



THE SCIENCE AND PSYCHOLOGY OF PERSUASION

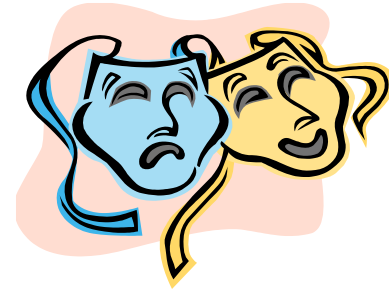
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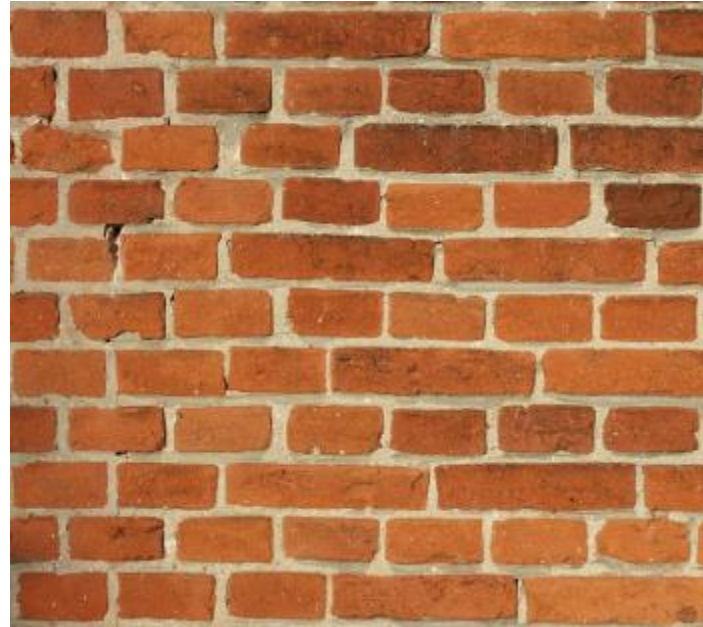
My Background

- M.A. in Theater, 1 yr. of Ph.D study
- 23 years as technical writer/editor, including 13 yrs. at MorphoTrust USA
- President, Society for Technical Communication (STC), Twin Cities chapter



I'm Fascinated with Persuasion!

- I'm *not* a scientist or a psychologist! I'm a technical writer and editor.
- I kept getting stuck on why people behave the way they do.



Persuasion



- **A form of social influence.** The process of guiding oneself or another toward adopting an idea, attitude, or action by rational and symbolic (though not always logical) means.

www.wikipedia.com

- The ability to **induce beliefs and values in others** using specific strategies.

Kevin Hogan

- To persuade is “**to prevail on (a person) to do something**, as by advising or urging.”

www.dictionary.com



Laws of Persuasion

- 1. Law of Reciprocity**
When someone gives you something with a perceived value, you respond with the desire to give something back.
- 2. Law of Contrast**
If two items are different, they appear more different when placed close together in time and space.
- 3. Law of Friends**
When someone asks you to do something and you perceive that they have your best interest at heart, you are strongly motivated to do it.
- 4. Law of Expectancy**
When someone you believe in expects you to do something, you will tend to do it.
- 5. Law of Association**
We like products, services, and ideas endorsed by people we respect.
- 6. Law of Consistency**
When someone announces a stand on an issue, he or she will defend the stand.
- 7. Law of Scarcity**
When someone perceives that a desired object is scarce, the object increases in value.
- 8. Law of Conformity**
Most people agree to proposals that would be acceptable to a majority of others in their peer group.
- 9. Law of Power**
People have power over others to the degree that they are perceived as having greater authority, strength, or expertise.

The Persuasion Process

- Establish trust and credibility with the person
- Find out about what the other person wants, needs, and values.
- Listen to the other person to hear what is being said.
- Pay attention to both verbal and nonverbal messages.
- Communicate that you genuinely care about him or her, and that your goal will be beneficial to both of you.



Persuasion and Influence

- Dale Carnegie, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, 1936
- Basic, common-sense guidelines:
 - Don't criticize, condemn, or complain.
 - Give honest and sincere appreciation.
 - Encourage others to talk about themselves and listen.
 - Make the other person feel important – and do it sincerely.
- **Learn to manage emotions and honestly try to understand the other person's needs**

Persuasion and WIN/WIN

- A life philosophy
- Focus on other person's needs, values, and desires
- The Double Win

Dennis Waitley,
The Psychology of Winning

- **If it isn't WIN/WIN,
it is NO DEAL**

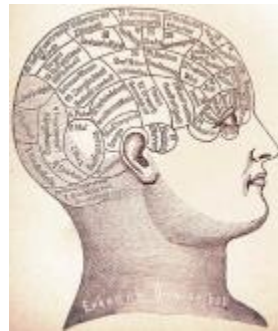
Steven Covey,
7 Habits of Highly Effective People



Definition of Psychology

- Science of the mind or of mental states and processes.
- Used “to understand individuals and groups by both establishing general principles and researching specific cases.”

www.wikipedia.com



Science of Human Behavior

- *The Power of Habit*, Charles Duhigg, 2012
- **Humans are creatures of habit.**
- The brain says “No!” to all but the most familiar requests or behaviors.
- A majority of our behavior is habitual, using well-established wiring in the brain.
- New behavior starts new neural pathways. It takes 5-30 days (repeated daily) to form a new habit.
- But the old wiring remains in place!



Psychology of Human Behavior

- How does a person react when you say: “You should do that!”
- **We don’t really *know ourselves*.** Strangers are almost as good at predicting our behavior as we are.
- **We don’t really know what we *want*.** (We *think* we know what we want—what will make us happy, but when we get it, we don’t feel the way we thought we would!)
- **We see ourselves in a better light than we see others.**



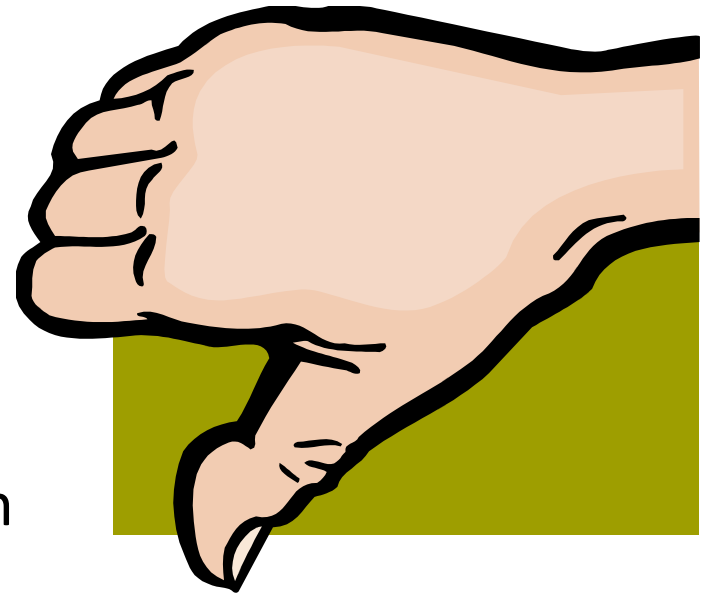


We Have Two Minds

Conscious	Unconscious (nonconscious)
Future-focused	Now-focused
Flexible	Rigid
Observes and analyzes	Detects patterns and types
Thinks about decisions	Makes rapid fire decisions (fight or flight?)
Wants to be accurate	Wants to feel good and avoid pain
Can consider, make changes	Afraid of changes
Sets goals, pursues goals	Reacts to environment
Sensitive to positive information	Sensitive to negative information

The First Few Seconds

- We unconsciously assess a person, noting first impressions within seconds of seeing them.
 - Who is she like?
 - Is that good?
 - Is she attractive?
 - What's unique about her?
 - What's familiar about her?
 - Does she have a high or low status in this group?
- We make a thumbs up or thumbs down judgment on the person
- Most people get a No--even before eye contact or hello
- **This is normal human behavior-expect it!**



Is Reason or Emotion in Charge?

- The **rational** mind has traditionally been considered key in decision-making
- Plato had metaphor of chariot driver with horses:
 - Reason is the charioteer (the thinking mind)
 - Emotions are the horses (the animal mind, which must be controlled).
- The Enlightenment
 - Descartes: I think, therefore I am.



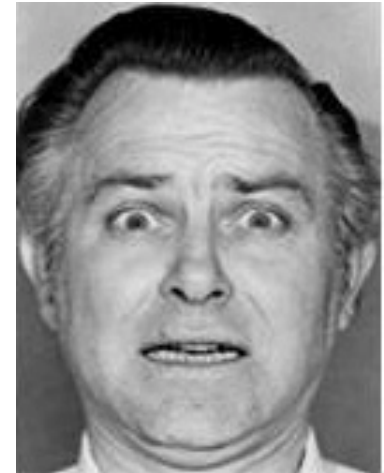
Research on the Loss of Emotion

- Antonio Damasio, *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain*, 1990s
- Patient had surgery to remove a tumor; his intellect remained the same; his emotions were lost; he lost the ability to make decisions and function socially; his life fell apart
- Similar case in 1800s with a railroad foreman who suffered a head injury; damaged part of brain involved in social conventions, ethical rules, personal and social dimensions.
- **Breakthrough in understanding the key role that emotions play in making decisions.**



Emotions in Making Decisions

- Jonah Lehrer, *How We Decide*, 2009: our best decisions are a blend of both feeling and reason.
- Example of emotions in deciding from highly experienced radar operator on British ship during 1st Iraq War
 - **Neuroscience: our brain is designed for learning from predictions.**
 - To get better at something, search for your errors, and dissect decisions that could have been a little better.
- Other situations require more reason (and less emotion)
 - People gamble on slot machines, pick the wrong stocks, and run up excessive credit card debt – you can't learn from predicting here



Emotions in Making Decisions

- Jonathan Haidt, *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People are Divided by Politics and Religion*, 2012.
- **Metaphor: the elephant (emotion and intuition) and the rider (reasoning).**
- People have gut feelings, like disgust or disrespect, that drive their moral judgments.
- We make judgments rapidly, intuitively, and we are good at making up stories to explain our judgments.
- To change someone's mind, especially on a moral matter, you've got to talk to their elephant
- Empathy is an antidote to righteousness.



Emotional Intelligence

- Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*, 2005
 - Being self-aware of your own emotions
 - Managing your emotions
 - Motivating yourself (self-discipline)
 - Recognizing emotions in others
 - Handling relationships
- **Self-control with managing emotions is a better predictor of success in life than IQ**



Admiration, Karl Witkowski

Nonverbal Communication

- 93% of communication is beyond the words
 - Words (7%), tone of voice (38%), and body language (55%)
- Congruency for verbal/nonverbal messages
 - A person says: “No, I didn’t do it,” but subtly nods their head yes is not congruent.
- Microexpressions
 - In press conference, Susan Smith (no real tears; no forehead tension) says we have to get our boys back; her husband says the same thing, but shows tension and emotion on across his forehead



Body Language

- If words contradict body language; the body language message is more powerful
- When trying to influence someone:
 - Pay attention to your physical positioning
 - Use rapport for physical appearance, vocal cues, posture, physiology, and breathing
- If you act powerfully, you begin to think powerfully*



The Art of Listening

- *The Zen of Listening*, Victoria Shafir, 2000
 - Speech-language pathologist
 - A 69 yr. old man showed up at the end of the day
 - She listened to him for 15 minutes
 - His doctor reported back, and asked about her meeting with the man



Not Listening

- Listening selectively to what we want to hear
- Telling others what they don't seem to understand
- Asking too many questions
- Judging people badly or dismissing them if they do not do what we recommend. (Then we waste time by reinforcing and re-explaining our point of view.)
- **If you don't get to know where someone is really coming from (background, expectations), you can't understand him or her and trust will be gone.**



Listening

- Willingness to try and see the world through the eyes of the speaker
 - The Magic “If”: If I were that person, how would I feel, what would scare me, what would I want, etc.?
- **When a person is given a chance to tell his views without the threat of judgment or advice (even if you do not agree), you have taken the first step toward creating good feelings**



Attentive Listening is Beneficial

- Heart rate and oxygen consumption is reduced, blood pressure is lowered.
- Contact with others promotes well-being and self-expression (good for you health).
- You can promote the good health of others by listening to them, affirming their perspective, and reducing their stress.





Closing Thoughts

- Our behavior is much more influenced by our unconscious mind than our conscious mind (90% and 10%?).
- Our emotions play a large role in decision-making, such as helping us to learn from mistakes when our predictions are wrong.
- **Persuade by starting with yourself:**
 - **Make the most of your appearance**
 - **Ask yourself, how am I coming across; how do I sound?**
- **Then imagine what it feels like to be the other person:**
 - **Ask yourself how he/she thinks and feels**
 - **Listen and watch for what he/she is really saying**



QUESTIONS?

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