

Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion
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chapter 1 weapons of influence.

- A well-known principle of human behavior says that when we ask someone to do us a favor we will become more successful if we provide a reason.
 - “Excuse me, I have five pages. May I use the Xerox machine because I’m in a rush?”
 - Suppose a man enters a fashionable men’s store and says that he wants to buy a three piece suit and the sweater. If you’re the salesperson, which would you show him first to make him likely to spend the most money? Clothing stores instruct sales personnel to sell the costly item first. Common sense might suggest the reverse: the man just spent a lot of money to purchase a suit, he may then be reluctant to spend very much more than the purchase of the sweater. They behave in accordance with what the contrast principle would suggest: sell the suit first, because when it comes time to look at sweaters, even expensive ones, their prices will not seem as high in comparison. A man might balk at the idea of spending \$95 for sweater, but if he just bought a \$495 suit, and \$95 sweater does not seem expensive. The same principle applies to a man who wishes to buy the accessories; shirt, shoes, belt to go along with the new suit. Contrary to the common sense view, the evidence supports the contrast principle prediction. The interesting thing is that even when a man enters a clothing store with the express purpose of purchasing a suit, he will almost always pay more for whatever’s accessories he buys if he buys them after the suit purchase than before.
 - It is much more profitable for salespeople to present the expensive item first, not only because to fail to do so will lose the influence of the contrast principle; to fail to do so will also cause the principle to work actively against them.
 - Clever use of perceptual contrast is by no means confined to clothes. I came across a technique that engaged in the contrast principle was investigating undercover compliance tactics of real estate companies. To learn the ropes, I was accompanying a company retail salesman on the weekend of showing houses to prospective home buyers. The salesman, will call him Phil, was to give me tips to help me through my break-in period. One thing I quickly noticed that was whenever Phil began showing a new set of customers potential buys, it would start with a couple of undesirable houses. I asked him about it, and he laughed. They were what he called setup properties. The company maintained a rundown house or two on its lists at inflated prices. These houses were not intended to be sold to customers but to be shown to them, so that the genuine properties in the company’s inventory would benefit from the comparison. Not all the sales staff made use of the setup passes, but Phil did. He said he liked to watch his prospects eyes light up when he showed the place that he really want to sell them after they’d seen the rundown house. The house I got them spotted for looks really great after they’ve seen a couple of dumb.

Chapter 2: reciprocity pg 17.

- A few years ago, a university professor tried a little experiment. He sent Christmas cards to a sample of perfect strangers. Although he expected some reaction, the response she

received was amazing— holiday cards addressed to him came pouring back from people who never met him nor heard of him. The great majority of those who returned cards never inquired into the identity of the unknown Professor. They received his holiday greeting cards, and automatically returned one to him.

- Because the rule for reciprocity governs the compromise process, it is possible to use an initial concession as part of a highly effective compliance technique. The technique is simple one that we call the rejection then retreat technique. Suppose you want me to agree to a certain request. One way to increase the chances would be first to make a large request of me, one that I will most likely turn down. Then, after I have refused, you would make a smaller request that you were really interested in all along. Provided that you have structured your requests skillfully, I should view your second request as a concession to me and should feel inclined to respond with a concession of my own, the only one I would have immediately open to me—compliance with their second request.

Chapter 3: commitment and consistency. PG 57.

- Once we have made a choice and taken a stand, we will encounter personal and interpersonal pressures to behave consistently with that commitment. Those pressures will cause us to respond in ways that justify our earlier decision.
- I just happen to know how several of the big toy companies jack up their January and February sales. They start prior to Christmas with an attractive TV ad for certain special toy. The kids, naturally, want what they see and extract Christmas promises for these items from their parents. Now here's where the genius of the company's plan comes in: the undersupply the stores with the toys they've gotten the parents to promise. Most parents find those things sold out and are forced to substitute other toys of equal value. The toy manufacturers, of course, the point of supplying the stores with plenty of these substitutes. Then, after Christmas, the company start running the ads again for the other special toys. That uses up the kids to want those toys more than ever. They go running to their parents whining, you promised, you promised, and the adults go trudging off to the store to live up to their words.
- Suppose that you want to increase the number of people in your area who would agree to go door-to-door collecting donations for your favorite charity. Of course, now interesting uncharitable to the survey taker for themselves, many people said that they would volunteer for three hours. The consequence of this slide commitment process was a 700% increase in volunteers when, a few days later a representative did call and ask for the neighborhood to volunteer. Using the same strategy, but this time asking residents to predict whether they would vote on election day, a team of researchers were able to increase significantly the turnout in the US presidential election among those called. Perhaps an even more crafty commitment technique has been developed recently by telephone solicitors for charity. Have you noticed that the callers asking you to contribute to some cause or another these days seem to begin things by inquiring about your current health and well-being? "Hello Mr./Ms. target person's, how are you feeling this evening? Or how you doing today? The callers intent with this short introduction is not merely to seem friendly and caring. It is also to get you to respond—as you normally do to such polite,

- superficial inquiries. Once you have publicly stated that all is well, becomes much easier for the solicitor to corner you into eating it those whom all is not well: "I'm glad to see that, because inclined to ask you if you be willing to make a donation to help out the unfortunate victims of..."
- The tactic of starting with a little request in order to gain eventual compliance with related larger request has a name: foot in the door technique. The homeowners were asked to allow public service billboard to be installed on their front lawns. Again idea of just how the sun would look, they were shown a photograph depicting an attractive house, the view of which was almost clearly obscured by a very large, poorly lettered sign reading drive carefully. Although the request normally and understandably refused by the great majority, 83%, of the other residents in the area, this particular group of people reacted quite favorably. The prime reason for their startling compliance has to do with something that had happened to them about two weeks earlier: they had made a small commitment to driver safety. A different volunteer worker had come to their doors and asked them to accept and display a little three-inch square sign that read be a safe driver. Such a trifling request and nearly all of them had agreed to do. But the effects of that request were enormous because they had incidentally complied with a trivial safe driving request a couple weeks before, these homeowners became remarkably willing to comply with another larger request that was massive in size.
 - Notice that all of the foot in the door experts seem to be excited about the same thing: you can use small commitments to manipulate a person's self image; you can use them to turn citizens into public servants, prospects into customers, prisoners into collaborators.
 - "You were referred to me anonymously by one of your friends because they thought you were 'ready for this...interested in developing yourself...'"
 - "I am reaching out to you because I know how 'X' you are so I knew this offer would be for you"
 - Another common way for businesses to cash in on the magic of written declarations occurs through the use of innocent-looking promotional device. Before I began to study weapons of social influence, I used to wonder why big companies such as Procter and Gamble and general foods are always running those 25, 50, or 100 words or less testimonial contests. They all seem to be like. The contestant is to compose a short personal statement that begins with the words, why I like... And it goes on too laud the features of whatever cake mix or floor wax happens to be a at the issue. The company judges the entities and awards some stunningly large prize to the winner. What has puzzled me was what the companies got out of the deal. Often the contest requires no purchase, anyone submitting a single entry is eligible. Yet, companies appear to be strangely willing to incur the huge costs of contests after contest. I am no longer puzzled. The purpose behind the testimonial contest is the same as the purpose behind the political essay contest of the Chinese Communists. The aim is to get as many people as possible to go on record liking the product.
 - I remember it was after I heard about another scientific study showing that smoking causes cancer. Every one of those things came out, I used to get determined to quit, but I never could. This time, so I decide I had to do something. I'm a proud person. It matters to me if other people see me in a bad

light. So I thought, maybe I can use that price to help me dump this damn have it. So I made a list of all the people who I really wanted to respect me. Then I went out and got some blank business cards and I wrote on the back of each card, I promise you that I will never smoke another cigarette.

- Yet another reason that written commitments are so effective is that they require more work than verbal ones. And the evidence is clear that the more effort that goes into a commitment, the greater its ability to influence the attitude of the person who made it.
- All this has important implications for rearing children. It suggests that we should never have threatened our children to do things we want them truly to believe in. Such pressure will probably produce temporary compliance with our wishes. However, if we want more than just that, if we want the children to believe in their correctness of what they have done, if we want them to continue to perform the desired behavior when we are not present to apply those outside pressure is, then we must somehow arrange for them to accept any responsibility for the Action we want them to take.
- The interesting result was that, of the boys playing with the toy, 77% choice to play with the robot that had been forbidden to them earlier. Freeman's severe threat, which had been so successful six weeks before, was almost totally unsuccessful when he no longer was able to back it up with a punishment.
- Freeman then changed his procedure slightly with a second sample of boys. These boys were initially shown the array of 5 toys by Freeman and warned not to play with the robot while he was briefly out of the room because it is wrong to play with a robot. But this time, Freeman provided no strong threat to frighten a boy into compliance. He simply left the room and observed through the one-way mirror to see if his instructions against playing with the forbidden toy was enough. It was. Just as with the other sample, only one of the 22 boys touch the robot during the short time he was gone.
- Adult facing the child rearing experience can take a cue from the Freeman study. Suppose a couple wants to impress upon their daughter that lying is wrong. But strong, clear threat such as "it's bad to lie so if I catch you I'll cut your tongue out", might well be effective when the parents are present or when the girl thinks it can be discovered. But will not achieve the larger goal of convincing her that she does not want to lie because she thinks it's wrong. To do that, much subtler approach is required. A reason must be given that is just strong enough to get her to be truthful most of the time but is not so strong that she sees it as the obvious reason for her truthfulness.
- No matter which variety of the low balling is used, the sequence is the same: an advantage is offered that induces a favorable purchase decision, then, sometime after the decision has been made but before the bargain is sealed, the original purchase advantage is deftly removed. It seems almost incredible that customer would buy a car under these circumstances. Yet it works, not on everybody, of course but it is effective enough to be a staple compliance procedure.

Chapter 4: social proof.

- We view a behavior as more correct in a given situation to the degree that we see others performing it.

- People suffering from phobias can be rid of these extreme fears in an amazingly simple fashion. For instance, in an early study, nursery school age children chosen because they were terrified of dogs merely watched a little boy playing happily with the dog for 20 minutes a day. This exhibition produce such marked changes in the reactions of fearful children that after only four days, 67% of them were willing to climb into a playpen with a dog and remain confined there, petting and scratching it while everyone else left the room. Moreover, when the researchers tested the children's fear levels again one month later, they found that the improvement had not evaporated during that time, in fact the children were more willing than ever to interact with the dogs.
- And important practical discovery was made in a second study of children who are exceptionally afraid of dogs: to reduce their fears, it was not necessary to provide live demonstrations of another child playing with a dog, film clips had the same effect. And the most effective type of clips where those depicting not one but a variety of other children interacting with their dogs. Apparently the principle of social proof works best when the proof is provided by the actions of a lot of other people.
- The powerful influence of filmed examples in changing the behavior of children can be used as therapy for various problems. Some striking evidence is available in the research of psychologist Robert O'Connor on socially withdrawn preschool children. We have all seen children of this sort, terribly shy and standing alone at the fringes of the games and groups of their peers. O'Connor worried that long-term pattern of isolation was forming, even at an early age, that would create persistent difficulties in social comfort and adjustments through adulthood. In an attempt to reverse the pattern, O'Connor made a film containing 11 different scenes in a nursery school setting. Each scene begin by showing a different solitaire child watching some ongoing social activity and then actively joining the activity, to everyone's enjoyment. O'Connor selected a group of the most severe withdrawn children from for preschools and show them this film. The impact was impressive the isolates immediately began to interact with their peers at level equal to that of the normal children in the schools. Even more astonishing was that Connor found when he returned to observe 6 weeks later. While the withdrawn children who have not seen a kind of film remained isolated as ever, those who had viewed it without leaving their schools in the amount of social activity.
- Only 33% of the wallets were returned when the first finder was seen as dissimilar, the fully 70% were returned when she was thought to be a similar other. These results suggest an important qualification of the principle of social proof. We will use the actions of others to decide on proper behavior for ourselves, especially when we view those others as similar to ourselves.
- I could have kicked myself. Of course, it would be to little Tommy, not to a 6 foot 2 inch graduate student, that Chris would look for the most relevant information about what he could or should do. Haven't been more thoughtful about solving Chris's swimming problem, I could have employees Tommy's good example earlier.

Chapter 5: liking. The friendly thief.

- The clearest illustration I know of the professional exploitation of the liking rule is the Tupperware party.

- There was a man in Detroit, Joe Girard, who specialized in using the liking rule to sell Chevrolets. He became wealthy in the process, making more than \$200,000 a year. With such a salary, we might guess that he was a high level GM executive or perhaps the owner of a Chevrolet dealership. But no, he made his money as a salesman on the showroom floor. At what he did, he was phenomenal. For 12 years straight, he won the title as the number one car salesman, he averaged more than five cars and trucks sold every day he worked, and he has been called the world's greatest car salesman by the Guinness Book of World Records. For all his success, the formula sheet employed was surprisingly simple. It consisted of offering people just two things: a fair price and someone that I like to buy from. And that's it, he claimed in an interview, finding the salesman they like, plus the price, but them both together and you get a deal.
- In fact, the attractive defendant were twice as likely to avoid jail as the unattractive ones.
- One of the most influential is similarity, we like people who are similar to us.
- Another way requesters can manipulate similarity to increase liking and compliance is to claim that they have backgrounds and interests similar to ours. Car salesman, for example a train to look for evidence of such things while examining the customers trade-in. If there is camping gear in the trunk, the salesman might mention later on how he loves to get away from the city whenever you can, if there are golf balls on the back seat, he might remind that he hopes the rain will hold off until he can play 18 holes as he scheduled for later in the day, if you know this is that the car was purchased out of state, he might ask where the customer is from and report was surprised that he or she was born there as well.
- Remember Joe Gerard, the world's greatest car salesman. He did something that, on the face of it seems foolish and costly. Each month he is sent everyone of his more than 13,000 former customers a holiday greeting card containing a personal message. The holiday greeting changed from month to month, Happy New Year, happy Thanksgiving, but the message printed on the face of the card never varied. It read I like you. As he explained, there's nothing else on the card. Nothing but my name I'm just telling them I like them.
- Often we don't realize that our attitude toward something has been influenced by the number of times we've been exposed to it in the past.
- Notice too, that's a typical fundraising dinner speeches, the appeals for further contribution and height and effort never come before the meal is served, only during or after.

Chapter 6: authority. Directed difference.

- However, his status of Cambridge was represented differently in each of the classes. To one class, he was presented as a student, - a second class, a demonstrator, to another a lecture and yet to another, a senior lecturer and to a 5th, a professor. After he left the room, each class was asked to estimate his height. It was found that each increase in status, the same and grew and perceived height by an average of a half inch, so that the professor he was seen as two and a half inches taller than as the student.

Chapter 7: scarcity. The rule of few.

- The idea of potential loss plays a large role in human decision making. In fact, people seem to be more motivated by the thought of losing something than by the thought of gaining something of equal value. For instance, homeowners told how much money they could lose from inadequate insulation are more likely to insulate their homes than those told how much money they could save.
- Pamphlets urging young women to check for breast cancer through self examination are significantly more successful if they state their case in terms of what would stand to be lost, eg. You can lose several potential health benefits by failing to spend only 5 minutes each month during breast self examination, rather than gained eg. You can gain several potential health benefits by spending only 5 minutes each month during breast cancer self examination.
- The researchers wanted to see how quickly the toddlers would make contact with the toys under these conditions. Their findings were clear period when the barrier was too small to restrict access to the toy behind it, the boys showed no special preference for either of the toys, on the average, the toy next to the barrier it was touch just as quickly as the one behind. But when the barrier was big enough to be a true obstacle, the boys went directly to the obstructed toy, making contact with it three times faster than with the unobstructed toy. In all, the boys in this study demonstrated the classic terrible twos response to a limitation of their freedom: outright defiance.
- When students learned that a speech opposing coed dorms on campus would be banned, they became more opposed to the idea of coed dorms. Thus, without ever hearing the speech, they became more sympathetic to this argument. This is the word some possibility that especially clever individuals holding a weak or unpopular position can get us to agree with that position by arranging to have their message restricted.
- One set of customers heard a standard sales presentation before being asked for their orders. Another set of customers heard the standard sales presentation plus information that the supply of the imported beef was likely to be scarce in the upcoming months. A third group received the standard sales presentation and information about the low supply of beef, -, however I also learned that the beef supply news was not generally available information - - had come, there were told from the executive contacts that the company had. That's the customers who received this latest sales presentation blaring that not only was the availability of the product limited, so also was the news concerning it, the scarcity double whammy.
- Much like the other effective weapons of influence, the scarcity principle is more effective at some times than others. And important practical problem, then is to find out when scarcity works best on us. A great deal can be learned in this regard from an experiment devised by social psychologist Steven Worchel. The basic procedure used by his research team with simple colon participant in a customer preference study were given a chocolate chip cookie from a jar and ask to taste and rate its quality. For half of the Raiders, the jar contains 10 cookies, for the other half, it contains just two. As you might expect from the scarcity principle, when the cookie was one of only two available, it was rated far more favorably than when there was 10 of them. The cookie and short supply was rated as more desirable to eat in the future, thus a more attractive consumer item.
- The lesson applies as well to the politics of family and country. The parent who grants privileges or enforces Rules erratically invites rebellious by unwittingly established freedoms for the child. The parent who only sometimes prohibits between meals sweets. At that point, enforcing the road

becomes a much more difficult and explosive matter because the child is no longer merely lacking what they never possessed right but is losing an established one. As we have seen in the case of the political freedoms and especially pertinent to the present discussion, chocolate chip cookies, people see a thing as more desirable when it has recently become less available than it was being scarce all along. We should not be surprised, then when research shows that parents who enforce discipline in consistently produce generally rebellious children.

- This finding highlights the importance of competition in the pursuit of limited resources. Not only do we want the same item more when it scarce, we want it the most when we are in competition for it. Advertisers often try to exploit this tendency in us. And their ads, we learn that popular demand for an item is so great we must hurry to buy.