

Notes: YES! 50 Secrets from the Science of Persuasion
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Pradeep Anand, April 2015, www.seeta.com

1. Show Social Proof: It's the famous change from "Call now, the operators are standing by" to "If the line is busy, call again", that greatly improved the call volume by creating the impression that everybody else is trying to buy the same product. Most people are followers.
2. Show more Social Proof: A person similar to them giving a reference, the more the persuasion.
3. Promoting Negative Behaviors: Don't provide social proof for negative behaviors. It promotes negative behaviors. Provide social proof for positive behaviors.
4. Magnetic Middle: Applaud positive behavior but beware of the magnetic middle. Applauding middle behavior affects under- and over-performers to achieve average performances.
5. Choices/Decision Making: Too many choices and options complicates decision making and defeats it.
6. Value: Value of something declines when it is offered as a "free" gift. Inform or remind customers about the true value of the gift that is being offered "at no cost" instead of "free"
7. Choices: Positioning choices for decision making. Having decoy products above and below the preferred product improves sales of the middle product.
8. Persuading with Fear: Fear, without steps, paralyzes; fear, with steps, persuades. Pair a message conveying a potential threat with a clear, specific and easy-to-follow plan.
9. Initiate Reciprocity: Who can I help? Reciprocity trumps liking. Indebtedness instills a social obligation to support us in the future.
10. Personalize: Handwritten notes are very effective. Bad handwriting hurts, good handwriting helps. Easy to read. Use Post-It Notes.
11. Reciprocity: Genuinely personal, significant and unexpected gifts go a long way in garnering reciprocal behavior.
12. Reciprocity+ Social Obligation: To increase participation in a "giving" program, you should give first and then ask others to join in.
13. Value of Favors: For the doer, it's like wine—gets better with age. For the recipient, it's like bread—it is assumed to be deserved and gets stale with time. Receivers may think they did not need the help at that time, while doers may think they went the extra mile.
14. Commitment: Getting started with small steps. Example: a "brief" survey.

15. Commitment: When wanting to change behavior, to get commitment plant a seed of that trait, label or belief that needs to be achieved. “We know you had a choice. Thank you for choosing us.” “I knew I was in an above-average class then I walked in!”
16. Commitment: When people have publicly stated that they’ll perform a socially desirable behavior, they’ll be motivated to behave consistently with the commitment they have made. Conversely, this can work against you too—when negotiating don’t make adversaries announce their settlement numbers in public. They will adhere to original positions, making it difficult to reach an agreement.
17. Commitment: To get commitment, write it down.
18. Changing Habits: The new habit will provide the same or better rewards as the old habit. Rewards include values, beliefs and practices.
19. Reciprocity: “He who has done you kindness will be more ready to do you another, than he whom you yourself obliged.” Benjamin Franklin. People are strongly motivated to change their attitudes in ways that are consistent with their behavior.
20. Commitment: Ask for small favors. Low threshold. Even a penny with help; more donors, with no difference in average donation per donor.
21. Social Proof at Auctions: Because starting prices for auctions act as something as a barrier to entry, lower starting prices are better for encouraging participation by as many people as possible. Prospective bidders considering an item that started off at a low price would find social proof/validation that the item is of value because so many people are bidding on the item, and this validation would spur them to join the bidding. Bidders, especially who get in early, are likely to spend more time and effort updating their bids. In order to justify their efforts, they stay in the process for a longer time, raising their bids even higher.
22. Source Credibility: Even blatantly paid “unbiased sources” are more effective than blowing your own horn.
23. Performance: Teams are better than individuals if you don’t count votes in the end and leader makes the final decision.
24. Performance: Unchallenged leaders and meek followers create vicious circles of failure.
25. Performance: Team “groupthink” kills. Cohesiveness doesn’t make better teams.
26. Performance: A true dissenter is better for better decisions than a devil’s advocate. The former has a personal stake in dissenting; to the latter, it’s a role.
27. Performance: Error-based training is better than success-based training. Training should be based on errors committed in the past and how they could and can be avoided.

28. Trust & Source Credibility: Mentioning small flaws in your product/service, increases overall credibility of the message. Mentioning a small drawback creates perception that the company advertising the product is honest and trustworthy.
29. Positioning: Two-sided persuasive appeals that shows clear connection between a negative attribute and positive attribute work. Pair the dark cloud with a silver lining. Restaurant: Little space, cozy atmosphere. Solo company, you get 100% of our experience and attention. Follow drawback with a virtue that neutralizes the drawback.
30. Trust: When playing the blame game, point fingers internally rather than externally.
31. Trust & Blame: Blame technology before people. We are more forgiving of technical errors than human errors. Technical errors can be corrected and fixed, while Human errors need to be treated and may or may not work.
32. Trust: More positive responses if you share similarities. We feel positive towards some subtle things that are associated with ourselves, even our names. Strive to bring out similarities.
33. Processing Fluency: People's names have significant impact on their decisions—career, product choices. Avoid uncommon letter in naming products—Z, Q, X. Use client's name or company name as often as you can.
34. Trust: Imitate people's behavior. Mirror people's behavior, even during negotiations. Imitation is a great form of persuasion.
35. Trust: Authenticity is critical. Ben Franklin again—"Search others for their virtues". Increases authenticity of interactions. When we search for what we like about someone, we like them more.
36. Value & Scarcity: People value objects that are scarce. Be different in important ways and also scarce.
37. Behavioral Economics: People don't like to lose something and are less attracted to gaining. Loss aversion. Make people avoid a loss, miss something than gain something. Potential losses figure far more heavily in managers' decision making than the same things presented as gains. Instead of presenting something as a saving or a gain, more persuasive to frame the initiative in terms of losing that amount if it fails to get adopted. {What will you lose if you fail to adopt my methods, elect me? Avoid revenue and margin loss. Can you afford more revenue and margin loss?}
38. Trust Factor: Give people a reason for something you ask them to do. "Because" is a great word to use, even if the reason is flimsy. Get a set of reasons why people use my services.
39. Ease or Difficulty of Imagining: Judgments are often based on ease or difficulty of the process of generating results. Ask clients to generate a large number (example: ten) of reasons for using the competition. The harder it is to do so,

the better your goods and services look in comparison. Concrete images are more likely to be effective than abstract ones.

40. Fluency: People have affection for words that they can pronounce, even stock symbols. Persuasiveness of a handwritten message is influenced by the quality of the handwriting: the worse the handwriting, the less persuasive the message. Use easy to read fonts and keep language simple.

41. Processing Fluency: Rhymes improve processing fluency.

*I wonder if I committed the crime,
And tell people what I do in rhyme.
Would it be more seductive?
Would it be more effective?
Or, would it be just a waste of time?*

*But rhyming to me comes naturally,
Though I am challenged linguistically,
Rhyming words
Are for the birds,
I prefer to write sentences laconically.*

42. Comparison: Nothing exists in isolation; only in comparison to other objects.

Example: Can you think of ten reasons why McKinsey is a great consulting company and why you should use them? Here are some reasons why you should consider me as a consultant the next time you are faced with the situation of stagnant revenue and margin loss. I can deliver astounding results at a significantly lower cost. Like a good engineer, I have designed a process that has been proven to deliver great results. The process answers three questions: where are we? Where should we go? How do we get there? I teach MBA students at Rice University this intricate process and I will train your employees in this process in your business context, to empower them to produce great results for the longer term. An MBA quality education at no cost to your employees. It's part of the package.

43. Incentives: Reframe a program that has started but is incomplete rather than one that has not yet begun. Give credit at the start of the program rather than at the end.

44. Being different and unexpected helps: You do get positive responses to being different. Unusual names can help but keep it simple.

45. Use memory aids in any way you can to keep the message going.

46. Compliance: Mirrors and eyes all over the place improves compliance. People act more consistently with their values.

47. Sad buyers pay more for an item than happy buyers. Research 30% more than neutral buyers. Sad sellers were willing to take 33% lesser than neutral buyers.

48. Negotiation/Decision Making: Offers laden with emotion, are not rational. So avoid negotiating when emotional. Emotional experience can have detrimental impact on "decision-making".

49. Negotiation/Decision Making: Being tired, distracted, multitasking hurts! Get more sleep!
50. Likeability: Caffeine increases likeability. Make presentations after a coffee break.
51. Communication Medium: Women are more persuaded personally. Men, no difference, regardless of the medium.
52. Trust: Those who behave in an untrustworthy manner can do little to regain the public's trust.
53. Social Proof/Authority: People rely on those with superior knowledge for wisdom for guidance on how to respond to situations. Showing references' credentials help.

THE END!

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