

Pump up Your Persuasive Powers!

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The art of persuasion is the ability to gain trust. It's cultivated when someone believes you're honestly communicating with them, and that you understand their needs. This is influenced by a complex combination of factors, including how they judge your credibility, character, attitude, appearance, choice of words, body language, and other aspects of your demeanor.

Gaining the confidence and trust of others, whether in a personal or professional situation, sometimes takes some convincing. Some skeptics are reluctant to trust anyone and that's always a big barrier to forming productive connections. Trust is usually withheld until people gain the evidence they need to put their trust in another; only then will their doubts subside. Your job as a conscious connector is to build confidence in others and provide them with just reasons they need to trust what you say and do. To properly position a connection for mutual benefit and success involves the gentle art of persuasion.

Persuasion is the act of influencing a person, by appealing to his or her reason or emotion, into taking a certain course of action. Although the choice has the appearance of being made independently, it is in fact being influenced by your powers of persuasion. Persuasive prowess can be a significant influence, valuable in both personal and professional arenas. To increase your ability to influence others, learn to design persuasive messages that target people's needs, beginning with answering any questions they might have about how a particular request, product, service, policy, or new course of action will make a difference.

The art of persuasion and influence is different from manipulation, which has strong ties to control, pressure and dominance. While manipulation sows the bitter seeds of resentment, defensiveness, and distrust, persuasion enhances the decision making process and gains cooperation of others willingly; you are simply introducing them to the value and corresponding benefits of making a particular choice. True persuasive power is the ability to demonstrate to others how certain decisions satisfy their needs and are in their own best interests.

Based on the book, “Get Along with Anyone, Anytime, Anywhere ... 8 keys to creating enduring connections with customers, co-workers .. even kids” by Arnold Sanow and Sandra Strauss, www.getalongwithanyone.com here are 5 steps for influencing the outcomes that you want and enhancing your persuasive prowess:

1. **Target your messages to what others want or need.** By focusing on what they want or need, you connect to their concerns directly. Do they want to; improve relationships with friends and family?, Make more business contacts?, Build new friendships?, Manage or save time?, Manage or save money?, Reduce stress?, Impress others?, Become financially secure?, Enhance their self image?, Increase profits?, gain recognition and acceptance?, and others.
2. **Communicate clearly to accelerate the other persons understanding.**
Ask yourself;
 - How does my message accommodate their needs, interests and values?
 - What questions might I have at this point?
 - Am I articulate and using the right words?
 - Is my language descriptive?
 - Have I provided examples or stories to improve understanding?
 - What other information might they need?
3. **Inspire the other person’s confidence by providing evidence and showing enthusiasm:**
 - Provide information that is relevant to their needs
 - Document information from reliable sources
 - Provide information that helps them understand the solution or problem
 - Demonstrate enthusiasm to make your statements compelling
4. **Enhance retention: Think of what you want others to remember about your message.** Ask yourself, “How can I make it unforgettable?” Ask them for their reactions to your ideas.
5. **Request an action: Ask the other person to take the desired action.** It may seem obvious to you, if you’ve gone through all the steps and they appear ready to say “Yes.” Yet it requires following through

with them to obtain their signature, check, credit card, consent to the terms, or whatever else is desired.

The proof of your persuasive power is whether it prompts people to respond in the way you want. Did they buy your product or service? Agree to work with you? or Take the action you want?

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