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Focus

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How to Persuade

Do people ignore your ideas? Always lose arguments? Can't sell water in the desert? Then this article is for you! Learn to convince others to bend to your iron will in just three stimulating minutes!!!

Persuasive people enjoy advantages in life. They influence their environment to create more options for themselves. Moreover, a convincing individual can achieve his or her goals more easily. Selling, negotiating, mediating disputes, and attracting volunteers for a project all require persuasion.

Use the following seven steps to increase your persuasion performance.

- 1. Know your audience.** Knowledge of the target's situation, concerns, needs, and preferred communication style allows you to plan your approach.
- 2. Develop a plan.** A game plan for the pitch helps you stay on track and recover from diversions.
- 3. Gain undivided attention.** Anything less than the target's complete attention diminishes your effectiveness. Plan ahead (time and place), take control, or delay the discussion as appropriate. When appropriate, use an "attention getter" like this article's opening paragraph to focus the target's attention.
- 4. Build rapport.** You want the target to regard you positively, so begin by expressing your positive regard for him/her/them. Where possible, establish common experience, emphasize similarities, and express empathy.
- 5. Establish credibility.** Answer the unasked question: "Why should I listen to you?" Your credibility may be based on personal experience, knowledge of facts, skills/expertise, and recommendations from other trusted people.
- 6. Use a simple, dynamic message.** Deliver a clear, concise, and cogent message. Avoid abstractions and fuzzy logic.
- 7. Appeal to emotion, logic, or both.** Knowledge of your audience - or comments made during the conversation - will guide your use of appeals to emotion and/or logic. An example appealing to both emotion and logic paints a vivid image and includes hard facts:
"Spending just \$10 now to feed each starving, homeless child will save us taxpayers more than \$50 in emergency medical relief costs next year. Can you imagine your child with a bloated belly, living in the mud-caked squalor and enduring the agony that these helpless orphans face each and every day?"

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The **most important factor** in effective persuasion is to **know your audience**.

- Adapt your pitch to their perspective
- Try to see yourself through through their eyes
- Speak their language

Tom Wagner

We help clarify options so our clients
identify the Right Questions
and solve the Right Problems.

Call us at 800 422-1374 to learn more.

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