

YES!

50 Scientifically Proven Ways To Be Persuasive

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The Web site for this book is at www.scienceofyes.com

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MAIN IDEA

When it comes to your ability to persuade others, it's often the little things that count. Sometimes just a small and subtle change can have a huge impact on your success in being more persuasive. This is an area where a scientific approach is much better than winging it. To be specific, there are 50 persuasion strategies which have been scientifically proven to work. Many of these strategies are disarmingly simple and easy to implement but they have all been validated and rigorously proven to work in the real world. If you understand and then properly employ these strategies, you will become more persuasive in your work, in your personal life and everywhere else.

Most people automatically assume persuasion is more art than science. This is incorrect. Persuasion has been studied academically for more than half a century. It has been well established there are, in fact, six universal principles of social influence:

- Reciprocation – we feel obligated to respond in kind when others do us a good turn.
- Authority – we typically tend to look to experts to show us the best way to do things.
- Consistency – we generally like to act in rational ways which are consistent with our prior commitments and personal values.
- Scarcity – the less available anything is or looks like becoming, the more we want it.
- Likeability – the more we like a person, the greater the pressure we feel to say yes to them.
- Social proof – we like to look to what others do or have done as a guide for how we should behave.

Despite all this research, most people are perfectly comfortable relying on their gut instincts and therefore overlook the large body of research which has been carried out on persuasion. The reasons why this is so are varied and may include:

- A perception that people learn persuasion intuitively by virtue of living their lives and interacting with others and therefore there is no need to acquire learning from others who are skilled in this area.
- Many people are more comfortable relying on their own introspection when it comes to analyzing their motivations for doing things and assume everyone else thinks the same way.
- It's easy to assume persuasion is more "touchy-feely" or subjective than the more established academic disciplines like economics, finance or public policy.

All of these reasons tend to generate an overconfidence which ultimately means people miss out on opportunities to make simple changes which increase the results of their initiatives and actions. This is a shame and a wasted opportunity. Instead of blithely ignoring the possibility that persuasion follows set principles, it makes sense to learn what has been proven to work and what does not. After all, who doesn't want to enhance the fruits of their efforts just by making a few easy changes in the way things are done?

"Persuasion has often been referred to as an art, but in a sense, this is a misclassification. Although talented artists can certainly be taught skills to harness their natural abilities, the truly remarkable artist seems to possess a certain level of talent and creativity that no instructor is capable of instilling in another person. Fortunately, that isn't the case with persuasion. Even people who consider themselves persuasion lightweights – people who feel they couldn't convince a child to play with toys – can learn to become persuasion heavyweights by understanding the psychology of persuasion and by using the specific persuasion strategies that have been scientifically proven to be effective."

– Noah Goldstein, Steve Martin & Robert Cialdini

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inconvenience can actually improve persuasiveness 2. Look for testimonials people will identify with 3. Provide lots of positive role models, not negative 4. Reward appropriate behavior openly and generously 5. To maximize interest, limit your customer choices 6. Always quantify the value of any bonus products 7. Adding a top-of-the-line product can be advantageous 8. You can't scare people to buy – provide a solid plan 9. Never forget the power of reciprocity 10. Put personalized sticky notes on all your paperwork 11. Great gifts are significant, unexpected and personalized 12. Why no-strings-attached has tremendous pull 13. Allow for the impact of the passage of time 14. Look for small steps that lead to giant leaps 15. Become a master of persuasion 16. Ask simple questions and reap the rewards 17. Always get people to write down their commitments 18. It's possible to fight consistency with more consistency 19. Enlist Benjamin Franklin's help 20. The "even a penny will help" approach 21. Start low to finish high 22. Get other people to sing your praises 23. Always seek input from others, and then make the call 24. Always seek out alternative points of view 25. The best type of training focuses on how to avoid errors | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 26. Embrace transparency to turn weakness into strength 27. Pair your faults with their silver linings 28. If you make a mistake, 'fess up 29. If you have any similarities, bring them to the surface 30. People have a natural tendency to be reminded 31. Mirroring back really does work 32. Authenticity matters when dealing with people 33. Use the power of scarcity to good effect 34. Loss aversion is always a powerful driver of behavior 35. Including "because" will boost your persuasiveness 36. Make it easy for people to understand the differences 37. Never underestimate the power of simplicity 38. Rhyme can make your influence climb 39. Perceptual contrast can enhance persuasion 40. Always give people a head start on loyalty programs 41. Unexpected descriptive names can add some zing 42. Use memory aids to bulk up your persuasiveness 43. Even a mirror can enhance persuasiveness 44. Emotions can seriously impact on persuasiveness 45. Don't multitask when making important decisions 46. Inject some coffee breaks into your presentations 47. Try an e-mail free day each week 48. Consider the impact of language differences 49. Take into account cultural conditioning 50. Be sensitive about letting your call go to voicemail |
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