



Six Fundamental, Psychological Strategies of Persuasion

by Alan Ovson

We all know that the best negotiators, salespeople, and conversationalists are able to persuade others to their point of view. These people understand that persuasion is the act of engaging others, creating trust, and then motivating people to voluntarily change a belief, attitude, or behavior.

Outstanding persuaders motivate others to think differently or buy things they did not previously plan to. These persuaders often use six psychological strategies that develop trust. Persuasion is about trust: The more a person trusts you, the easier it is to get them to change their minds.

Here are the six fundamental, psychological strategies that build trust and help persuade others:

STRATEGY 1: LIKING

The first step towards a trusting relationship: They like you.

The more someone likes you, the easier it is to get them to listen to you. The more they listen, the better chance you have to get them to see another point of view and change their perception. If you are genuinely friendly, listen attentively, and are open to other points of view with everyone you interact with, you will be seen as likeable. Likeability is big. Remember to smile; a smile develops comfort and starts relationships on the right track.

STRATEGY 2: RECIPROCITY

Give something. It makes it easier to get something back.

When you do something for someone else or give something to them, you produce a feeling of indebtedness in the other person. They'll want to do something for you too. In sales and negotiations this is accomplished with strategies such as offering free samples, sharing information, and making small concessions.

STRATEGY 3: CONSISTENCY AND COMMITMENT

Two huge elements in building trust.

The more consistent and committed you can be, the more other people perceive your interest and determination. This perception makes them willing to trust your information and change their ideas. Consistency and commitment are high social values. Inconsistency and lack of commitment are not.



STRATEGY 4: SOCIAL PROOF

If other people do or think something, then it must be good.

If the Smiths and Jones like the idea, why shouldn't everyone? The more you can cite facts and proofs and define who likes your idea, the more other people will be open to being part of the group. People determine what behavior is correct in a given situation to the degree they see others performing it. If everyone else likes what you are offering, people generally think, "It must be good." Social proof is the psychological basis for giving testimonials. If many others are doing or thinking something, shouldn't you be doing or thinking the same thing?

STRATEGY 5: AUTHORITY

Well-known "Dr. So And So" says it's the best thing you can do.

Well, if he says that, it must be good for me too. In negotiations, when you cite a higher authority who the other side is likely to respect, your message becomes much more appealing. People trust authority and are used to showing allegiance to people they respect. From a psychological perspective, people like having the advice of an authority figure because they don't have to research or spend time and energy thinking. An authority they trust has already done that for them. Make sure people know that you are an authority also. Cite your credentials or expertise and make sure they know that you are a leader in your field.

STRATEGY 6: SCARCITY

"If there aren't many more, I better grab one now."

Scarcity often motivates people to reduce their objections and buy because, if they don't buy now, whatever it is will be gone. People want to be free to make choices, and psychologically, if something is not available, it restricts the feeling of freedom. If an item is scarce, you can persuade prospects and customers more easily. Scarcity can mean a limited quantity, a limited time at that price, or something that will never be offered again.

These six persuasion strategies, along with the use of dominant buying modes and [the three principles of sales psychology](#), give you a big advantage when negotiating and closing sales. The number of deals you close is a direct reflection of your ability to motivate potential buyers, overcome their objections, and persuade them to agree with you.

Contact Ovson Communications today for information on how you can bring Alan Ovson and his expert sales, negotiation, and persuasion advice to you and your organization.

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