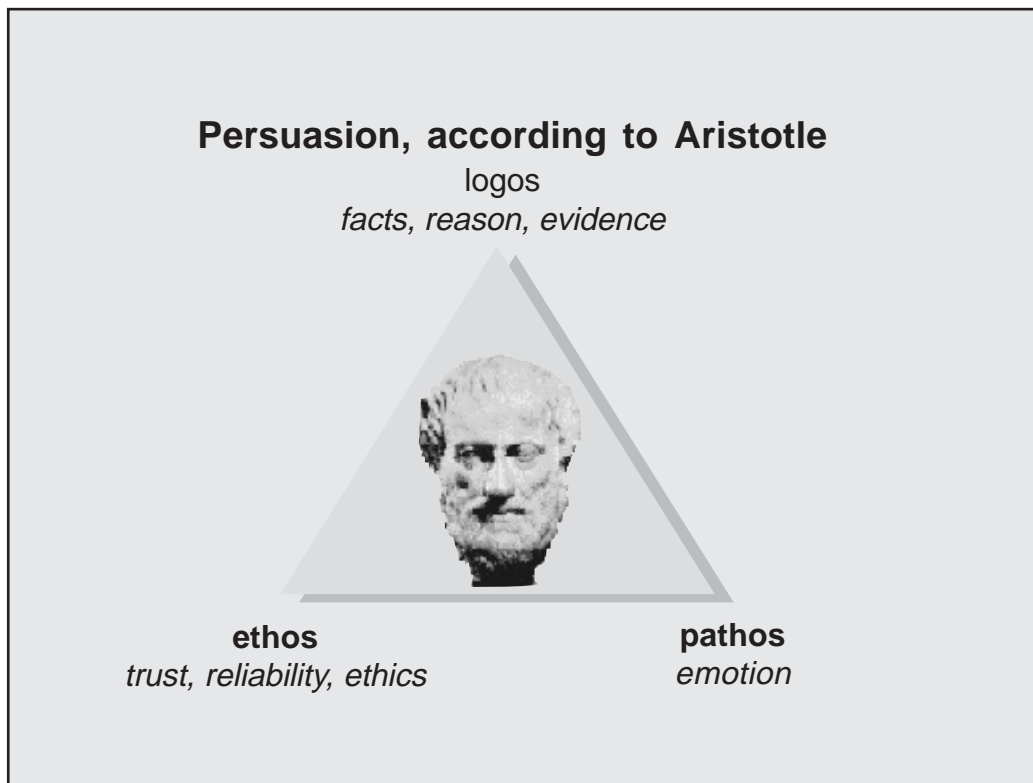
- unearthing all obstacles or objections, including those, the other person is trying to hold back for various reasons_____
- finding conditions under which agreement would be possible_____

Evaluation: If you have many ratings of 1 or 2 for items 1-12, you'll benefit greatly from working on your persuasion skills and attitudes. If your 1 and 2 ratings occur more in items 13-19, you have sound habits that should give you a good chance of persuading people to your point of view.

Source: All About Communication, International.

II. The Rhetoric of Persuasion

The goal of all communication is to persuade the audience. To some it comes easily, to others it is difficult to assimilate. According to the Greek Philosopher Aristotle, persuasion could be brought about by the speaker's use of three modes of "rhetoric" – **Ethos**, **Pathos** and **Logos**.



Ethos: Ethos (Greek for ‘character’) in rhetoric is the demonstration of a communicator’s character and/or credentials. The persuasion lies in the power and authority of the speaker. Aristotle considered it the most important attribute of any communication. The audience has to find the writer or speaker’s character credible and trustworthy — otherwise, anything said from that point will not be persuasive.

Mortimer Adler (“Art of Persuasion”) draws attention to the classic illustrations of the role of ethos in persuasion in the speeches made by Brutus and Mark Antony in Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*.

In *Julius Caesar*, Julius Caesar, the protagonist of the play, had been assassinated. The citizens of Rome, gathered near his dead body in the forum, grieving for their loss, angrily demand an accounting. Brutus, one of the conspirators who took part in the

assassination, mounted the rostrum to address them:

“Romans, countrymen and lovers! Hear me for my cause, and be silent, that you may hear: believe me for mine honour, and have respect to mine honour, that you may believe: censure me in your wisdom, and awake your senses, that you may the better judge. If there be any in this assembly, any dear friend of Caesar’s, to him I say, that Brutus’ love to Caesar was no less than his. If then that friend demand why Brutus rose against Caesar, this is my answer: Not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more. Had you rather Caesar were living and die all slaves, than that Caesar were dead, to live all free men?

As Caesar loved me, I weep for him; as he was fortunate, I rejoice at it; as he was valiant, I honor him: but, as he was ambitious, I slew him. There is tears for his love; joy for his fortune; honor for his valor; and death for his ambition. Who is here so base that would be a bondman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so rude that would not be a Roman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so vile that will not love his country? If any, speak; for him have I offended. I pause for a reply.”

The citizens replied in unison: “None, Brutus, none.” Then, satisfied that he had persuaded them that the assassination was justified, Brutus yielded his place to Mark Antony. Before Antony can speak, the populace, completely won — or sold — by Brutus, showered him with acclaim and proclaim the public honors they wish to bestow upon him in dead Caesar’s place. Brutus quietened them and implored them to listen to Antony, to whom he had granted permission to speak. Thus introduced, Antony addressed them:

“Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears; I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him. The evil that men do lives after them; The good is oft interred with their bones; So let it be with Caesar. The noble Brutus hath told you Caesar was ambitious; If it were so, it was a grievous fault, And grievously hath Caesar answered it. Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest — For Brutus is an

honorable man; So are they all, all honorable men — Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral. He was my friend, faithful and just to me: But Brutus says he was ambitious; And Brutus is an honorable man. He hath brought many captives home to Rome, Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill: Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?

When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept: Ambition should be made of sterner stuff: Yet Brutus says he was ambitious; And Brutus is an honorable man. You all did see that on the Lupercal I thrice presented him a kingly crown, which he did thrice refuse: was this ambition? Yet Brutus says he was ambitious; And, sure, he is an honorable man.

I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke, but here I am to speak what I do know. You all did love him once, not without cause: What cause withholds you then to mourn for him? O judgement! Thou art fled to brutish beasts, And men have lost their reason. Bear with me; my heart is in the coffin there with Caesar And I must pause till it come back to me.”

The short speech of Brutus mainly illustrates the role of *ethos*, as does the somewhat longer opening portion of Antony's address. Practical persuasion is always selling and compelling — whether it is in the market place or in the political forum, across the counter or in a legislative chamber, in a commercial transaction or in a campaign for public office, in the advertisement of a product or in an appeal for a public cause or a political candidate.

Pathos: Pathos (Greek for 'suffering' or 'experience') is an appeal based on emotion. The intent is to motivate people to take action. Without effective use of pathos, persuasion is unlikely to move people to action on any issue. Many rhetoricians, over the centuries, have considered pathos the strongest of the appeals, though this view of persuasion is rarely mentioned without a lament about the power of emotion to sway the mind.

Perhaps the most common way of conveying a pathetic appeal is through narrative or story, which can turn the abstractions of logic into something palpable and present. The values, beliefs, and understandings of the communicator are implicit in the story and conveyed imaginatively to the audience. Thus, pathos refers to both the emotional and the imaginative impact of the message on an audience. It is the power with which the communicator's message moves the audience to decision or action.

Rhetoric of pathos "makes its appearance fairly early in Antony's speech. Antony reminds people of all the things that Caesar did for Rome, things from which they benefited, and as he recounts these benefactions, he repeatedly asks them whether they can believe that Caesar displayed self-seeking ambition rather than dedication to the public good."

In fact, extensive use of pathos-driven speeches have been made by teachers, managers, and political leaders. Tim Bryce ("Art of Persuasion") quotes Franklin Roosevelt's "fireside chats" which gave moral strength to the American public during the Great Depression and World War II as an example.

However, the only problem with the rhetoric of pathos is that that it is not necessarily based on truth. Bryce illustrates the presence of falsity in pathos by citing the example of Adolph Hitler who was able to motivate the German people to develop a military state. Hitler's discourse was often laced with lies. Also, advertising often substitutes facade for substance and as such, the public should exercise "caveat emptor" (let the buyer beware). Apart from this, pathos is a great way to get one's point across.

Logos: Logos, or appeal through reasoning, was considered the most important appeal by Aristotle. It refers to the internal consistency of the message—the clarity of the claim, the logic of its reasons, and the effectiveness of its supporting evidence. The impact of logos on an audience is sometimes called the argument's logical appeal. Basically, a logos-based argument exhibits geometric characteristics, such as:

- If A = B
- And B=C
- Then A=C

However, Tim Bryce warns that the danger with rhetoric of logos is “developing a weak or convoluted argument which is perceived as either illogical or is difficult for the audience to grasp.” For example:

- Idolizers are people.
- Indians are people.
- Therefore, all Indians are idolizers.

Logos is vital to the credibility of one’s argument which should be carefully constructed with basic building blocks of common sense. So logical discourse is an effective way of communicating thoughts, but it is important to know the audience before presenting such ideas.

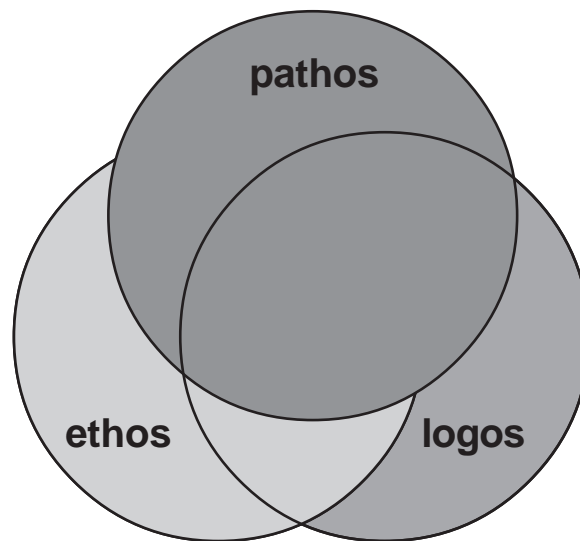
Adler says: “Reasons and arguments may be used to reinforce the drive of the passions, but reasons and arguments will have no force at all unless your listeners are already disposed emotionally to move in the direction that your reasons and arguments try to justify.” The concluding portion of Antony’s address is an illustration of effective blending of pathos and logos.

“If you have tears, prepare to shed them now. You all do know this mantle: I remember The first time ever Caesar put it on; ‘Twas on a summer’s evening, in his tent, That day he overcame the Nervii: Look, in this place ran Cassius’ dagger through: Through this the well-beloved Brutus stabb’d; And as he pluck’d his cursed steel away, Mark how the blood of Caesar follow’d it, As rushing out of doors, to be resolved If Brutus so unkindly knock’d or no; For Brutus, as you know, was Caesar’s angel: Judge, O you gods, how dearly Caesar loved him!

This was the most unkindest cut of all; For when the noble Caesar saw him stab, Ingratitude, more strong than traitors’ arms, Quite vanquish’d him: then burst his mighty heart; And, in his mantle muffling up his face, Even at the base

of Pompey's statue, Which all the while ran blood, great Caesar fell. O, what a fall was there, my countrymen! Then I, and you, and all of us fell down, Whilst bloody treason flourish'd over us."

Seldom will anyone depend on any component of rhetoric – ethos, pathos or logos. Separating the appeals is an artificial process. The three appeals work together in persuasion as illustrated in the diagram below:



This diagram represents a way of imagining how the three appeals can add to each other. However, just as using a single appeal is unlikely to persuade, neither is using all three in equal measure. How much *ethos*, *pathos* or *logos* is added into the mix depends on the speaker, the audience, the subject and the context.

III. Functions of & Routes to Persuasion

Functions of Persuasion

The function or purpose of persuasion will depend on how strongly the audience holds an attitude. In relation to the persuader's opinion, audience may have attitudes that fall anywhere on a continuum as below.

-2 ——— -1 ——— 0 ——— +1 ——— +2

-2 = strongly opposed, -1 = moderately opposed 0 = neutral or undecided +1 = moderately in favor, +2 = strongly in favor

The persuader needs to select a purpose that is realistic for his/her audience. **Five** general purposes of persuasion are listed below.

- **Create uncertainty.** When an audience is strongly opposed to the persuader's view, the best that may be possible for the persuader is to make the audience a little less certain they are right, a little less comfortable with their current attitude.
- **Reduce resistance.** If the audience is moderately opposed to the persuader's position but not closed-minded, the persuader may be able to reduce opposition to his/her view and move the audience toward neutrality. While not expecting a reversal of views this goal asks the audience to recognize the validity of opinions different from their own.
- **Change attitude.** If the audience is not committed, especially strongly, to any attitude on the topic this goal is appropriate.
- **Amplify attitude.** If the audience is already moderately favorable to the persuader's view, he/she can design a message which will reinforce current attitudes in the audience, help the audience resist appeals from opponents, and (perhaps) motivate the members of the audience to become strongly committed to his/her position.

- **Gain behavior.** When an audience strongly favors the persuader's position, the logical goal is to get them to act on their convictions.

Two Routes to Persuasion

There are two routes leading to persuasion: Central Route and Peripheral Route.

1. Central Route occurs when the attitude of an audience is changed because of thoughtful consideration of the message. The central route to persuasion is sought when the receiver has high-involvement information processing—whether the person ponders the content and logic of message. It involves a more logical, thought-out process and generates a number of cognitive responses to the communication. It leads to more enduring attitudinal change.

- If the argument is compelling → persuasion → accept job
- If not compelling → persuasion won't occur → stay with the job you have

2. Peripheral Route involves persuasion via incidental cues — e.g. speaker's attractiveness, expertise, pictures, sounds, etc. It tends to appeal to emotions rather than cognitions. It triggers temporary liking or acceptance and works best for audiences who are neither analytical nor involved with the issue. The peripheral route to persuasion is used when the receiver has low-involvement information processing — persuasion depends on non-message factors; for example, if the message-receiver thinks: "That speech has a lot of statistics in it, so I have positive feelings about the message."

Whether the person uses the central or peripheral route depends on a large variety of factors. Here, five factors have been mentioned:

a. An individual receiving the message (viewing/hearing the message) must be able to understand the message to use the central route. Comprehension of the message would include being familiar with all of the terms used in the message (for example, high tech terminology), being able to learn new concepts that are presented, and be-

ing able to relate experiences and knowledge gathered in the past to the new information being presented.

b. Another factor that affects the central route to persuasion is the personality of the audience member. Is the person willing to think about the message in detail? Some people enjoy engaging in complex cognitive activities, and other people are less willing or able to contemplate the message. And, is the information presented relevant enough to the people that they would engage in critical thinking?

For example, a person who does not wear contact lenses is not likely to waste his or her time thinking thoroughly about a message for contact lens solution and a person who does not want a new car might not think deeply about the merits of a new model of car.

c. The peripheral route is affected by whether or not the message falls into a person's latitude of acceptance or rejection (whether or not the person has already made up his or her mind on the subject).

For example, a public service message advocating a pro-choice view on the use of ultrasonography method primarily for determining the position and health of a foetus rather than sex-determination which leads to abortion of female fetuses/ or the Act that was passed in Goa regarding the HIVtest compulsorily to be taken by the bride and the bridegroom before marriage would not create an attitude shift; it also would not create a change in the views of the individual who already agrees with the pro-choice position. If message receivers are stable in their conceptions, they will not need to analyze the new messages thoroughly.

d. Other factors that can influence peripheral processing of an audience are basic cues, such as food or pain, in the message. For example, an individual with a headache might see an ad for Anacin (Zandu balm), and just go buy it without critically evaluating the message content. Message-recipients are also peripherally affected by the source of the message. Is the speaker attractive? Is the speaker credible?

e. In situations in which an audience uses the peripheral route in attitude change, it may not matter whether or not any actual information is provided.

Now having analysed the factors that leads one to take a central or peripheral route, let us find the “tactics” that are adopted in the process. And the following chapter unfolds the “tactics” and its complexities in detail.

IV. Persuasion

(Influencing & Defense Tactics)

A. Influencing Tactics

The following is Marwell & Schmitt's Taxonomy of 16 influence or persuasive tactics that people employ to change beliefs, attitudes or behaviors of people who they interact with.

1. Reward

- a. I'll reward you if you do it. "I'll throw in a pair of speakers if you buy it today." "Thanks! I'll make certain your manager knows how helpful you were."

2. Punishment

- a. I'll punish you if you don't do it. "If you don't buy it today, I won't be able to offer you this special incentive price again." "If I can't get it at that price tomorrow, then I'll take my business elsewhere."

3. Positive Expertise

- a. Speaking as an authority on the subject, I can tell you that rewards will occur if you do X, because of the nature of reality. "If you start working out at our gym regularly, you'll find that people are more attracted to you physically."

4. Negative Expertise

- a. Speaking as an authority on the subject, "I can tell you that punishments will occur if you do Y, because of the nature of reality". "If you don't buy it today, you may never get another chance - our stock is almost sold out."

5. Liking, Ingratiation

- a. To get the prospect into a good frame of mind, "Gosh you look nice today. I just love that hat you're wearing! Should we order dessert before we look over the contracts?"

6. Gifting, Pre-giving

- a. It means giving something as a gift, before requesting for compliance. The idea is that the target will feel the need to reciprocate later. “Here’s a little something we thought you’d like. Now about those contracts . . .”

7. Debt

- a. Recalling past favors like, “After all I’ve done for you! Come on—*this* time it’s *me* who needs the favor.”

8. Aversive Stimulation

- a. Continuous punishment and the cessation of punishment are contingent on compliance. “I’m going to play my classical music at full volume if you insist on playing your rock music at full volume. When you turn yours down, I’ll turn mine down.”

9. Moral Appeal

- a. This tactic entails finding common moral ground, and then using the moral commitments of a person to obtain compliance. “You believe that women should get equal pay for equal work, don’t you? You don’t believe that men are better than women, do you? Then you ought to sign this petition! It’s the right thing to do.”

10. Positive Self-feeling

- a. You’ll feel better if you X. “If you join our club today, you’ll feel better about yourself because you’ll know that you’re improving every day.”

11. Negative Self-feeling

- a. You’ll feel bad if you Y. “If you don’t return it to him and apologize, you’ll find it hard to live with yourself.”

12. Positive Altercasting

- a. Good people do X. “Smart people tend to sign up for the year in advance, because that’s how they can get the best weekly rate.”

13. Negative Altercasting

- a. Only a bad person would do Y. “You’re not like those bad sports that whine and complain when they lose a game.”

14. Altruism

- a. Do me a favor or “do-me-a-favor”. “I really need this photocopied right away, can you help me out?” (An extremely common influence tactic and is in wide use among friends and acquaintances).

15. Positive Esteem of Others

- a. Other people will think more highly of you if you X. “People respect a man who drives a Mercedes.”

16. Negative Esteem of Others

- a. Other people will think worse of you if you Y. “You don’t want people thinking that you’re a drug-head loser, do you?”

B. Defence/ Resistance Tactics

Resistance to persuasion refers to the processes through which people prevent persuasive messages from changing their attitudes. They include cognitive, motivational as well as affective factors. Listed below are some of the defense tactics:

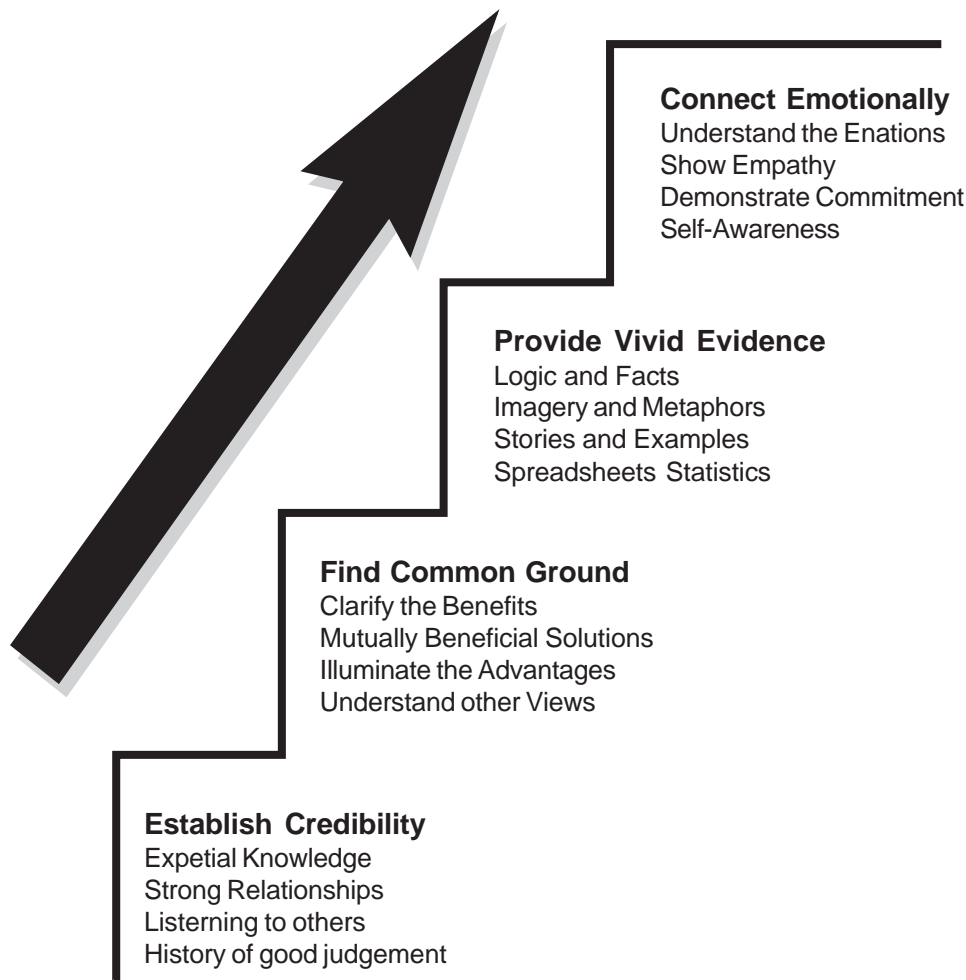
- **Deflect** - they could divert the issue to a lesser, side issue; or could “pass the buck” to a lower official who has no real power.
- **Delay** - your opponent could make you think they are addressing the issue, when nothing is really being done, for example, forming a “study commission” that has no real power.
- **Deny** - your opponent may say your claims and your proposed solutions, or both, are invalid.
- **Discount** - your opponent may try to minimize the importance of the problem or question your legitimacy as an agent of change.

- **Deceive** - your opponent may deliberately try to make you and your group feel like, they are taking meaningful action, when they in fact have not; they may never have had any real intention to consider your issues.
- **Divide** - your opponent may sow the seeds of dissent into your group's ranks, and use a "Divide and conquer" strategy.
- **Dulcify** - your opponent may try to appease or pacify your group through offers of jobs, services and other benefits.
- **Discredit** - your opponent may try to cast doubt on your group's motives and methods.
- **Destroy** - your opponents may try to de-stabilize or eliminate your group through legal, economic, or scare tactics.
- **Deal** - your opponent may decide to avoid conflict by offering a deal, working towards a mutually acceptable solution.

Surrender - the opposition may agree to your demands. If this is the case, you should remember that the victory is not complete until the opposition follows through with its promises.

V. Steps in Persuasion Process

Persuasion is an essential proficiency for all leaders. According to Professor Jay Conger, “effective persuasion involves four distinct and essential steps.” These are identified in the following diagram



1. Establish credibility - Credibility grows out of expertise and relationships. A persuader needs strong emotional characteristics and integrity. The need to listen carefully to other people’s suggestions and establish an environment in which they know their opinions are valued. They should prepare by collecting data and information that both support and contradict their arguments through – surveys, focus groups, interviews, sounding boards with colleagues/experts and personal hunches.

Credibility factors - Expertise

- Well informed
- Studies issues thoroughly
- Clearheaded/reasonable in beliefs
- Provides reasons/evidence in response to objections
- Avoids foolish/exaggerated opinions
 - Is own person/not easily misled
- Has specialized training/experience
 - **Credibility Factors: Relationship**
 - What's said matches what's done
 - Truthful/admits mistakes
- Acts out of conviction, not expediency/opportunism
 - Concerned for others rather than self
 - Emotionally stable
- Not intimidating, domineering, submissive, lacking conviction
- Has emotional/personal stake, not "just business"

2. Framing common goal with colleagues- Effective persuader must be adept at describing the position in terms that illuminate the person's point advantages that he/she is trying to persuade. It is a process of identifying shared benefits. This requires conversations to collect essential information by asking thoughtful questions. This process will often prompt to alter the initial argument or include compromises.

Peter Sandman identifies four kinds of colleagues or public with varying levels of 'involvement' with a persuader's issue of interest that managers should learn to cope:

- **Fanatics:** Persuader's issue is their main interest aside from job and family. They can not turn their interests.
- **Browsers:** Persuader's issue is on their 'worry list', but way at the bottom.
- **Attentive:** Persuader's issue is on his/her top-10 list.
- **Inattentive:** They do not know and they do not want to know.

3. Reinforce positions with vivid language and compelling evidence:

Persuasion requires presentation of evidence — strong data in multiple forms (stories, graphs, images, metaphors and examples). Persuaders need to make positions come alive by using vivid language that complements graphics.

In most cases, a rock-solid argument:

- Is logical and consistent with facts and experience
- Favorably addresses your audience's interests
- Eliminates or neutralizes competing alternatives
- Recognizes and deals with office politics
- Receives endorsements from objective, authoritative third parties

4. Connecting emotionally with audiences: Good persuaders are aware of primacy of emotions and are responsive to them. They know how to maintain a balance between professionalism and their own emotional commitment to the position they are advocating. Their connection to their audience demonstrates both intellectual and emotional commitment to their position. Successful persuaders cultivate an accurate sense of their audience's emotional state, and they adjust their arguments accordingly. Whatever their position, they must match their emotional fervour to their audience's ability to receive their message.

Proven Approaches for Strengthening Emotional Connection

- Go for the heart of the audience
- Use highly descriptive and involving stories and illustrations
- Use visuals to illustrate your points
- Show how the issue has touched you personally

The persuasion process is after all governed by principles that are dealt with in the next chapter and following is a chart summarizing the persuasion process.

Persuasion Process

Establish Credibility

Expertise/Knowledge

Strong Relationships

Listening to others

History of good judgment

Find Common Ground

Clarify the Benefits

Mutually Beneficial Solutions

Illuminate the Advantages

Understand Other Views

Provide Vivid Evidence

Logic and Facts

Imagery and Metaphors

Stories and Examples

Spreadsheets/Statistics

Connect Emotionally

Understand the Emotions

Show Empathy

Demonstrate Commitment

Self-Awareness

VI. Governing Principles of Persuasion

An important attribute of management is the ability to persuade others to accept ideas and follow certain courses of action. Where senior managers give directions, intermediaries may be required to influence the behavior, thought process and actions of others in order to comply with that direction. A manager's level of success or failure may be determined by his/her ability to influence people within his/her own organization, as well as those operating in other organizations.

The six principles of influence that are used everywhere in society are discussed by Dr. Robert Cialdini. While these are common principles that can be effective, ethical, and lasting, they can also be used unethically, as by those leading totalist groups. Compliance is behaviour that occurs only because it is requested, that is, getting what one asks for. **The Six Principles of Reciprocity** are:

1. Reciprocity (give and take)

a. **Obligation** People are programmed from childhood to pay back those who give them something. If someone gives a present for their birthday, they have to give that person a gift for his birthday. If someone sends a Christmas card, people feel that they must send them one. Those who only take are called moochers, ingrates, parasites.

For example, the Hare Krishna Societies are mostly funded by contributions. They give something like a book or flower, and then ask for money. People buy their way out of the obligation. Some try to give back the flower, or throw it on the ground in order to break freeb. **Reciprocation of concessions**

A person will start by asking for something very high, and then come down. Compliance is very high in this situation.

2. Scarcity (if I can't have it, I want it)

Something held in abundance is much less highly valued than something is scarce. Deceptive groups use this, for example, by saying that this is the only way to salvation.

To a slightly less degree this is also done when the group claims to be the “best,” the “closest to the will of God,” “God’s Green Berets,” the “fastest path to enlightenment,” etc.

a. Exclusivity of information

Exclusive information is more prized, and more readily believed. A test of scarcity showed that scarcity of commodities produced increased revenue, but the exclusivity of the information about a future shortage produced a far greater increase in revenue. It should be noted that the information must be true to maintain the relationship of trust.

b. Rivalry for scarce items

Scarcity can be manipulated, especially by creating rivalry for it. In cults this can apply to such things as leadership positions, praise from the leader and other special favors.

3. AUTHORITY (if an expert says it, it must be true)

People automatically believe the expert or follow those in authority. This is true even if the person is not and cannot be an authority, but is only perceived as such. They react automatically, without thinking, because an “authority” says so. The most credible authorities are both knowledgeable and trustworthy. **TRUST**

One must be impartial, unbiased and honest. A shortcut to gaining trust is to say something mildly contradictory to one’s own position. Then one will be seen as impartial, willing to acknowledge the negative side of one’s own position, and one will thus establish credibility.

b. MISPLACED TRUST

Trust can be established either by “smuggling” or by being honest and providing the truth.

4. **CONSISTENCY (I can't back out now, nor do I need to)**

a. **Obtain a commitment**

People become more certain after they invest in something—or make a decision.

b. **Start small and build**

Start by getting a person to make a very small commitment, and then ask for increasingly larger requests. The build-up can be slow, subtle and insidious. Once the commitment is made, it is very hard to change.

5. **CONSENSUS (everyone is doing it)**

a. **The actions of many others**

People often look to see what other people are doing before they act. In Singapore, a bus strike caused a run on a bank and its closure because the people outside the bank waiting for the bus created the impression of a problem with the bank.

b. **The actions of similar others**

“The more one sees others like him/her doing something, the more one does what he/she does”

c. **Rejection of Original Referent Group**

If the original referent group is rejected, a person is susceptible to the coercion and persuasion of the new group. This is one of techniques used by cults: reject normal society, parents, and friends and substitute the cult.

6. **LIKING (positive connections create liking)**

a. **Similarities**

A person likes people who are like himself/herself.

b. Compliments, praise

People like to be complimented by others, whether the compliment is true or false.

c. Cooperative efforts

Bonds form through cooperative efforts, whether natural and legitimate or unnatural and manipulative.

These principles will be seen in any influence-setting situation. It is crucial to take a psychological step back, away from the situation to ask oneself, “Why do I feel this obligation to say yes to this person’s request [or to believe what this person is telling me]?” Is a person just feeling obligated towards the other because the other person gave him something; or because he or she seems to be an “authority”; or because the person claims to have exclusive truth. Is it because he or she is “a nice person”; or because all his friends signed up; or because one is already agreed to an earlier request? Are these reasons, by themselves, sufficient to warrant a person going ahead and saying yes? One has to make sure that there are legitimate reasons for going forward.

According to Cialdini, when it comes to utilizing the principles of persuasion, there are three different categories under which people fall - Bunglers, Smugglers, and Sleuths.

The “**Bungler**” is the individual who doesn’t understand how to use the most powerful principles of influence and, consequently, fumbles away opportunities for beneficial change.

The “**Smuggler**” is the person who understands these principles of influence perfectly well, but who imports them illicitly into situations where they don’t naturally exist, thereby producing gain that is one-sided and temporary.

The “**Sleuth**” on the other hand, uncovers the power principles that naturally reside in the influence situation and brings them to the surface to the long-term advantage of both parties

Cialdini says, it is only through the Sleuth’s approach that an influence agent or persuader can bring about the desired change in others that is both effective and ethical.

<p>The Bungler Doesn’t know the principles Fumbles away opportunities</p> <p>The Smuggler Knows the principles but misuses them Causes loss through dishonesty</p> <p>The Sleuth Knows and looks for natural principles at work Alerts the other party Informs him or her into “yes”</p>
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Four Ways to Not to Persuade

1. **Don’t attempt an up-front hard sell.** Providing a strong position at the start of a persuasion effort gives potential opponents something to fight against. One should present one’s position with finesse.
2. **Don’t see compromise as surrender.** People want to see the persuader is flexible enough to respond to their concerns. Compromises can often lead to better, more sustainable shared solutions.
3. **Don’t think the secret to persuasion lies in presenting great arguments.** Arguments, per se, are only one part of the equation. Other factors that make arguments compelling are the persuader’s credibility, her ability to create a mutually beneficial frame for a position, connect to the right emotional level with an audience, and communicate through vivid language.
4. **Don’t assume persuasion is a one-shot effort.** Persuasion involves listening, testing a position, reframing it in a way that reflects input from the group, re-testing, reframing incorporating compromises and trying again.

Jay Conger

VI. Overview of Persuasion Theories

Persuasion is a complex phenomenon involving interplay of different factors and is influenced by diverse communication modes and contexts. There are several theories, advocated by communication experts, based on extensive research and experience which attempt to provide insights into the whole process of persuasion. Presented below is an overview of some of the principal theories of persuasion.

1. Social Judgement Theory: This theory of persuasion holds that to persuade someone best, one must understand well his or her present views on the subject. There are five principles of social judgment theory:

- People have categories of judgment by which they evaluate persuasive positions.
- When people receive persuasive information, they locate it within their categories of judgment.
- The level of ego involvement affects the size of latitudes. (The latitude of acceptance is the range of opinions with which people agree. The latitude of rejection is the range of opinions with which people disagree. The latitude of non-committal is measured by the questions for which people have no opinion.) For example, ego involvement increases the latitude of rejection. When closely involved with an issue, people recognize a broader range of opinions on the issue with which they disagree.
- People tend to distort incoming information to fit their categories of judgment.
- Small to moderate discrepancies between anchor positions and the one advocated will cause people to change; large discrepancies will not. People typically can not be moved far from their anchor position or far outside their areas of acceptance or rejection. Ambiguous messages thus work best.

According to this theory, influence is most likely to occur under certain conditions. Communicators must work within the latitude of acceptance or at least the latitude of

non-commitment for success. People will neither process nor respond in a negative way to information that occurs within their latitude of rejection. Therefore, direct attacks are doomed to failure according to this theory.

2. Inoculation Theory: Inoculation theory posits that through cognitive processing, the likelihood of resistance to attitude change can be enhanced by applying inoculation treatments containing threat components that motivate individuals to generate counter arguments. The motivation for individuals' counter arguing is induced by threats to their freedom of attitudinal discretion.

Inoculation works because it exposes people to arguments, making them think about and rehearse opposing arguments. When they hear the arguments again, even stronger versions, they pay less attention to them, especially if they believe their opposing argument is stronger.

There are **three stages** to inoculation:

- Warning: Tell the person that it is about to happen so they are forced to get ready.
- Weak attack: Attack them, but weakly so they can easily resist.
- Active defending: The persons must actively defend themselves (and find it relatively easy to do so).

Inoculation theory has explanatory power in that it provides credible explanations for the concepts. This theory has predictive power, and has relative simplicity. Inoculation theory is testable and can therefore be proved false, and is internally consistent.

3. Balance Theory: Balance theory states that when tensions arise between or inside people, they attempt to reduce these tensions through self-persuasion or trying to persuade others. A 'motivational theory' of attitude change, 'Balance Theory' conceptualizes the consistency motive as a drive toward psychological balance. It proposes that "sentiment" or liking relationships are balanced if the 'affect valence' in a system multiplies out to a positive result.

For example: a person who likes another person will be balanced by the same valence attitude on behalf of the other.

Symbolically, when $P (+) > O$ and $P < (+) O$ the result is psychological balance.

This can be extended to objects (X) as well, thus introducing triadic relationships.

If a person P likes object X but dislikes other person O, what does P feel upon learning that O created X? This is symbolized as such:

- $P (+) > X$
- $P (-) > O$
- $O (+) > X$

Multiplying the signs shows that the person will perceive imbalance (a negative multiplicative product) in this relationship, and will be motivated to correct the imbalance somehow. The person can either-

- Decide that O isn't so bad after all,
- Decide that X isn't as great as originally thought to be, or
- Conclude that O couldn't really have made X.

Any of these will result in psychological balance, thus resolving the dilemma and satisfying the drive. (Person P could also avoid object X and other person O entirely, lessening the stress created by psychological imbalance.)

4. Source Credibility Theory: The source credibility theory postulates that people are more likely to be persuaded when the source presents itself as credible. The theory is broken down into three models that can be used to apply the theory. These three models are: the factor model, the functional model, and the constructivist model.

The factor model - a covering laws? approach - helps determine to what extent the receiver judges the source as credible.

The functional model - a covering laws approach - views credibility as the degree to which a source satisfies a receiver's individual needs.

The constructivist model - a human action approach - analyzes what the receiver does with the source's proposal.

The findings of the Source Credibility of Persuasive Communication study by Yale University are presented schematically below:

Who (source of communication):

- The speaker should be credible and attractive to the audience.

Says what (how)(nature of communication):

- Messages should not appear to be designed to persuade.
- Present two-sided arguments (refuting the 'wrong' argument, of course).
- If two people are speaking one after the other, it is best to go first (primacy effect).
- If two people are speaking with a delay between them, it is best to go last (recency effect).

To whom (the nature of the audience)

- Distract them during the persuasion
- Lower intelligence and moderate self-esteem helps.
- The best age range is 18-25.

While the relationship between source credibility and attitudinal change seems to be self evident, it is interesting to note that many studies have also revealed no/ and relatively low level of relationship between source credibility and attitudinal change.

5. Cognitive Dissonance: The cognitive dissonance theory gives a basic explanation for the way humans react when they act outside of their beliefs. This theory posits that individuals often have conflicting beliefs with actions they take, or other beliefs they have. This dissonance creates a tension and tension reduction is automatically sought

by changing their evaluations by some degree. Dissonance increases due to the following:

- The importance of the subject
- How strongly the dissonant thoughts conflict
- People's inability to rationalize and explain away the conflict

Dissonance increases with the importance and impact of the decision, along with the difficulty of reversing it. Discomfort about making the wrong choice of car is bigger than when choosing a lamp.

Dissonance is often strong when people believe something about themselves, but do something against that belief. If they believe that they are good but do something bad, the discomfort they feel as a result is cognitive dissonance.

Cognitive dissonance is central to many forms of persuasion to change beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviors. The tension can be injected suddenly or allowed to build up over time. People can be moved in many small jumps or one large one.

Cognitive dissonance is a very powerful motivator which will often lead to change one or other of the conflicting beliefs or actions. To release the tension a person can take one of three actions:

- Change his/her behavior.
- Justify his/her behavior by changing the conflicting cognition.
- Justify his/her behavior by adding new cognitions.

Dissonance is most powerful when it is about our self-image. Feelings of foolishness, immorality and so on (including internal projections during decision-making) are dissonance in action.

If an action has been completed and cannot be undone, then the after-the-fact dissonance compels one to change one's beliefs. If beliefs are moved, then the dissonance appears during decision-making, forcing one to take actions one would not have taken before.

Cognitive dissonance appears in virtually all evaluations and decisions and is the central mechanism by which a person experiences new differences in the world. When one sees other people behave differently to one's images of them, when one holds any conflicting thoughts, one experiences dissonance.

6. Reinforcement Theory: Attitude changes result from an opinion change produced through reinforcement in areas such as attention, comprehension and acceptance. Attention, comprehension and acceptance are considered by the audience before a new opinion is adopted. The message must be drawing attention and easily understood. More importantly, it must be presented in a way that reinforces the idea's validity.

Here is an example of how reinforcement theory operates. A public relations practitioner is conducting a week-long campaign for "Organ Donation Awareness Week". S/he conducts a pre-campaign phone survey providing positive reinforcement for pro-organ donation answers for two groups and no reinforcement for the other two groups. All groups have an opposing position to organ donation.

One group from each, reinforcement and no reinforcement, are in the target area of the campaign. According to Reinforcement Theory, the people in the areas that received the reinforcement and the campaign will have the greatest change in attitude toward organ donation. The next should be the group that received the reinforcement without the campaign closely followed by those who received the campaign but not the reinforcement. The group with the least amount of attitudinal change would be those who reached no reinforcement and did not receive the campaign.

7. Information Manipulation Theory: A communicator overtly or covertly violates one of the conversational maxims of quantity, quality, relation and manner with the intention of deceiving his/her audience.

- 'Quantity' refers to a person's expectations that a conversation will be as informative as possible. We do not expect information to be left out.
- 'Quality' refers to a person's expectation of being presented with information that is truthful and complete.

- 'Relation' illustrates the expectation of contributing relevant information to a conversation.
- 'Manner' relates to how things are said rather than what is said.

For example, the private secretary turns up late to the office. How will he/she answer his boss for turning up late?

- Quantity: "I am so sorry Sir; I was caught up in a traffic jam caused by political rally."
- Quality: "I overslept. Because, I had forgotten to pay the electric bill, power got cut off and my alarm clock didn't go off." "
- Relation: "I've just had a really bad week. My mom was in the hospital and was discharged today morning only."
- Manner: (said rolling eyes and looking disgusted): "I really started on time, but was caught up in the traffic jam"

Information Manipulation Theory provides an explanation for and the multiple ways in which deception can occur. However, it does not predict what maxims a person may only violate that the violation will occur within the certain realm of possibilities provided.

8. Rank's Model: Rank's model of persuasion states that persuaders use two major strategies to achieve their goals. These strategies are nicely set into two main schemes known as (1) **intensify**, and (2) **downplay**.

The basic premise of the model is that people will either intensify or downplay certain aspects of their own product, candidate, or ideology, or those of their receiver's. The persuaders will do this in one of four methods.

- Intensify their strong points.
- Intensify the weak points of the opposition.
- Downplay their weak points.
- Downplay the strong points of the opposition.

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VIII. Persuasion Techniques

One cannot be an effective manager if one fails to influence others – especially the colleagues and subordinates. Scott Williams (“Leader Letters”) says: “...building power bases should not be a manager’s primary focus, but managers have to have at least some form of power to be able to do their jobs. The same principle applies to influence (which is the exercise of power); influencing others does not prove that a manager is effective, but failure to influence others is often the cause of managerial ineffectiveness.”

Choosing the right influence strategy is the key to managing effectively. Scott Williams advocates the three following techniques of persuasion and the choice of the specific techniques by managers depend on their values, priorities and contextual demands.

1. Reason

When feasible, the best way to influence others is by reason. Managers who primarily use reason to influence others garner more respect and support in their organizations. Using reason to influence others simply means explaining to them why it is important or helpful for them to do what they are being asked to do and relying on their sense of responsibility and conscientiousness to comply. It’s possible/appropriate to use reason when the relationship with the other party is one of mutual trust and respect, and there is sufficient time to explain the request. Reason also requires some degree of common values and priorities between the parties. If someone is requested to do something because it would “save the organization’s money” or “make the client happy,” that person will only be motivated to comply with the request to the extent that he/she cares about those outcomes.

• Using Reason

- Again, reason is the best form of influence for most situations. When presenting the reasons why someone is asked to comply with a request or accept a suggestion, managers should consider how their request or suggestion pertains to the personal values of the person they are trying to

influence. In the ideal situation, the person they are trying to influence has internalized the organization's values. If so, anything they ask him/her to do that is consistent with the organization's values will be something he/she personally wants to do.

- **Resisting Reason**

- **Present alternative reasoning.** When someone is trying to use reason to get us to do something, people are likely to respond in one of two ways: (1) cooperate because the reasoning is sound, or (2) tactfully explain why they do not think it would be wise for them to cooperate. In other words, reason can be resisted with counter-reasoning. People may need to call attention to the bigger picture or the flaw in the logic.
- **Defend your rights.** Some people become slaves to their desire to be helpful to others. Being cooperative and a "team player" is great, but they should remember that they have rights. They should not sacrifice their priorities in order to help others. They have a right not to help others who are becoming overly dependent on their help. They have a right to use this free time to pursue innovative projects. They have a right to work a reasonable number of hours. Sometimes, they have to assertively stand up for their rights. In pop-psych terms, "people pleasers" need to develop "boundaries."
- **Firmly refuse.** Sometimes people are a little overzealous in their efforts to use reason to influence us. They have ideas to "sell" to us. And, like all good salespeople, those zealots do not give up when we voice our objections - they try to answer them. As long as they continue to present counter-reasoning, the debate will continue. Even in relationships that they would like to keep harmonious, sometimes they need to firmly refuse a request and firmly refuse to discuss it further.

2. Exchange

Exchange influence techniques include all the ways to get people to do things by engaging in some sort of trade. Putting an incentive on a certain goal and offering a bonus for a particular assignment are examples of exchange techniques. Ingratiation is a more subtle and potentially manipulative way to use an exchange to influence others. Ingratiation is giving gifts or performing favours to foster a sense of indebtedness in another party. Later, when that party is wanted to do something again, that sense of indebtedness can either consciously or unconsciously influence their decision.

Exchange works even when the party managers are trying to influence does not have the same values and priorities that they do. Exchange techniques answer the “What’s in it for me?” question. Of course, the problem is that managers have to give something to the other party, such as some form of reward or incentive. Furthermore, once they start using incentives to get compliance, people will expect them to offer them inducements when they try to influence them in the future. A drawback specific to the ingratiation strategy is that it can actually cause the opposite of the intended effect if the plan becomes obvious, because people resent being manipulated.

- **Using Exchange**

- **Favors or incentives** - To overtly influence others with exchange, managers must clearly explain exactly what they have to offer and what they want to receive in return. Any ambiguity in the offer or request could cause the other party to feel cheated later. It can also help to emphasize “it’s a one time offer” so that the party they are trying to influence will not always expect them to dangle a carrot in front of them when they want their help.

Ingratiation - To influence others using ingratiation, managers have to be subtle. Overt attempts at ingratiating themselves with others often backfire because people resent being manipulated. They can ingratiate themselves with others by spontaneously doing

favours for them or giving them gifts. Even friendship and compliments can be offered for the purpose of ingratiation. Colloquial terms for this are “brown nosing” and “sucking up.”

- **Resisting Exchange**

- **Scrutinize gifts and favors.** Managers should consider the motives of people who give them gifts and do favours for them. Not that gifts and favors are always manipulative, but they should decline gifts from people who may be using them to bias their decision-making.
- **Reject manipulative bargaining tactics.** When managers notice that a party they are bargaining with is using manipulative tactics such as rushing them into an agreement or trying to change terms they have already agreed upon, they should call attention to the manipulation, explain why they do not want to bargain that way, and suggest a different approach to bargaining.
- **Stop bargaining.** If managers do not approve of someone’s bargaining style, they can refuse to bargain with him or her. Unless they are willing to walk away from negotiations, the other party has no leverage over them.

3. Pressure

Pressure influence techniques involve coercion or intimidation. People comply with these techniques to avoid the negative consequences of not doing so. Sometimes those negative consequences are clearly stated (i.e., coercion), other times they’re implied (i.e., intimidation). Some examples of the range of negative consequences that managers could use include - quitting and leaving someone in a bind, shouting at someone, requiring overtime, or embarrassing them publicly. The advantage of pressure is that it can get quick compliance, but that is about all that can be said in defense of pressure. Pressure tends to create insecurity, resentment, and distrust. It should be used as a last resort.

- **Using Pressure**

- To use pressure effectively, managers must use it sparingly. Furthermore, they must stay within organizational policies and the bounds of what is reasonable. For instance, it is reasonable to threaten to suspend a staff member who repeatedly violates office norms, but unreasonable to threaten to terminate someone the first time he or she misses a meeting. Finally, they have to follow through with the consequences if they do not gain compliance. If they do not deliver the consequences, they will have less credibility when using coercion in the future.

- **Resisting Pressure**

- **Build the power base.** In the famous words of British historian, Lord Acton, “Power corrupts. Absolute power corrupts absolutely.” Perhaps he exaggerated, but most of the managers have been in situations where people who have had a lot of power over them have treated them in insensitive and selfish ways. By building their own power base, they reduce the chances of a powerful person pressuring them.

In summary, reason, exchange, and pressure are used to influence others in organizations. Whenever managers can use the reason strategy to influence others, they probably should. Exchange can also be effective, and it is particularly useful when parties have different values and priorities. Pressure can be effective too, but it should be practiced with utmost care.

There are also the Cognitive Dissonance Techniques that managers could use for persuasion. Cognitive dissonance is based on two assumptions:

- Contradictions are uncomfortable.
- Because they're uncomfortable, contradictions motivate change.

The Cognitive Dissonance Techniques include:

- **“ben franklin effect”** - enemies who do you one favor will want to do more
- **hazing** - get people to like their situation by making them suffer to get there
- **counterattitudinal advocacy** - when we state opinions we don't believe, we start to believe them
- **labeling** - get people to act a certain way by talking to them as if they already were that way

1. Ben Franklin Effect

The “Ben Franklin Effect” is a great example of cognitive dissonance theory at work. Ben’s political opponent originally had antagonistic views toward Ben. However, Ben then very politely asked him for a small favor. For whatever reason — perhaps the refinement of Ben’s letter or the smallness of Ben’s favor — the opponent obliged. After obliging, the opponent feels cognitive dissonance. Ben is his enemy, and yet, he just did his enemy a favor. He just contradicted himself. Logical contradictions are discomforting. How can he get rid of this contradiction? There are two ways:

1. take back book (change behavior so it aligns with original attitudes about Ben)
2. decide Ben is actually good (change attitudes about Ben so they align with new behavior)

It follows that it is very easy to change one’s attitude to relieve dissonance, but very difficult to change one’s behavior. Thus, the political opponent becomes Ben’s friend, and in fact, is even more willing to do more favors for Ben, to further relieve any evidence of contradiction between his thoughts and his actions.

In essence, “Ben Franklin Effect” is converting an enemy into a friend, by asking ones enemy for a small favor. If the enemy obliges, he or she will be even more willing to do more favors.

2 Hazing Technique

Hazing is getting people to like their situation by making them suffer to get there. Approval of a situation is greatly amplified if people have spent lots of effort to reach that situation. Sometimes an effortful path can be purposely planned in the interest of manipulating attitude.

The following are some examples of hazing divided into three categories: subtle, harassment, and violent. It is impossible to list all possible hazing behaviors because many are context-specific. While this is not an all-inclusive list, it provides some common examples of hazing traditions.

A. Subtle Hazing: It, “subtle hazing”, is termed so, because these types of hazing are often taken-for-granted or accepted as “harmless” or meaningless. Subtle hazing typically involves activities or attitudes that breach reasonable standards of mutual respect and place people on the receiving end of ridicule, embarrassment, and/or humiliation tactics.

Some Examples:

- Deception
- Assigning demerits
- Silence periods with implied threats for violation
- Deprivation of privileges granted to other members
- Requiring new members/rookies to perform duties not assigned to other members
- Socially isolating new members/rookies
- Name calling
- Expecting certain items to always be in one’s possession

B. Harassment Hazing: Behaviours that can cause emotional anguish or physical discomfort in order to feel like part of the group are called harassment hazing. Harassment hazing confuses, frustrates, and causes undue stress for people.

Some Examples:

- Verbal abuse
- Threats or implied threats
- Sleep deprivation
- Be expected to harass others

Obviously, hazing is a negative persuasion tactic and is least preferred by those people-oriented managers who believe in good interpersonal relationships

3 Labelling

Labelling is getting people to act a certain way by talking to them as if they already were that way. Labelling could be interpreted as a self-fulfilling prophecy effect. The difference is that with labelling, one is consciously constructing artificial expectations of a person. However, that person does not know it is artificial, so it's all the same to him or her.

This strategy involves assigning a trait, attitude, belief, or other label to a target individual and then making a request of that individual that is consistent with that label. In an effective demonstration of this strategy, researchers Alice Tybout and Richard Yelch (1980) showed how the labeling technique could be used to increase the likelihood that individuals would vote on Election Day. They interviewed a large number of prospective voters, and randomly told half of them that based on their responses, they could be characterized as “above-average citizens likely to vote and participate in political events.” The other half of the interviewees were informed that they could be characterized as about average in terms of these interests, beliefs, and behaviors. Those respondents given the label as being a good citizen and as having a high likelihood of voting not only came to see themselves as better citizens than those labeled as average, but they also were more likely to vote in an election held one week later.

One can use this technique in the organizational settings in several ways. For example, if a colleague or subordinate seems to be having difficulty with a project and is losing confidence in himself or herself, a manager can remind that person how intelligent and hardworking and persevering he or she is, and can even point out examples of past behaviors reflective of these traits.

One must remember that as tempting as it might be to move over to the Dark Side with this strategy, this technique, like all other influence strategies, should be used only ethically –that is, only when the trait, attitude, belief, or other label accurately reflects the target individual's disposition. Of course one would not even think of using this strategy in an unethical manner.

Assertion

An assertion is an enthusiastic or energetic statement presented as a fact, although it is not necessarily true. They often imply that the statement requires no explanation or back up, but that it should merely be accepted without question. Any time a manager states that his opinion is the best without providing evidence for this, he or she is using an assertion. The other person, ideally, should simply agree to the statement without searching for additional information or reasoning.

The following are other additional persuasion techniques one is likely to encounter in organizational settings:

Card Stacking

It involves only presenting information that is positive to an idea or proposal and omitting information contrary to it. Card stacking is used in almost all forms of persuasion, and is extremely effective in convincing the public. Although the majority of information presented by the card stacking approach is true, it is dangerous because it omits important information. The best way to deal with card stacking is to get more information.

Pinpointing the Enemy

This is an attempt to simplify a complex situation by presenting one specific group or person as the enemy. Although there may be other factors involved, the subject is urged to simply view the situation in terms of clear-cut right and wrong.

Plain Folks

The plain folks device is an attempt to convince the public that his/her views reflect those of the common person and that they are also working for the benefit of the common person. The persuader will often attempt to use the accent of a specific audience as well as using specific idioms or jokes. Also, the persuader, especially during speeches, may attempt to increase the illusion through imperfect pronunciation, stuttering, and a more limited vocabulary. Errors such as these help add to the impression of sincerity and spontaneity.

Simplification (Stereotyping)

Simplification is similar to pinpointing the enemy, in that it often reduces a complex situation to a clear-cut choice involving good and evil. This technique is often useful in swaying uneducated audiences. When faced with simplification, it is often useful to examine other factors and pieces of the proposal or idea.

Transfer

It is an attempt to make a person view another item, to link the two in his/her mind. Although this technique is often used to transfer negative feelings from one object to another, it can also be used in positive ways. By linking an item to something the person respects or enjoys, positive feelings can be generated for it. However, in organizations, transfer is most often used to transfer blame or bad feelings

IX. Seven Levers to Change People's Minds

- What does it take to change one's mind?
- How do we change our minds?
- What happens when we change our minds?

Howard Gardner ("Changing Minds: The Art and Science of Changing Our Own and Other People's Minds") says the first step toward changing a person's mind is no surprise: "Know thine audience." The tactics managers use to influence their senior colleagues should be different from those he/she uses to persuade a large group of employees. Age is another factor to consider. Gardner says, "As you age, the neural networks become like a road that has been driven down over and over again. There are deep ruts."

Beliefs also become deeply ingrained and reinforced over time; the longer people believe something, the better they get at deflecting counterarguments.

Gardner has identified seven factors—he calls them levers—that are effective in influencing a person to change his mind:

1. **Reason:** Reasoning involves logical outlining the pros and cons of a decision.
 - The use of reason figures heavily in matters of belief
 - Especially useful for educated people
 - Uses rational approach in identifying and weighing relevant factors
 - Often involves sheer logic, use of analogies etc.,
 - Pareto's 80/20 principle holds relevance (According to Pareto Principle one can in general accomplish most (perhaps up to 80%) with a relatively modest amount of effort (perhaps up 20%))
2. **Research:** It involves presenting data and relevant cases to support the argument.

- Useful especially for educated people with scientific temperament
- Can proceed in systematic manner – even with statistics – to verify trends
- 80/20 principle will guide behavior and thought

3. Resonance: It involves using ones likeability and emotional appeal to win support for ones argument.

- A view, idea or perspective resonates if it feels right.
- Resonance appeals to the affective component of the human brain – not cognitive component
- Fit occurs at the subconscious level, and may conflict with reason
- Fit occurs if one feels ‘relation’ to the mind changer (i.e., ‘reliable’, ‘respects’ etc.)
- 80/20 fully applies here

4. Representational Re-descriptions: It is making a point in many different ways - using humour, stories and pictures; acting out a scenario.

- A change of mind becomes convincing if it lends itself to representation in different forms
- Especially true, if forms reinforce each other
- 80/20 principle is less applicable here

5. Resources and Rewards: It is one using rewards or punishments as incentives to convince someone to adopt his/her viewpoint

- Mind changing is more likely to occur when considerable resources can be drawn on
- The provision of resources is an instance of positive reinforcement
- 80/20 principle is fully applicable here

6. Real World Events: Using events from the society to make one's point

- A major event, like, September 11 terrorists' attack on twin-towers in US, tsunami or earthquake may drastically change one's mind.
- Events would push people towards adopting the 80/20 principle from a conventional 50/50 principle

7. Resistance: People have a tendency to develop strong views that are resistant and revert to 50/50 principle

- One has to understand the factors that cause people to reject a particular point of view. Such insights can make it easier for one to change his/her mindset.

Some levers will work better than others will in government or public service organizations. A manager who relies strictly on his charm to “resonate” with his audience may not get very far. But the use of stories (representational re-description) can be very effective. Managers have to make sure that the stories that they communicate are inclusive rather than built around scare tactics. “Try to incorporate everyone in the same narrative and convince people that we are in this together,” says Gardner.

The biggest challenge managers are likely to run up against is fundamentalism—not in the religious sense, but in the form of a conscious decision made by a person not to change his mind. When they encounter people whose opinions are so fixed and unwavering, Gardner advises managers not to waste their time trying to change them. Gardner notes that he has had a long string of assistants who would leave their desk drawers open despite his frequent warnings about pocketbook safety. “Every now and then I would steal their wallets just to show them,” he says, “but eventually I got too old.” Plus, he says, it never worked anyway.

X Ten Tips to Effectively Influence Others

1) Set an outcome for what the other person will do, if you are successful in influencing him/her.

a) Flush out in detail what would really be ideal for you - even if you think there's no way that ideal is possible. At a minimum you'll know your own goals, and you are likely to get closer to them than you think.

b) Consider the other person's outcome(s). Are there ways you can include their goals in your proposal? What are the benefits and costs to him/her in doing what you want? Are there ways to enhance his/her benefits and/or lessen his/her costs that could still get you what you want?

2) Aim high when you make the first suggestion(s). Suggesting that he/she does even more than you might really want gives you room to lessen your suggestions, and makes it more likely you'll get closer to what you really want in the final agreement.

3) Be congruent, and confident as you communicate. Other people usually notice (not always consciously) your body language and voice tone, so if you're uncertain in making suggestions, it's likely that will come across.

In other words, be as certain of yourself and your suggestions as you can possibly be. This doesn't mean you need to be demanding or argumentative. It does mean that you present your position and/or requests as if you are certain that this is what you want. A quiet, solid, clear confidence is often your best attitude.

4) Consider your long-term relationship with this person or people.

What impact will the results of this interaction have over time? What will your relationship with him/her be if your suggestions are implemented? What will it be like if the suggestions are not implemented?

5) Begin where they are, that is, acknowledging that they have a particular perspective that makes sense for them. This is best done by considering their mood and/or attitude, as well as the particular position he/she may have at the beginning of the discussion.

6) Consider the larger context. What factors might make it difficult for the person to do what you want? Can you develop some ideas that would minimize these difficulties, or better yet, turn them into advantages for him/her?

7) What might you be able to give the person ‘no strings attached’? This can be information, and need not be anything physical (such as a gift). Giving something can be a good move towards developing a favorable context, a move inviting reciprocity but be perfectly willing to have your ‘gift’ taken, without expecting anything back. So, it needs to be something you can give freely.

8) Be clear on what you would get if this person agreed to your request. That is, what would you benefit of influencing them so that you get your outcome?

One way to determine your benefits is to ask yourself “What would have this done for me?” When you get the first answer, ask yourself the same question about that answer. You may determine a wider range of options that would satisfy you. This gives you more flexibility in making suggestions and/or requests from the person.

9) Are there any changes you could make to the environment that would make it more likely for the person to agree to your request?

This is intended as a thought provoking question, i.e. to get you to think about factors you might not ordinarily consider. For instance, there’s some evidence that people are more likely to accommodate requests when they are eating (associating a pleasant activity with your request). Hence the number of business deals that are completed over lunch.

Another environmental factor when influencing someone is to consider whether to discuss an issue on the phone, in person, or by e-mail. In many cases, you will get a very different response to the same request, depending on how it is made.

Thinking of the environment in a slightly broader sense, for instance, could you, persuade a colleague of the person to, say, be more cooperative. Perhaps this increased cooperation would make it easier for the person to take your suggestions.

10) It goes without saying, of course, that when you are successful in influencing, you'll certainly live up to the agreements that you've made - both during and after the 'influence time'. These agreements should be implemented as the other person understands them. This requires you to verify that your communication has been understood in the same way you intended it.

The benefit to you is a long-term business relationship, in which you have established your reliability and in which you request the same. Atmospheres in which you trust one another makes better business sense for all.

A person may use this as a checklist before an attempt to influence some one else, decide to go through the list and choose which would be the most useful in a particular situation, or use it as a test of which items could be missing from an ongoing attempt at influence.

Source: Lynda L. Fudold, Advanced Communications Group

Suggested Readings

Power, Influence, And Persuasion: Sell Your Ideas And Make Things Happen. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2005

The Essentials of Negotiation, Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2005

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Tingley, Judith C: The Power Of Indirect Influence. New York: AMACOM Books, 2001.