

Persuade

How to persuade anyone about anything



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Persuade

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Set yourself some goals before you start reading

To put your thinking into context as you read this book – please list three people who you would most like to persuade or influence more because of what you learn.

Who do you want to persuade?	What do you want to achieve with them?

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Introduction

Why would you want to persuade anyone about anything?

Let's face it, there are times when most of us would have to admit that despite our willingness to get on with others, we do desire to have things our own way. It may not be possible to always have things go the way we would prefer by themselves, and so the reality is that influencing skills are indispensable in many modern life and work situations.

- Do you lead, manage, or supervise others?
- Do you find it a challenge to get everything you need from suppliers, sub-contractors or colleagues?
- Would you like to increase sales from your advertising or marketing?
- Maybe you find getting your ideas across effectively in meetings a challenge?
- Nobody ever poses an objection to your ideas or proposals, do they?
- Would you like to be more confident and persuasive?

To fulfil our ambitions, to build a business or career, to win or complete a project successfully or bring up a family well – all these things either happen or don't because of our ability to bring others with us, to cause them to buy into our ideas. Persuasion is a skill – part psychology, part human relationships, part communication. Can you turn people around, so others see things your way all the time? Probably not; but what we can all do is increase our success rate so that more people, more often, willingly go along with our ideas.

Now if you are thinking persuasion is just not you... be careful. I don't suppose as a baby you ever cried for food, or as a teenager stomped, sulked or whined until you got your way? No, of course you didn't. And you didn't whisper sweet nothings into the ear of that boy or girl you fancied to secure a date? No, of course not...

That accepted – you might want to consider this book a support to you in case you ever have to persuade someone in the future. If you have ambitions, big or small, long term or immediate, the chances are you will want to persuade someone, sometime, to your way of thinking.

Before we go too far, it might be best to agree a definition of our topic – Persuasion.

Persuade means

According to a variety of dictionaries the word persuade means the following:

- To cause someone or convince them to do or to believe something by various means including giving them a good reason to do it or believe it
- To induce, urge or prevail upon another to undertake a course of action or embrace a point of view by means of argument, reasoning or entreaty
- To prevail on a person to do something, as by influencing, advising or urging

There is a variety of other words and phrases that are closely associated with our chosen word 'persuade', such as:

- To win approval or support for, to sway, to carry
- To influence, act upon, tempt or charm
- To induce into action

- To twist somebody's arm
- To hustle – pressure or urge someone into an action
- To bring around or turn around
- To cause to adopt an opinion or course of action, new or different from what preceded it
- To badger through constant efforts
- To sell to somebody such that they accept something
- To chat up someone with the aim of getting your way
- To talk someone into something
- To rope in – draw in as if with a rope or lure
- To cajole, coax, inveigle, sweet-talk, wheedle, caress or flatter
- To convince, win over, convert
- To make someone agree, understand, or realise the truth or validity of something
- To brainwash
- To induce, stimulate, create, get, have – cause to do, or cause to act in a specified manner
- To assure



You can see that not every phrase or word associated with persuading is wholly positive or complimentary about the person doing the persuading.

Persuasion does get a bad press at times. In the land of the unsavoury person, the high-pressure / low-ethical, fast-buck, me-me culture, you are likely to find that manipulative subliminal techniques and shameless ploys are all acceptable tools of the trade.

There have been plenty of political leaders, business executives, journalists and tradesmen that have used a deftly chosen compliment, a kind of smile, gesture or phrase to get their way. A silvery tongue can lead millions to follow an immoral cause just because the approach appears reassuring and soft, but it does not mean the intention is reasonable and fair.

Does that mean that persuasion is bad? No – it means that if someone's intentions are less than honourable, then whatever tactic they use or outcome they achieve will be tainted by their negative or selfish intention. The 'badness' is in the intention and not in the tool itself. Any form of human interaction is turned by the intention of those involved in either a good or bad exercise, to fulfil either honourable or destructive ambitions.

This book on persuasion is written with sound intentions: that this skill of persuasion, this approach to persuade others, when used with integrity for genuinely positive outcomes for all involved produces a much better result. It has been said that one volunteer is worth that of nine pressed men, a throwback to the days when men were forced to work on sailing ships. They were persuaded by clubs, knives and guns by what were known as ‘Press Gangs’. By improving our understanding of and skill at persuasion, our aim is that you will more often be able to secure the ‘willing support’ of those around you. Effective persuasion wins the heart and mind so that you almost have a volunteer on your hands.

Is persuade just another term for influencing, selling or negotiation?

In many ways yes, ‘persuade’ is a similar term, because...

- Negotiation is a mutual discussion or process about the arrangement of the terms of a transaction or agreement; it is an activity that people use to influence others. To persuade someone, we must go through a process even if it only involves one conversation. Influence is the power to affect a person, thing or course of events without apparent exertion of force or the direct exercise of command. And to efficiently persuade we must influence. If you force an alternative view on another – they are of the same opinion still; you have a resistant mind on your hands, and that reluctance will cost you dearly regarding time, effort or money. In the worse cases, it will cost you all three!
- Selling means at least these two things:
 1. To cause something to be accepted; to advocate or promote the worth or desirability of a course of action successfully.

2. To give up (a house, some money or a point of view) to another for (or in return for) something of value.

To effectively persuade, generally we must put across our ideas well enough for others to find them attractive. That means the other person must see something significant or of genuine value in them. Often, when persuading, we must get others to give up their previously-held position. Some new position tends to be replacing some old; most people have an opinion or default bias on things in life, so you rarely win a blank canvas to work with or a vacuum to operate in. They already hold a view or an opinion about the topic in question, and this is in place at the start of our interaction with them. For our target to accept a new option or our idea, we must somehow cause that original point of view to be given up.

In some ways no, ‘persuade’ is not a similar term, because...

In sales and negotiation at least, there is a trade going on. To put it at its simplest level in sales, I have a product you might want, and you have some cash that I might want – so we trade. With negotiation the trade is different; it is more like the story of two children and one orange. They cannot both have the whole orange, but one child wants the flesh to squeeze into orange juice, and the other wants the skin or pith to add as an ingredient to the cake she wishes to make. If they negotiate effectively, they can have everything they really want. One can have all the orange peel, and the other can have all the flesh. In both situations, there is some trading going on. There is dialogue, there is understanding or appreciation of the value, and there is a trade.

With persuasion, there is no trade. I see something this way – you see it that way, and somehow, I must get you to accept the way I see it. There is no trade. We are not swapping ideas or goods, and I am not giving up my position to take up yours; I must persuade you to join me on my side of the fence.

Unfortunately, this type of influencing or persuasion can often be thought of as wrong. It is often portrayed in the media as manipulation; whether that is the politician putting a ‘spin’ on an issue to turn a negative situation to their advantage (often perceived as dishonest exaggeration at best, and lying at its worst) or whether that is the advertising at Christmas which positions only those parents as good if they buy presents from a particular store or catalogue. Of course, that infers that those parents who do not are bad.

Manipulation is an act where a person is led towards something that is not in their best interest by controlling, confusing or subverting their natural thought process. The manipulator is going to get what he or she wants at the other’s expense. If you are on the other end of manipulation, in many ways you are being psychologically abused; with manipulation, there is an adversarial and dishonest covert deception going on. Someone is doing something to you and without you even knowing it at the time.

Persuasion happens in the open, it engages all parties reasonably and consciously; their thinking, their emotions and their behaviour. It is a strategy or at least a process that is meant to solve a problem, to resolve a difference and ultimately to benefit everyone involved. Persuasion is the process of guiding people toward the adoption of a new or different idea, attitude or action by dialogue or interaction – willingly and without duress or pressure.

What is the purpose of this book?

So, you get the point – the focus of our attention – the central theme of this book is persuasion. But why write another book on this topic; after all, it is not as if this book is the first one on persuasion?

For fun, type ‘books on persuasion’ into your favourite search engine and see how many you get. When I did, in 0.30 seconds I

found 16,700 books, articles or web pages! Now I suspect many of the links are not actually real books. And I also imagine that many of these 16,700 search results only have a passing relationship to the topic of persuasion. I mean, what has Jane Austin's novel *Pride and Prejudice* got to do with persuasion? But there it was on page two! Her last novel was called *Persuasion* and was on page one of course, but in fairness, it is not really going to help improve your skills in this area.

Seriously though, there are many books on persuasion, and some are quite old. The ancient Greeks including Socrates and Aristotle were banging on about making rational decisions through the reasoned argument of known facts and opinions, otherwise known as persuasion, and that was 400 years BC. Through the ages, others have added to our understanding of the matter. For instance: Dale Carnegie who wrote *How to Win Friends and Influence People* in the 1930s; David Ogilvy who wrote the book with the punchiest title *Ogilvy on Advertising*; and Robert Cialdini who wrote *The Art and Science of Influence* in 1982.

So why did Nick and I set out to write another one on the same subject? Apart from needing the money...

Yes, we have a business to run, and yes, we have views on this subject (and quite a few other opinions too, to be fair) that we'd like others to read or hear about. It is also true that very few of the leading texts on persuasion have been written by everyday business people, like us, for ordinary business people, like you. Most are by academics or want-to-be-gurus aiming to name and command a new space like Neuromarketing or Buyology: The New Science of Desire.

Our aim is to set out a process that anyone can follow by explaining why each step is important and exactly how to use each level thoroughly. Our intention for this book is to improve your understanding of and skill at persuasion. Our ambition is that after

reading this book and applying its principles, you will, more often and more readily, be able to secure 'willing support' from those around you.

Now you might be thinking, "Why didn't he say that about three pages ago?" Well, we are sales and marketing people at heart, so why use one word when two hundred will do?

By reading this book, you will understand the key steps to take yourself, as well as the steps that the other person or persons must go through, to get them from x to y; to communicate more efficiently. You will learn how to become more able to persuade others to modify their attitude and behaviour.

We hope and pray that your intentions are good, and your use of this approach to persuasion is based purely on your integrity for attaining genuinely positive outcomes for all involved, to lead a business, a family or a project more effectively, to communicate your ideas more persuasively in writing, one-to-one or when speaking to a group. And on that basis, we wish you well in applying these concepts, achieving your ambitions and creating a better result for everyone involved.



CHAPTER 1:

Context

In this section we will discover that while communication seems easy, it is harder to do effectively. To persuade we must communicate effectively. The need to persuade today is greater than ever before and is made more challenging because of the different modes of communication available as well as there often being a difference between what is communicated and what is received.

- We all have a need to persuade every day for one reason or another
- What is said in my communication is not necessarily what is heard – why does it often go wrong?
- If I can improve my communication I improve my ability to persuade
- Our life experiences shape how we see the world and how we receive communication, affecting how we might be persuaded
- People experience change daily, and each person can respond to the same type of change differently to the way others might – understanding that will help us in our ability to persuade others

Do we need the skill of persuasion?

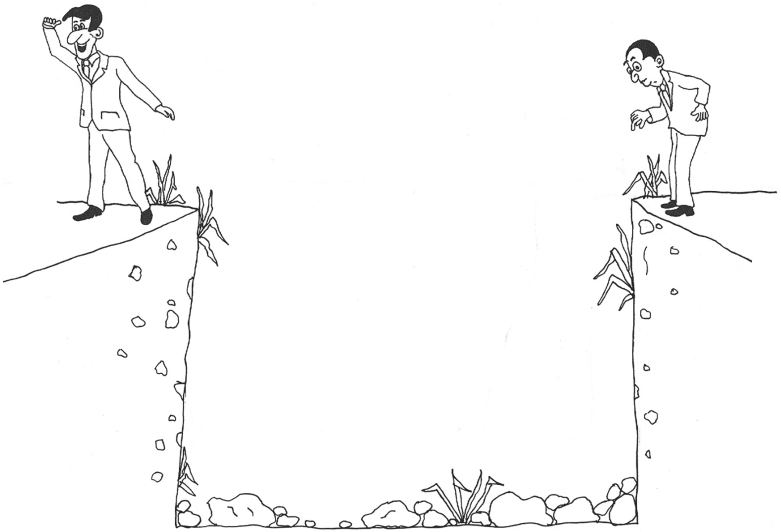
Well, you'll only need the skill of persuasion if there are times in your life where others see things or want to do things differently from you. I'm sure it won't happen too often... at least not every day!

- Maybe your local council has changed collecting the rubbish from weekly to once a month to save money, and you don't think it is right?
- Maybe your teenagers have started smoking, and you think that is dumb?

- Maybe you have prospects who bring up objections which you struggle to answer?
- Maybe a person you are sweet on just won't go out with you?

Need I go on...?

The need for persuasion kicks in whenever you and one or more others end up in two separate places.



Picture two hills – with a valley in between – with one person on one side – one person on the other side – a steep, dangerous valley – an impossible gap – can't jump across – both people facing the same direction – one looking down – the other looking off into the distance.

You are entirely convinced it would be better for everyone involved if the other person(s) joined you on your side. The strategy or process of getting them across requires the skill of persuasion. You can't negotiate and meet them in the middle, and you cannot trade sides. Houston, we have a problem...

Well, at least two problems.

The first is that we've been through some thinking or maybe some 'life experiences' that led us to the point of drawing this conclusion, of taking up this position, of fixing this belief. We've been there, done it, got the T-shirt – you are on top of that hill, you own the hill and no one but no one is going to take that hill from you. We no longer have any form of confusion or any flicker of doubt and so have no active mental enquiry going on in our head. In fact, we think it is so normal and so obvious that our attention is elsewhere, we see a new horizon, a new issue or topic – that is our focus of attention and thought now. The bias is hardwired into our brain, and if anyone asks us about anything connected to the said hill, we'll trot out the default answer without even having to break sweat let alone engage the brain and think.

This means you may not understand or even appreciate the conclusion or position of those you wish to persuade because they may have been through a different set of experiences and therefore ended up in a different place. But, like you, they own a 'hill' – their hill – and don't usually trouble their conscious mind to think about it.

You will both have been through a thought process and reflect or even experience feelings associated with pain or joy. The trouble is, you've forgotten the pain or the active thinking, you've already gone through the journey of confusion and doubt so what you now see as the truth, or as correct, you view through the rose-tinted glasses of someone who made it through the valley of fear. Strange as it may seem, it is hard to put yourself in the shoes of someone who doesn't see it like you. It is also hard to even think the way you did previously, before you arrived on your current hill. You may not be able to find a mental reference point of someone who has not started the journey to your hill. Most scary of all – some who haven't started the journey to your point of view will not even be able to see the mountain you are so confident of, because to them, in their world, your hill doesn't even exist.

The second problem is... whoever you are trying to persuade, even if they can see your hill, will recognise it as *their* hill, which is a different hill that will be separated from you by a deep and dark valley. If they must leave their point of view, they will only be able to see down. They may be intentionally looking the other way to avoid the darkness. They may have heard your initial call but are refusing to look your way.

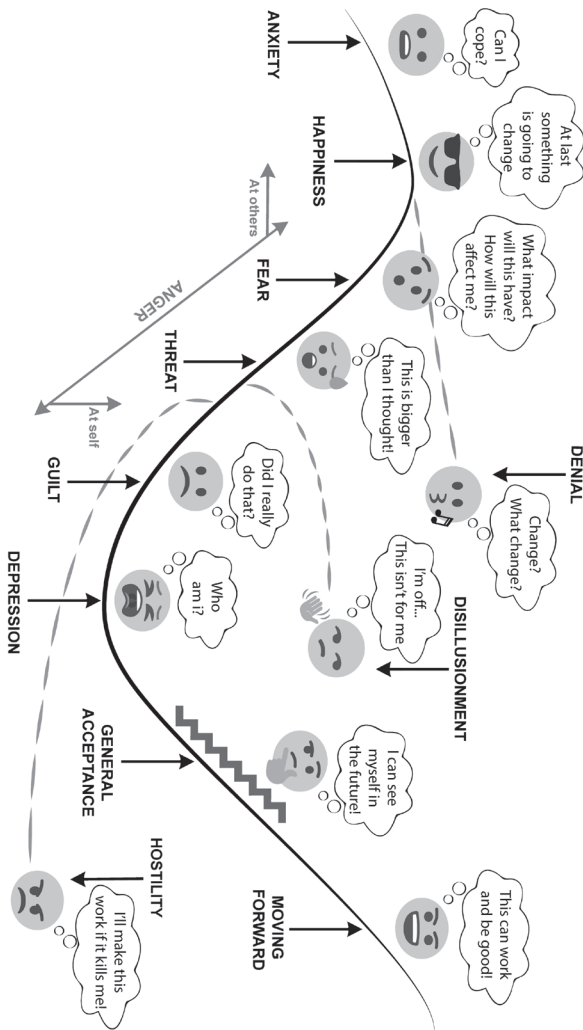
But, if they are prepared to see things from your point of view, then this will steer them away from the initial danger of looking only down. You know the grass is greener on your side, you are familiar with the darkness, hard thinking, pain and confusion are temporary, you know it all works out right in the end because you've read the last page of the book. They haven't. No sir! To them, it just looks terrible. It looks like grief. Their journey must start with giving up their hill to begin a journey of discovery without any certainty of what the outcome will be for them. And nothing in this world is going to get any right-minded person to head in that downwards direction. Forgot it sugar – I am happy where I am. My hill is kinda green. I like it here. You cannot make me leave it.

Now if you prefer the academic answer to why we need the skill of persuasion, then look up 'The Change Curve' – there are plenty of them.

The commonly-quoted model was devised by Elizabeth Kubler Ross, a Swiss psychiatrist who worked extensively with the bereaved and dying and was a principal founder of the hospice movement. She noticed a pattern of reaction to news of impending death, which went through the stages of shock, denial, anger, bargaining, depression and finally acceptance. The theory, while untested in a traditional scientific way, gained immediate recognition and has since been applied widely to encompass almost any aspect of personal and corporate change.

Other alternatives include:

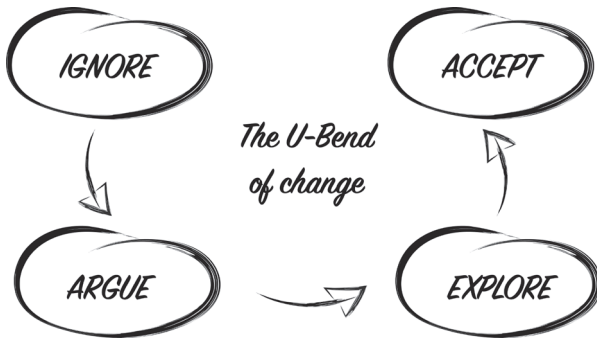
- ‘The Personal Transition Curve’ by John Fisher, as part of his work on Personal Construct Psychology. Rather than assessing the reaction to death, this is a study of changing behaviour. Here, the eight stages are listed as: Anxiety and Denial, Happiness, Fear, Threat, Guilt and Disillusionment, Depression and Hostility, Gradual Acceptance and Moving Forward.



- ‘The Transtheoretical Model of Behaviour Change’, by James O. Prochaska of the University of Rhode Island and his colleagues, describes a similar process with stages labelled Not Ready, Getting Ready, Ready, Action, Maintenance, and Termination or Zero temptation to return.
- The Lewis-Parker ‘Transition Curve’ with seven stages are summarised as follows: Immobilisation – Shock; Denial of Change – Temporary Retreat; Incompetence – Awareness and Frustration; Acceptance of Reality – Letting Go; Testing – New ways to deal with new reality; Search for Meaning – Internalisation; Integration – Incorporation of meanings within behaviours.

Many people consider Nick and I, your authors, to be simple men, and in fairness, they are right. So, I offer you a simplified model that condenses the plethora of positions you could find yourself in on the change curve to four. Four stages of the U-bend of change. This represents a U-bend just like you’d see under your sink or behind your toilet bowl. And, on any self-respecting U-bend, there is no shortcut to avoid the curve; in our U-bend the only way to get from ignoring the need to change to acceptance of a new point of view is by going through the other two stages – argue and explore.

When people ignore the need to change it is as if they have fingers in their ears and blindfolds over their eyes, or as comedian Catherine Tate says so poetically, “Face bovvered? Not.” People at this point in the change curve just don’t see the point of even talking about it.



Stage two, or argue, is in fact progress. Hard to believe because now, instead of ignoring your ideas, they are fighting back and being generally critical of the concept or point of view you are proposing. Some may even be critical of you, let alone the hill you are standing on. One danger is that we sense this 'push-back' as a negative and argumentative stage in the journey and as a problem for us and the other person so backtrack or ease off a little. We hope for a more pleasant journey, so we reverse and head off in different directions in search of that elusive shortcut between ignoring and acceptance, only to find... it doesn't exist! In the meantime, our change of pace and direction has confused the other person even more.

In the end, if we persist, our colleague arrives at the explore stage where there is far more of a genuine interest in the ideas we've raised. Some are positive, some future based, some negative, and some backwards-looking at that wonderful deeply-held belief that they used to enjoy when sitting on their previous beautiful hill. Now they are genuinely engaging the power of thought, questioning and hypothesising, reflecting and discussing.

Once in the explore stage, the journey through the change curve takes on a different momentum and focus – yes, it is uphill and can be tough, and yes, there can be setbacks along the way. Still, with clever questioning and the occasional supportive nudge, the vista of the new hill starts to build a sense of attraction until that eureka

flashbulb moment when eyes are opened and jaws dropped. That was jaws not drawers!

These four stages around the U-bend of change describe reasonably accurately the path we must enable the other person to walk. And the model ably explains many of the challenges we as the persuader face too.

So, take it from us, with our story of two hills separated by a deep, dark, scary valley or take it from the academics – you thought this persuasion thing was easy... Just smile nicely, sensibly, and clearly explain things, and hey-presto, job done! Well maybe – sometimes. Then again, more often you are likely to have to deal with some reluctance or some resistance to your charm offensive and a mixture of facts, arguments and emotion.

QED = you need this skill of persuasion...

How we see the world

How did we come to our point of view? And why is it so hard at times to see or believe another view? We all interact with the world from a unique perspective – our own! This interaction includes all our past experiences, and because of what we make of those experiences, means our view of the world often dictates how we approach situations, what we believe, who we believe, as well as what and who we don't.

As we live and grow, succeed and fail, we are continually observing, assimilating, developing actions/reactions, experimenting and testing beliefs. If we have a degree of self-awareness, then we are, even non-consciously, conducting on-going research and development, examining ourselves and our ideas along with our views on the world.

How we interact with other people is also the result of our past experiences and an assessment of the current situation which is

then mapped onto possible alternative courses of action. We generate a hypothesis about what will happen if we do or say x instead of y, and then chose that course of action which we think will best suit our needs. This may or may not take any other people involved into account.

We are not victims of circumstance; we do have the power to change our views, our attitudes and our behaviour. And yet, we are limited strongly in some ways. The opinion defines us as a person, our abilities and potential. We are limited by our view on our current position and the relationships we have. We are limited by our own internal blinkers. These limit how far out into the future we dare look, as well as the range of possible options we can see for ourselves, and hence restrict our ability to accept things outside the frames of reference we currently hold.

Our collection of experiences and actions form our mental picture of the world and each idea, each thing or each person we consider we will place on our map, somewhere between two fixed points. Those points are the extreme ends of our views on the matter. Based on our perceptions of other people and what they say or do, we place them somewhere between those two markers as part of our map of the world. We also place ourselves somewhere in relation to the position we've allocated to them, either near to us or far away. We use that map and our relative position to others, to things and to beliefs as a guide. This guide helps us to choose not only our behaviours but also our friends and our beliefs.

As part of life, we are constantly taking part in live R&D. We are continually assessing things for their level of 'fit' within our world. With low levels of awareness, sometimes called default thinking, fast thinking or thin slicing, we don't even notice that we've opted in or out of a situation. With high levels of self-awareness, we would be testing the validity of our map and the places we allocate to people and things. That slow thinking takes time, effort and energy, and probably none of us could cope with a constant

reassessment of our mental maps. There is just not enough energy to get through the day if we tried. Of course, a short burst of high intensity is possible, and so every now and then we tend to get serious about our thinking thus enabling us to redraw those maps. Sadly, not everyone will willingly put in the thought, time, effort and energy. Some people won't or can't, at least not voluntarily, redraw their map.

The building blocks of our map come in various shapes and sizes. Some aspects are more important and are connected to our 'core' or sense of being. These are very resistant to change and include things such as right versus wrong, our moral code and religious beliefs. A threat or challenge to our core is normally met with significant resistance. Other building blocks are more peripheral. A suggestion that invites us to change them does not have the same impact. The rest fall somewhere in between and unconsciously are ranked against or connected to the others. Some building blocks we think of in an all-or-nothing way, like a ball is a ball and cannot be anything else. Some come with a whole batch of ancillary stereotyped baggage attached to them. Whether this is right or wrong doesn't matter – if we think real men don't cry so be it. Thankfully some of our building blocks are quite movable, a bit like a Rubik's Cube: providing the blue face is on the blue side, then everything is fine.

To be able to communicate with another person, let alone persuade them, we need to have some understanding of how the other person perceives their world and where we and our 'Big Idea' fit into it. By having a knowledge of this we will determine their reaction to our world, or whether we are able to work out some aspects of their map ahead of time, enabling us to find more efficient points of reference, make it more relevant and be able to persuade them more easily.

For example, Bob and his wife Julie were on holiday in a quiet village in Fuerteventura. Bob described the story like this:

"The original plan was to get a villa near a village with its own pool and do nothing for the week – just chill. Part way through the week, while strolling back from the village after a late wine-fuelled lunch, we stopped to look into the window of a tourist attraction shop. While easily disregarding most of the attractions, the hire of a three-wheel motorbike did catch my eye. With the warm weather, and tiny winding roads that snake around the small island of Fuerteventura, the idea of touring on one of those powerful bikes appealed to me.

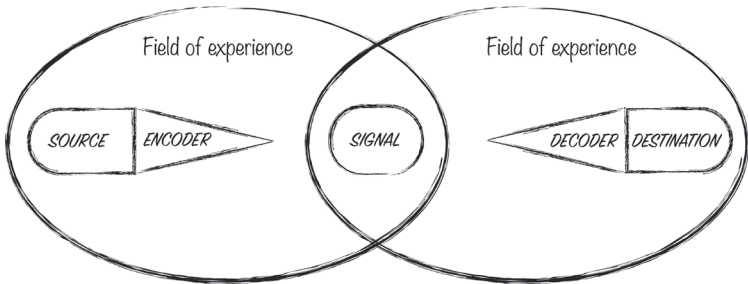
So, I suggested it... only to be met with firm and abrupt resistance. Back and forth went the conversation. OK, the argument. This argument went on for five or so minutes until my brain kicked back in. My wife's elder brother had died in a motorbike accident when she was seven years old, and while she happily gets on a pedal bike, she has only ever been on a motorbike twice in her life and hated every second. I might suggest a three-wheeler is safer and that the roads are less dangerous until I was blue in the face.

On this topic with a belief central to the core of her being the three-wheeler tour discussion was going nowhere. The attraction of the three-wheeler ride was not important enough for me and certainly not important enough for Julie to even consider. That 'Big Idea' was never going to fit into her world where motorbikes are closely connected to such a massive and painful loss. I'd like to think that had it not been for the wine then I would never have suggested it, but that is probably not true because I've been fascinated with motorbikes since I was a four-year-old."

That personal example highlights the importance of understanding the core beliefs of the parties involved. The emotional attraction to, or rejection of, the Big Idea may have little to do with the current situation, and may have more to do with unconnected things from light years away in another lifetime.

Theories of communication

In some ways, of course, our ability to persuade is directly linked to our ability to communicate. The personal situation above could be used to explain one of the leading theories on how communication works or doesn't. That model is owed to Wilbur Schramm,



a well-known communication theorist, who developed a straightforward communication model in his book *The Process and Effects of Mass Communications*.

Schramm's first model suggests, as did Aristotle, that communication always contains three main elements — the source, the message and the destination. In the simple version, the source encodes a signal and then transmits it to the target destination via a selected channel, where it is received and hopefully decoded to create the same meaning that it had contained before being encoded by the source.

Schramm also pointed out that for the intent and content of the message to be encoded and decoded so that a calibration of understanding or a common understanding can take place between the source and the destination, the 'Source' and 'Destination' must share something in common.

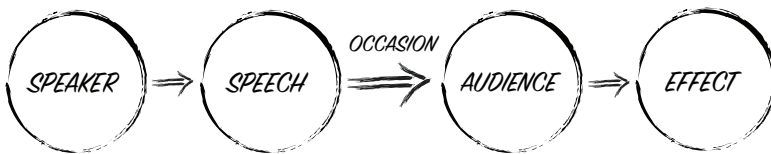
That means the fields of experience of the source and the destination must overlap in some way before effective communication can take place. If your mental map of the world is entirely separate

from mine and we have no shared experiences whatsoever, then even at the most basic level of communication we are not going to understand and relate to one another. Such shared experiences could include language and culture as well as the physical environment. Where we share a small area of overlap, then communication is not impossible, just tricky. The larger the space of shared experiences the more straightforward the interface should be, at least in theory.

If I can communicate effectively then maybe I can persuade. Or perhaps persuasion is merely a matter of effective communication?

If we look at the origins of communication theories to explain why persuasion is more than just effective communication, we must examine the arguments of Aristotle and Plato. I know it is a bit unfair as they left this mortal coil some time ago, but this is what happens when you've been famous for so long!

Aristotle's Model of Communication



Aristotle's main point was that to create the desired effect as a speaker you need to have an accurate insight or understanding of your audience and the situation. Armed with those ideas, you would then be able to prepare a different speech depending on the audience and the occasion. Conversely, if you thought you could deliver the same talk to a different audience at another time and still create precisely the same effect, you would need to be seen by a psychiatrist!

Lasswell's Model



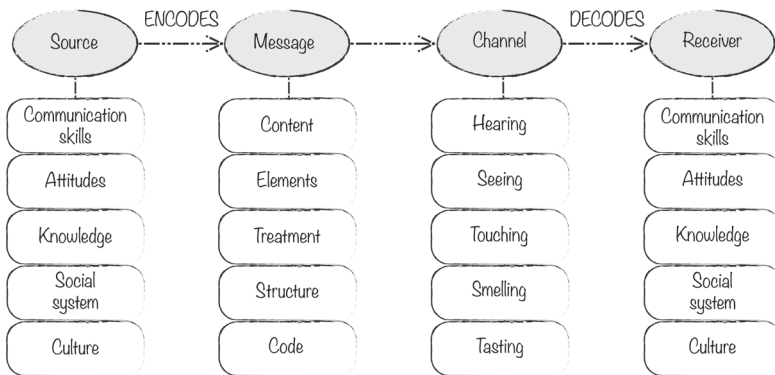
Harold Lasswell, a political scientist, developed a much-quoted formulation of the main elements of communication: “Who says what in which channel to whom with what effect.”

This summation of the communication process has been widely quoted since the 1940s. The point in Lasswell’s view is that there must be an ‘effect’ for communication to take place. An ‘effect’ is described as an observable or measurable change in the audience or listener; meaning that if we have communicated effectively, the receiver changes in some way.

Lasswell’s version of the communication process mentions four parts — who, what, channel, whom. Aristotle also talks about three of the four parallel sections — speaker (who), subject (what), the person addressed (whom). Only ‘channel’ was added by Lasswell after over 1000 years. A smart fellow, that Mr A.

Berlo’s Model (1960): The Ingredients of Communication

Berlo’s model shows many of the critical elements used in the communication process. These factors contain variable characteristics of the sender and the receiver and affect their communication ability and the quality of understanding achieved. This model is sometimes known as the SMCR Model (Source, Message, Channel, Receiver).



Each of these theories falls within the realm of understanding the process of communication.

Semiotics

Another route we can travel down to understand communication is titled 'The Semiotics School', the foundations of which were laid by Charles Morris in the 1930s through the study of signs and symbols. This school of thinking approaches communication as the generation of meaning via a mixture of signs, symbols and messages. The sender selects a set of signs and symbols to convey a specific purpose of creating a particular reaction from the receiver.

Some proponents of the process school of communication call semantics 'the noise' which can interfere with communication. We each assign meaning to words, to voice inflexions in speech, to gestures and expressions and to other similar 'noises' in writing. We don't all assign the same meaning to the same sign, symbol or word and so end up with a severe problem or barrier to effective communication, a barrier many do not realise until too late, if at all. Too often the person sending a message chooses to use words, phrases or symbols that have a specific meaning to him or her. However, those same words, phrases and symbols may have a significantly different meaning to individuals receiving the message. The encoding and decoding of the embedded meanings

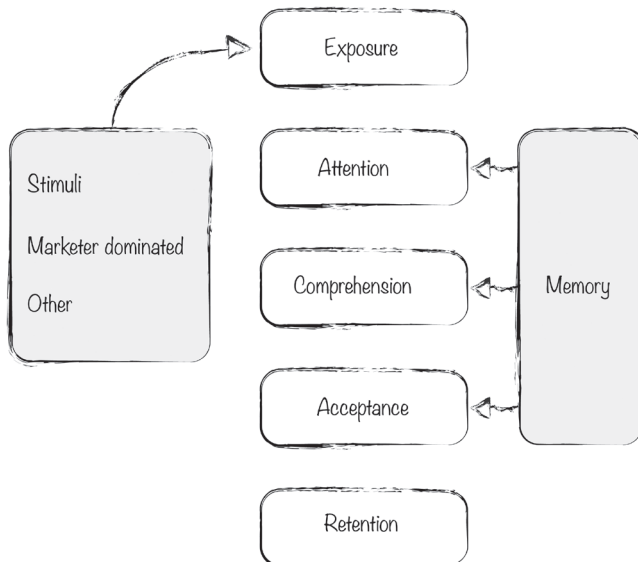
are massively crucial for effective communication to take place, and unless we are communicating effectively and in harmony, we will probably never persuade anyone of anything.

The different outcomes

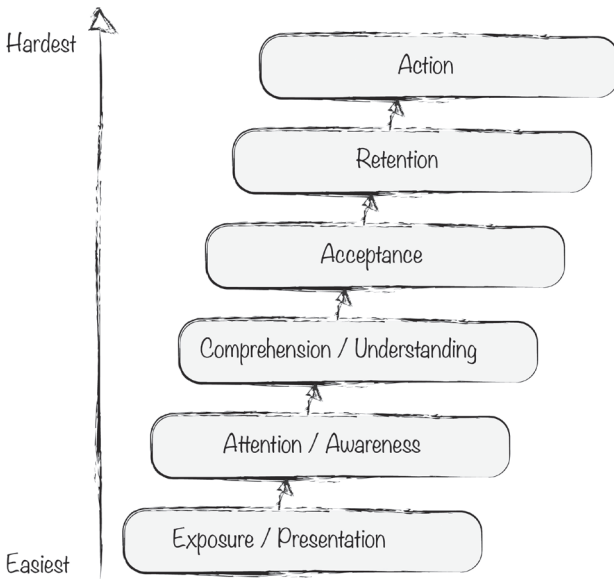
We've looked at the process of communication and the semantic school of thought and yet we've barely mentioned the impact of any of this communication theory on the receiver.

William McGuire (1981) adds a further dimension to communication. Instead of having only 'input factors' with Source, Message, Channel and Receiver, he added 'output' factors of Attention, Liking, Comprehension, Yielding, Remembering and Action. McGuire's focus was the 'effect' the communication has on the receiver. Everyone from Aristotle on mentioned this and yet few studied it as profoundly as McGuire.

For many purposes of communication, his model of outputs can be displayed like this



Someone has heard, liked, understood and accepted our message. That message is now successfully planted in the receiver's brain. This works when you are trying to inform, educate or teach someone French or Mathematics. It just isn't the full monty when you need to persuade someone. Thankfully, McGuire did a great job, and so, when considering persuasion as the purpose of communication, we can reflect on the full model which he even called a model of persuasion.



Not all communication is about persuasion although many consider it to be the toughest part of the job. This means that to have a hope of persuading others to your point-of-view, you will need to have a pretty good understanding of the essential skills of communication. You must understand the three aspects of communication we've discussed: process, the semantics and the outcomes. If you have a grasp of these elements, you will be sufficiently self-aware to understand your mental model of the world; but you must also be wise and appreciate that you need to understand the other person's mental map as well as you can. If you cannot understand

another's map, you must be willing to work further on your crucial communication skills.

SUMMARY

In this chapter we have considered why persuasion is an everyday skill for most people and how it can make a positive contribution to make our lives more efficient. We could all get more out of life, our jobs, community projects, time with our children and our hobbies if we used the skill of persuasion more consciously and frequently.

We have also considered some of the factors that make communication and persuasion challenging for many of us. Each of us has a unique vision of the world, and whether we think about something carefully or not, we generally have a default point of view on the matter. To persuade someone, we need to enable them to exchange their point of view for a fresh one, hopefully to the same view that we hold. Even before we consider any specific persuasion techniques, understanding the process of communication and the innate ability we all possess to misinterpret what another person is saying must come directly into our focus. If not, we stand little, if any, chance at calibrating a shared mutual understanding.

Any improvement in communication and shared understanding is likely to improve our life and our performance even without learning about the specific persuasion principles and concepts in the following chapters.

Of course, we hope you continue to read the chapter on the PERSUADE model because it will provide you with a practical tool to help you plan and apply an efficient approach to persuasion. In the meantime, you have already gained some significant ideas, so it is appropriate to offer you some time to reflect and absorb your learning.

REFLECT AND LEARN

What ideas from this chapter were novel, fresh or new to you? What have you learned that was familiar? In what ways do you already apply some of this information?

How did you react emotionally and cognitively to the ideas in this chapter? What concepts do you agree with and why? What do you disagree with and why?

What were the most exciting or useful insights gained from reading and thinking about this chapter?

In what ways might you translate the ideas presented through this chapter into practical, everyday, useful ideas and plans?

What new questions about persuasion do you now have after reading this chapter?

ACTION LEARNING

In addition to the original three examples you selected at the beginning of the book, list several other people and situations where you could apply your learning of persuasion.

Set yourself some time-phased goals to apply some of the learning that you listed in the Reflect and Learn section, to guide your actions over the next three months, some for the next three weeks and some for the next three days.

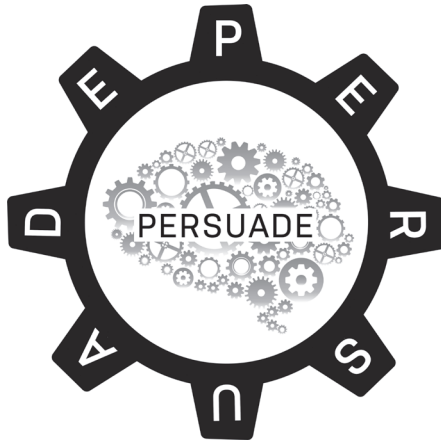
Thinking about how you plan to apply your learning, what obstacles might you encounter along the way? And, realistically, how might you deal with them?

Who else could you share these ideas with as a supportive sounding board, or as your informal coach? How might you go about setting up a conversation with them to enrol them as a supporter of the application of your learning? Consider what might be the reasons why they would consider being involved? How might they also benefit?



CHAPTER 2:

The Basis of Persuasion



The basis of persuasion

Why is it that some people seem better able to persuade than others? Why is it that some communication is persuasive and some not? Having the right elements in your communication optimises your ability to persuade. This section considers these points and what we can do about them.

- The more you connect with the person, the better your chances of persuading
- Why trust and credibility are so important when persuading and what we can do about it
- Asking questions is key to successful persuasion
- If the other person feels I care and understand their needs, I will considerably increase my chances of successful persuasion
- Relying solely on logical reasons to persuade is a recipe for failure. Why?

Ethos, Pathos, Logos

The challenge of being able to influence and persuade has been a part of our existence for some considerable time. The ability to bring about a change or shift in the way someone thinks or behaves, to get someone to act or do something differently, is as topical today as it was thousands of years ago.

A lot of what we know and do today is arguably based on the philosophies and teachings of some of the great Greek philosophers from over 3000 years ago. The most commonly accepted and used principles of persuasion today are based on Ethos, Pathos & Logos, and on the teachings of such great Greek philosophers such as Plato, Socrates and Aristotle.

- Ethos – Personal credibility
- Pathos – Empathy
- Logos – Logical argument

These three are sequential, so it is essential that each one is established in turn within the relationship that persuasion is occurring. Establishing credibility first is critical as without it the other person is unlikely to listen, pay attention or believe what the other person is saying.

Having established personal credibility, then the persuader (the person seeking to persuade the other) will attempt to understand the other person and see things from their point of view. If this appeals to the other person and common ground might be established, then the person being persuaded is more likely to listen to the persuader when it comes to putting across their point of view.

Finally, you will need to make a logical argument that makes sense to the person you'd like to persuade. The only way to reach this stage is for the persuader to understand the points that are important to

the person being influenced, by positioning your ‘proposal’ or ‘point of view’ in such a way that it makes sense to them. They, of course, are more likely to listen to the proposal because they feel that the persuader is credible (Ethos), clearly understands their point of view and their challenges (Pathos) and are therefore inclined to see the value (Logos) in what is being suggested (your idea).

So, let’s consider how important these three points are when it comes to successful persuasion.

Ethos – personal credibility

We tend to believe people whom we respect. Our goal when seeking to persuade someone is to project an impression on the other person that you are credible and worth listening to, as well as being likeable and worthy of respect. It’s like having your own brand image.

The strength of a brand image is reflected in the extent to which it attracts potential customers. It is, in general, the first thing a potential customer will associate with a product.

Well, just as products have a brand image, so do we. Everyone has a brand image. Your brand image is representative of what other people perceive you stand for. It is often regarded as the first ‘hurdle’ in our attempt to be heard and believed.

Years ago, a particular make of car from an Eastern Bloc country was considered highly unreliable and became the butt of all car jokes. As a result, few people were really interested in owning one. Even though the car may have had a good story to tell and the challenges and frustrations of its customers were understandable, few potential buyers wanted to hear about this because they were unable to overcome the first hurdle: the hurdle of credibility. Interestingly, all of that has changed today with the advancement of technology, and the same cars are now considered highly superior in virtually all areas.

So we, as individuals, have a brand image also, one that represents the first hurdle we must all overcome. We want our prospects to accept and believe we are personally credible as this will determine how successful we are.

So, what helps give me credibility?

Several things lend themselves to establishing credibility in another's eyes, although each one, of course, will not have the same effect and gravitas with everyone. One factor may mean a considerable amount to one person, whereas it may say absolutely nothing to someone else.

- **Your qualifications** – academic, vocational
- **Track record** – how you are perceived through your past achievements
- **Skills** – specialist or any other skills you perform effectively
- **Knowledge** – understanding that when applied demonstrates wisdom
- **Reputation** – a widespread opinion about you
- **Position** – whether you hold a senior job as well as fitting into a niche
- **People you associate with** – your network of people. Who you associate with speaks volumes about you

No doubt there may be other factors, but those above are the primary considerations. Any of these might be sufficient to get you to a point where you can establish initial credibility – although it may not be enough to keep your credibility intact.

Activity – think of someone who you would like to influence. Now consider what will give you initial credibility in their eyes.

What will give me personal credibility in their eyes?

-
-
-
-

Which one of these do I consider will have the strongest influence on them?

How could I do this?

What contributes to keeping my credibility intact?

Credibility is a fragile and delicate creature and keeping it intact is based on how you act in each situation. Your credibility needs looking after and, if it is fragile, can break very easily.

As an example, one cannot help thinking about Gerald Ratner and the rather unfortunate turn of events during a speech he gave to the Institute of Directors on 23 April 1991. During the speech, he commented:

“We also offer cut-glass sherry decanters complete with six glasses on a silver-plated tray that your butler can serve you drinks on, all for £4.95. People say, “How can you sell this for such a low price?” I say, “Because it’s total crap.”

He was stupid enough to compound this by going on to remark that some of the earrings were ... “Cheaper than an M&S prawn sandwich but probably wouldn’t last as long”.

After the speech, the value of the Ratner group plummeted by around £500 million, which, not surprisingly, almost resulted in the firm’s collapse. Ratner resigned in November 1992, and the company changed its name to Signet Group in September 1993.

You could argue very strongly that before he made that speech on that day in that room his credibility with his audience had been healthy, based on his previous track-record, reputation and position. But, almost in an instant, by criticising his products, his entire credibility went flying out of the window. He had been a fool to himself, and although he may have intended his comments as a joke, the reputation of his company was lost, along with his own.

So, the truth is that people judge us by our actions, not our intentions. However, we tend to judge ourselves by our intentions rather than our actions. To understand how to keep credibility, you must consider the individual you wish to persuade. Why? Because each person uniquely defines credibility. What one person determines you need to do to remain credible, may well be very different from the definition the next person places on your reliability and reputation. Furthermore, you must be careful, because the way one person perceives your credibility may also define how others associated with that person may see you.

However, consider the following scenarios as an example of the way different people may have entirely opposing expectations of you.

- **Telephone conference call** – What someone may have required you to do before the call, during the call and after the call may differ from one person to the next. Consider what types of behaviour they like or appreciate. What might really irritate or annoy them in such a setting?
- **Face-to-face meeting** – How does the other person view building rapport? Consider what subjects you might avoid. Are there subjects close to their heart? I remember having a senior internal colleague at the *Daily Mail* who always required me to prepare well in advance for such a meeting and would judge me on whether I turned up either late and without preparation. For me to be considered credible in his eyes, I needed to be on time, be well equipped, get down to business rapidly and be prepared to have an opinion about the subject at hand. I was also expected to be prepared to challenge the ‘norm’ rather than nod in sycophantic agreement.
- **Questioning** – The quality of your questioning can have a direct bearing on the amount of credibility you are perceived to possess. The better and more thoughtful the question, the more reliability you are likely to have. If you can inject a well-considered form of questioning that takes everyone’s thought process in a different direction by considering something from another perspective, then you are likely to be found more credible by your actions in each situation.
- **Being in front of others** – You may have all the right qualifications, knowledge and even the highest position, but unless that is backed up with applied experience, it won’t count for much. How you choose to use your knowledge in a situation can be interpreted as wisdom. One can never forget the old adage: ‘It is better to close your mouth and be thought a fool – than to open it and remove all doubt.’

- **Giving/receiving feedback** – Not everyone loves to either give or receive feedback, or both. Although feedback is meant to be regarded as a gift, it is important to remember that most gifts are carefully wrapped, and consideration is given to when and how this reward is presented. It's the same with feedback. Unless you think carefully about how you present feedback (remember, you will always need to consider the other person to do this), then your credibility can be irretrievably damaged. A wrong word here, a wrong word there, will carry more weight than all the positive feedback you may give. Remember, if you utter a 'wrong' word, people will linger on it.

It is the same with positive feedback. Mark Twain said: "Man can live off a compliment for two weeks." Are you good at **receiving** feedback? You can enhance your credibility by asking for feedback, welcoming feedback and being seen to act on it. Conversely, if you are defensive, and do not pursue feedback, this might cause an adverse reaction to your credibility.

What's the point of all this?

The point, of course, is always to consider the individual whom you wish to persuade. These are all examples, but bear in mind that credibility is based on what we do – and not on what we intend to do. Remember, you must consider both the person and the situation you are likely to find yourself in to establish or protect your credibility.

Activity – what behaviours could act to reinforce and enhance your credibility?

1. Think of the person
2. Think of the situation
3. Think of what you need to do with that person in that situation to keep your credibility intact, if not build it.

Pathos – empathy

Some years ago on an American television news channel, a reporter was interviewing a man in the street. He was being asked about what the (then) President Bush had said on TV the previous evening about the economy. The reporter asked him if he was at all influenced by what the President had suggested that the American people should do about the situation that the President discussed.

The man's reply was impressive. "I am not at all influenced by what the President said and won't listen to him." He continued: "After all, he never listens to us!" The message was loud and clear. To have any chance of influencing someone you must first be sure to communicate that you understand the challenges the audience faces and that you care. In other words, you must demonstrate by proving that you care.

- What is empathy?
- Seeing it from the other person's point of view.
- Understanding their thoughts, hopes, fears and what they want?

The key here is to demonstrate empathy. You may ask why this is important; well, consider this...

You can act upon all the above in your mind without demonstrating it. However, what might the perception be that you create by doing so? It will suggest that you don't care. If the other person **feels** you don't care, then why should they listen to you and your ideas? So, it becomes the 'action' rather than the intent of what you do. This step must either be to demonstrate that you understand, or at least have the desire and make an effort to understand the other person's point of view. Remember, people judge you by your actions – not by your intentions.

How do I demonstrate empathy?

Socrates suggested that empathy is the 'pursuit of understanding'. It is exposing to the other person that your real intention is to understand them.

Once you can demonstrate you have empathy for the other person, you can then appeal to their emotions and build a strong bond of connection. Consider the following example from Martin Luther King:

"I am not unmindful that some of you have come here out of great trials and tribulations. Some of you have come fresh from narrow jail cells. And some of you have come from areas where your quest – the quest for freedom left you battered by the storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of police brutality. You have been the veterans of creative suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unearned suffering is redemptive. Go back to Mississippi, go back to Alabama, go back to South Carolina, go back to Georgia, go back to Louisiana, go back to the slums and ghettos of our northern cities, knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed."

I Have a Dream by Martin Luther King Jr. 28th August 1963.

Clearly, this is a great example of Martin Luther King connecting with the pain and emotions of his audience by saying:

- “I understand.”
- “I know where you are coming from.”
- “I fully appreciate how you might be feeling.”

All of these are critical to establishing empathy. How else can you demonstrate compassion on a very day-to-day practical level with someone? You can do this in any number of ways although some of the more obvious might be through ...

Questions

If you ask the right questions, not only are you demonstrating that you are pursuing an understanding which, in turn, will enhance your perceived empathy, but might it also affect something else? Might it impact on your credibility? Of course, it would! The fact you are asking questions combined with the quality and depth of the information you are seeking says a lot about you, your thought processes and your real intentions.

We will cover more about questioning as we move into the PERSUADE model later in the book, but suffice to say that such questioning is an integral, fundamental and the most powerful tool used in the influencing process.

Listening

What good is cheese without crackers? What is the benefit of bread without butter? What good is questioning if you are not prepared to listen? The answer is – not much! As Frank Sinatra once sang, they go together like ‘a horse and carriage’.

It is therefore worth considering the difference between **passive** listening and **active** listening. ‘Passive’ listening is, as the title

denotes – passive. In other words, you need do very little but merely listen. Your role is not intended to be that active. But, what sort of a message might this send to the person you are listening to? The fact you are not really listening? That you don't care? That may not be true, but if that is the perception being created, then that is the truth. Remember, people judge you by your actions – not your intentions.

'Active' listening is when your role as a listener is active! This means you must do things to demonstrate that you are listening. There are certain ways you can show that you are actively involved in the listening process, including:

Note taking – taking notes aids the listening process, allows you to summarise and clarify understanding, along with demonstrating to the other person that they are being heard and that you are 'pursuing' that understanding.

I'm listening noises – a more fundamental yet human form of connection that continues to send out signals to the other person to assure them that you are receiving and understanding their message, and you encourage them to keep talking.

Visual body language clues – it is argued that the largest proportion of our communication is through visible contributions. The body gives off visual signs that demonstrate that you are either listening with empathy or not. Such hints could be eye contact, smiling, nodding, hand gestures and even sitting upright or leaning toward the other person.

Summarising – *It is better to be understood a little than to be misunderstood a lot* (Anatole France). A common myth about summarising is that it is performed by one person (although anyone involved can do it) and that the best time to summarise a situation is at the end, when, in reality, it should be done as you go.

Asking questions about what has been said – questions could be used to explore further what has been reported to seek an understanding or to build on what the speaker has said. Providing the subject of your question is linked explicitly to the theme of what the speaker has told you, then they will consider you have been listening and are taking an active interest in their ideas – always a good move when it comes to empathy!

Making statements

Making statements (not unlike Martin Luther King) that undoubtedly appeal to the emotion of the person you are trying to persuade, and that connect with any issues close to their heart and to matters that concern them, to demonstrate that you see, understand, and feel what they have said.

All these factors should be taken into consideration when it comes to Empathy. Empathy is all about focusing on the other person through the conversation, the questions you ask, your understanding and through the body language you express. The more a person feels cared about, that their point of view matters and their needs are understood and considered necessary, the more they are likely to be ready to receive a message that falls in line with what they have said. Indeed, they would welcome such a message!



Activity – How could you build and develop Empathy with someone?

1. Think of the person.
2. Think of the situation.
3. What questions could you ask?

What statement could you make to that person that clearly demonstrates you understand their point of view in relation to the subject being discussed?

That leads us on to the third part of this sequential influencing model – Logos.

Logos – logical argument and reasoning

Aristotle was known as the father of the field of logic. He was the first to develop a formalised system for reasoning. Aristotle observed that the validity of any argument can be determined by its structure rather than its content. As the person who wishes to persuade, we seek to appeal to the other person by connecting to their sense of logic and reasoning, in a way that makes perfect sense to them.

Logos is logical appeal, and the term logic is derived from it. It is normally used to describe facts and figures that support the speaker's topic. Since data is difficult to manipulate, especially if from a trusted source, logos may sway cynical listeners. Having a logos appeal can also enhance ethos (see above) because information makes the speaker look more knowledgeable and better prepared for his or her audience. Watch out though, data can be confusing and thus confuse the audience. Logos can also be misleading or inaccurate.

Interestingly, many people in their haste rely on this one element to get their point across to persuade. In doing so, they neglect the other two principles, those of credibility and empathy. They may feel that by putting across the facts and reason alone will be sufficient for the other person to act. Think about this for a second. Have you ever received an advertising proposition (through the post maybe?) that makes perfect sense for you to act on the message, but then you don't follow up? How about the opportunity to change your utility provider and save £250 a year in the process? Have you ever received anything along these lines and done anything about changing supplier?

Logically everyone should act by changing provider to save money, but the majority of people do not – somewhat proving the point that we do not make decisions solely based on logical reasons.

An example of Logos

“Let us begin with a simple proposition: What democracy requires is public debate, not information. Of course, it needs information too, but the kind of information it needs can be generated only by vigorous popular debate. We do not know what we need to know until we ask the right questions, and we can identify the right questions only by subjecting our ideas about the world to the test of public controversy. Information, usually seen as the precondition of debate, is better understood as its by

product. When we get into arguments that focus and fully engage our attention, we become avid seekers of relevant information. Otherwise, we take in information passively – if we take it in at all.”

Christopher Lasch, *The Lost Art of Political Argument*

This Logos appeal involves convincing your audience that you are intelligent and the information you are providing can be trusted. We cannot simply say to our audience, “I can be trusted because I’m a very clever person”. You have to prove yourself by demonstrating that you understand what you are talking about because:

- you are providing personal experience, or
- you have deep insights from someone else who has personal experience, or
- you are using generally accepted authorities on this topic
- through extensive and up-to-date research.

You appeal to the logical thought processes in your audience when you offer credible evidence to support your argument. That evidence includes:

- Facts – Non-debatable data widely accepted as the truth
- Examples – Including situations and topics that your audience can relate to
- Precedent – Specific examples from the past
- Authority – Someone, or an organisation, generally accepted as qualified to judge the topic in a relevant way at the time
- Logical reasoning – This will take one or more forms: Deductive, Inductive or Abductive reasoning

A short explanation of logical reasoning

Deductive Reasoning – when you slice and dice evidence to reach conclusions

In general terms, deductive reasoning is using a given set of facts or data to deduce other facts from by following a step-by-step process. Deductive reasoning can be used to prove that these new facts are true. Here is a classic example:

- Major premise: All humans are mortal
- Minor premise: Socrates is human
- Conclusion: Socrates is mortal

Deductive reasoning provides no new information, it simply rearranges information that is already known into new statements or truths.

Inductive Reasoning – when you go beyond the evidence to reach new conclusions

This is about looking for a pattern or a trend and then extrapolating from it or generalising from it. This tends to mean that you don't know for sure if this trend or conclusion will be 100% true.

An example is that all swans are white. We could draw that conclusion from hours of walking around various lakes, as every swan we saw was white, none of them were black, so we could logically assume that black swans don't exist. While inductive reasoning can be helpful in exploring trends and establishing new conclusions, it can be risky.

Abductive Reasoning – when you add things together to draw new conclusions

You could say that this is a form of guessing, since conclusions are drawn based on probabilities. The authentic aim is to find the

most plausible conclusion, which hopefully is also the correct one.
Example:

- Major premise: The jar is filled with chocolate buttons
- Minor premise: Nick has some chocolate buttons in his hand
- Conclusion: The chocolate buttons in Nick's hand were taken out of the jar

By abductive reasoning, it is possible that Nick took a handful of chocolate buttons from the jar. It is also pure speculation. The buttons in Nick's hand may never have been in the jar, they could have been bought at a shop separately, or someone may have given Nick the buttons. While we would authentically aim to draw the correct conclusion, abductive reasoning can lead to a false conclusion.

Use an appropriate writing or speaking style

When laying out the logical parts of your proposition, by all means use relevant, professional and strong words that carry the appropriate connotations; just be sure that you don't sound overly emotional. Sometimes that can be helped by using mostly the 3rd person and only using the 1st person when stating a specific personal experience. At times, it could be as simple as saying, "A generally accepted view is" rather than "My view is".

Refuting another's fact or opinion

This requires at least a health warning, if not a separate chapter. If you have to refute statements of fact, or more likely the conclusions drawn by others from different facts – you must at least demonstrate that you are treating your audience with respect by establishing some common ground first.

Find some mutual ground for both sides of the argument by acknowledging that your opinion and the opinion of the opposite

side agree on at least one aspect. Show you are able to treat the topic fairly and your credibility will rise.

Be careful of the words you use

While we can all look up the dictionary definition of a word, no one is going to do so when in the middle of a conversation. Words, whether written or spoken, often carry secondary meanings, undertones and implications. For example, if you were to ask a friend who cares about their image how he or she would like to be described from the following list of words, what do you think the answer would be?

Slender.....Thin.....Scrawny

While all the words carry the same denotation or dictionary definition (they all mean lean, and not fat), the word slender carries more positive undertones suggesting gracefulness and elegance. Scrawny suggests being overly thin and even unhealthy, whereas thin on the other hand is a fairly neutral word. Conclusion? Slender is the most likely answer because it contains more positive connotations.

The best way to avoid wrecking a logical proposition, as well as pathos (or emotional) appeal, is by using words that carry appropriate connotations.

Think about this statement: “I am not a crack addict. I am not a welfare benefit scrounger. I am not illiterate.”

Compare it to this: “I am not a person who abuses substances. I have a job and do not receive welfare benefits. I can read.”

The words crack addict, welfare scrounger and illiterate carry strong connotations. It makes the above statement, while already logical, more emotional. In some situations, it might be appropriate to use the stronger language, with more emotional appeal – in others the

emotion will detract from your logic. Finding the best balance of logic and emotion is the ideal.

There are even some fairly neutral words that carry more persuasive weight. For instance:

Persuasive words	Weak words
Because	Can't
Definite	Problem
Success	Difficulty
Results	
Opportunities	Wishy-washy words
Gain	Maybe
Save	Possibly
Improve	Could
Reduce	Not sure
How it will help you is...	
The way you'll benefit is...	
The reasons why this is a good idea is...	

So, what's the point of these three Greek amigos?

The key message about this sequential model is to consider each element whenever you are aiming to persuade someone. Consider the extent to which you can become established with that person.

Credibility

- How much credibility do I have with this person?
- How do I know?
- How do they define credibility?
- How could I establish even greater credibility with them?
What would it take?

Empathy

- What else can I do to pursue an understanding of their situation?
- To what extent am I likely to be perceived currently as having empathy?
- How am I demonstrating it?
- How do they know?
- Am I demonstrating it in a way they can relate to?

Logic

- How can I make my idea more palatable to the other person?
- What benefits would most appeal to them?
- Why?
- What reasons could they offer for not agreeing to the idea?
- How might I offer a 'reasoned' position with benefits to counter this?

SUMMARY

Some people are just better at persuasion, and now we have explored why and how that is possible. We've gone back as far as early Greece to track down the more powerful combination of actuating elements.

- Ethos – Personal credibility
- Pathos – Empathy
- Logos – Logical argument

Without trust and credibility, you are unlikely to get a fair hearing, so acting on the ideas in that section of this chapter will enable you to at least have your ideas listened to and considered.

Empathy is the next step in the process. The better you understand the other person and their unique perspective on things, the better your chances will be of putting a proposal together that attracts their attention and emotional interest. Put plainly, if the other person you are trying to connect with does not feel the similarity or emotional connection between you and them, or between their view of the world and yours – then the chances of persuasion occurring are slim to none.

Finally, we considered how to build a logical set of ideas into the proposition that will make sense to the other person and offer them things which they value as part of the package – including selecting the words you use carefully.

When efficiently used together, these three principles will make a world of difference to your success at persuasion.

REFLECT AND LEARN

What ideas from this chapter were novel, fresh or new to you? What learning was familiar? In what ways do you already apply some of this teaching?

How did you react emotionally and cognitively to the ideas in this chapter? What concepts do you agree with and why? What do you disagree with and why?

What were the most exciting or useful insights gained from reading and thinking about this chapter?

In what ways might you translate the ideas presented through this chapter into practical, useful, everyday ideas and plans?

What new questions about persuasion do you now have from reading this chapter?

ACTION LEARNING

In addition to the original three examples you selected at the beginning of the book, make a list of other people and situations where you could apply your learning on persuasion.

Set yourself some time-phased goals to apply some of the learning that you listed in the Reflect and Learn section. These goals should be chosen to guide your actions over the next three months, the next three weeks and the next three days.

Thinking about how you plan to apply your learning, what obstacles might you encounter along the way? Realistically, how might you deal with them?

Who else could you share these ideas with as a supportive sounding board or informal coach? How might you go about setting up a conversation with them to enrol them as a supporter of your application of this teaching? What might be some reasons they would consider for being involved? How might they also benefit?



CHAPTER 3:

PERSUADE – The Model



P E R S U A D E

Persuasion is a process that is dynamic, as each situation and each person is different. Although a person good at persuasion is intuitive and flexible, he/she is aware that having a framework for the way in which he/she approaches things will produce a better result than an erratic, unplanned approach.

- Thinking and planning before we try to persuade will avoid the 'open mouth and insert foot' human error
- This model will help you have more discipline to plan while enabling the flexibility to adapt
- Understanding and appealing to the other person's interests and motivators must be a central theme of all persuasion activities
- As you gain more knowledge and awareness of the other person, you'll find persuading becomes clearer and easier

Increase your influence and persuasiveness

- What **is it** that makes someone persuasive?
- **What** do they do that others don't?
- What is it that **separates them** from others?

These are tough questions indeed...

Someone today who can readily persuade and influence other people is probably someone who is more in demand today than ever before.

Because we are often hardened to the brutal assault of mass marketing and advertising by a plethora of media, more so today than ever before, we are naturally harder to be persuaded. We are more aware, more in tune, more cynical in a way.

Often in our quest to get our messages heard, it is sometimes worth remembering that less is more and simplicity in our approach can serve us well.

Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler.

Albert Einstein

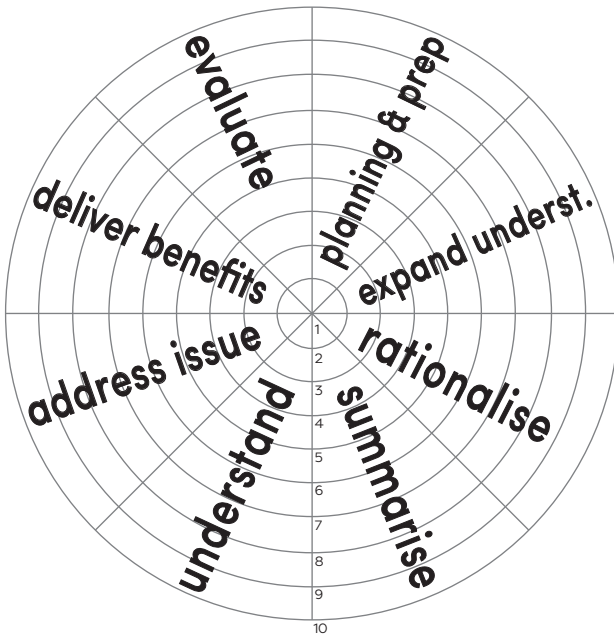
So, let us look at a way we can keep our approach simple yet highly efficient, as we seek to persuade people.

So, what is persuasion?

To persuade someone efficiently, we must, in our approach, recognise the individual first, rather than our own argument or point of view.

A useful way to allow us to do this is to follow the PERSUADE model. This acronym is a sequential process that will enable us to test the integrity of our approach to influencing others.

As we go through this, think of someone you currently would like to influence or persuade and, using the wheel below, rate your own ability to win them over in each section as you read.



- P** Planning & preparation
- E** Expand your understanding
- R** Rationalise
- S** Summarise
- U** Understand the person
- A** Address/answer the issues
- D** Deliver benefits
- E** Evaluate outcome

Instructions:

When you have finished reading each of the eight sections in this chapter score your ability in that one skill area. Ten out of ten means you are world class in that skill. One out of ten means you are pretty poor. If you score all of them nine out of ten you probably tell porky-pies about other things as well...

The P.E.R.S.U.A.D.E. model

P Planning & preparation

- What do you want to achieve?
- What is their knowledge of it?
- What is their mood?
- What are their concerns?



E Expand your understanding

- Ask questions
- Listen
- Share and understand their concerns
- Demonstrate a knowledge of their view



R Rationalise

- Use objective criteria
- Be clear about the issues
- Clarify key drivers, opportunities
- Clarify key benefits they would 'buy' into



S Summarise

- Demonstrate understanding of key issues
- Get agreement



U Understand the person

- Get agreement on the potential opportunity and potential benefits to be accrued
- Understand the person; consider style and approach



A Address/answer the issues

- Give answers
- Use facts and reasons
- Provide solutions



D Deliver benefits

- Use matching benefits
- Use FAB
- Connect to their needs, motivators in 'U'
- Use key drivers such as save, increase, improve, reduce, gain

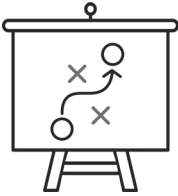


E Evaluate outcome

- Check understanding
- Get clarity of common thinking



The **P.E.R.S.U.A.D.E.** model



Planning

In this section, we will review how we should stop, consider, and plan the best way we should approach someone when we wish to persuade them to act on something.

Aim

- To provide flexibility in our approach
- To decide the best approach for persuasion to achieve the desired results
- To determine the results we want to achieve

Should we be mindful of the perception our communication creates?

Of course we should. We want to be sure that we create the right perception, create the right feelings and stimulate the right course of action with someone we wish to persuade. Of course, whatever we do or say, or don't do or say, **WILL** create a perception. The truth is that it is not what we do with our communication that counts; it is what the other person does with it.

It is this very perception that will shape the success we have in our efforts to persuade. There are considerable benefits in thinking through and planning our communication in how we approach trying to convince someone. This is why we start with planning in our **PERSUADE** acronym.

Let's get started then.

From the three people you have identified you'd like to be more efficient at persuading at the start of this book, let's take one of those so we can see how this element of the PERSUADE model applies to them. Now that you have a person in your mind, we are going to use some considered thinking about how you go forward.

To start with, it is essential from the outset that you have a clear idea of what you want to achieve. All good plans begin with the end in mind. So take a moment to clarify your objective.

- Do you want them to DO something? If so, what?
- Do you want them to THINK differently? If so, how?

It might help if you consider their current perspective on the subject you are trying to persuade them on. What objective would seem reasonable for you to achieve with this person, bearing in mind where you think they are on this subject right now? This will help you decide the best approach.

Use the template below to capture your thoughts and initiate the thinking and planning process. Look at the example given and then use the blank template for your own.

Imagine, for example, I want to persuade a fictitious business colleague called Julie that the idea of having a team meeting on a Monday morning is a good idea. It is not Julie's decision but the manager's. I want to garner her support for the idea to get support from the whole team when I put it forward eventually at a team meeting.

My planning template might look like this:

Consideration	Your thoughts
What do they now know about the subject you want to persuade them on?	<i>I haven't raised the idea with them before. We have had meetings in the past, and I know Julie always enjoyed them. She knows that the team has changed over the past year, so I know she is aware of the benefit of team meetings and possibly the need to have one.</i>
Specifically, what is the best outcome?	<i>That she agrees with the idea, supports me on it in a group 'huddle' and that she is prepared to voice her own views as to why she thinks it is a good idea too.</i>
How will I measure it? How will I know I have achieved it?	<i>If she says to me face-to-face she agrees and is prepared to vocalise support when I raise it next week. Of course, I could then measure that she does indeed vocalise that support.</i>
What are the likely difficulties I may face with this person?	<i>She may think another day is better as I know she seems a whirlwind of activity on a Monday morning. Also, getting the time quietly for a few minutes to raise it.</i>
What do I know that they may find appealing about the subject?	<i>She's a great team player. Has always enjoyed past meetings. A chance for her to 'shine' with her results on recent projects.</i>

What do I want them to do? Take action? Think? Appreciate? Understand?	<i>Vocalise agreement to me. To vocalise support and agreement to others.</i>
What type of person are they? Slow and considered? Quick and excitable?	<i>She is quite chatty and fast paced. She 'flits' from one subject to the next so I need to be mindful of that. She is very caring and always happy to help others.</i>
How would you describe your present relationship with this person? Strong? Weak? Functional? Warm? Cool? Factual?	<i>I have worked with her for three-years and we get on well. We can talk about most things. We have had one or two minor disagreements in the past, but we have got over them the next day. I can always talk to her and would regard her as a good colleague/maybe a friend.</i>

Now it's your turn – who is it you want to persuade?

Consideration	Your thoughts
What do they now know about the subject you want to persuade them on?	
Specifically, what is the best outcome?	
How will I measure it? How will I know I have achieved it?	
What are the likely difficulties I may face with this person?	

What do I know that they may find appealing about the subject?	
What do I want them to do? Take action? Think? Appreciate? Understand?	
What type of person are they? Slow and considered? Quick and excitable?	
How would you describe your present relationship with this person? Strong? Weak? Functional? Warm? Cool? Factual?	

- What history has gone before this?
- Are there likely to be objections?
- If so, what are they likely to be and what might cause them?
- How might you counter such concerns or objections?

Being able to manage the situation says as much about you as it does about the credibility of your message.

So how will planning the information in the grid help you?

- **Firstly:** It will stimulate your own thinking before you start the persuasion process. It will encourage ideas and thoughts that may not have been considered if you hadn't done this.
- **Secondly:** It gives you immense confidence in making the approach to that person. You are likely to have more success if you are seen and perceived as being confident and you believe that your idea is a good one. Lack of planning can leave you feeling unsure as if you are on soft, flaky ground.

- **Thirdly:** It will help you decide what approach may work best, how you should make it and when. Communication must be tailored to the person as we are all unique. When God created you, he threw away the mould. So, it will help you decide how best to 'tailor' your approach to the person you wish to persuade.

This is about how you want to approach the person on the subject, bearing in mind much of the above. Is there something you need to consider regarding the climate and environment in which you intend to persuade?

Think also about you. Are you clear about what you want and precisely what you are trying to achieve? Do you want the other person to do something as a result, or do you want them to think differently? Are you in the right frame of mind? Are you ready to persuade with a positive 'we are both equal' mentality?

Planning will give you flexibility and credibility. It also helps give you the confidence to approach your influencing encounter from a favourable thinking window, where you feel you both have value and you are equals, not necessarily equals in position but equals in that you believe there are benefits you can offer this person. If you start your communication with them on a footing where you feel they are better than you, or you are better than they are (for whatever reason), then the approach, the style and the words will all be 'skewed' towards that thinking.

And that's not good...

So, let us move on and start to think about the person you are trying to persuade and to the second part of the PERSUADE acronym which is Expanding our understanding.