

The Art of Persuasion

"You can have everything you want in life if you help enough other people get what they want." – Zig Ziglar



Warm up

- Have you ever convinced someone to do something they originally didn't want to do? How did you do it?
- Do you think persuasion is a learned skill or a natural ability? Why?
- Who do you think are the most persuasive people in society? (e.g., politicians)
- Have you ever been persuaded by an advertisement or a sales pitch? What made it so convincing?
- What's the difference between persuasion and manipulation?



1. Read the tables about ways people use persuasion in different areas of life and discuss.

Verbal Persuasion

- ✓ Complimenting someone
- ✓ Giving logical reasons
- ✓ Appealing to emotions
- ✓ Repeating key ideas

Non-Verbal Persuasion

- ✓ Eye contact
- ✓ Smiling or nodding
- ✓ Dressing formally
- ✓ Confident posture

Situational Persuasion

- ✓ Asking for help when someone's in a good mood
- ✓ Mentioning "everyone else is doing it"
- ✓ Offering a solution during a crisis
- ✓ Using urgency ("This offer ends today!")

- Have you ever used any of these yourself?
- Do you think all of these techniques are persuasive in the same situations? Why or why not?
- Can you think of any other examples to add to the tables?



2. Match the persuasion techniques to their meanings, then discuss.

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| a. Scarcity | 1. 9 out of 10 dentists recommend this toothpaste. |
| b. Social Proof | 2. Try a free sample! If you like it, you can buy more later. |
| c. Authority | 3. Only two left in stock! Buy now before it's gone! |
| d. Reciprocity | 4. Smoking kills. Don't be another statistic. |
| e. Fear Appeal | 5. This product has over 30,000 five-star reviews |
| f. The Bandwagon Effect | 6. Over a million people have already signed up. What are you waiting for? |

- What kind of products or services are usually advertised using each of these techniques? Can you give examples?
- Which of these persuasion techniques do you think is the most effective? Why?
- Do you find any of these techniques annoying, dishonest, or manipulative? Why?



3. Persuasion is about using the right words! Here are some key sentence structures that make persuasion stronger.

✓ Conditional Sentences:

If you try this product, you'll never go back!

If we work together, we can make a real difference.

✓ Emphatic Structures:

There's no doubt that this is the best option!

What we need now more than ever is action!

✓ The Rule of Three:

This method is simple, effective, and proven to work.

It's fast, affordable, and guaranteed to give results!

✓ Contrast & Comparisons:

Unlike other brands, this one lasts twice as long!

While others focus on profits, we focus on people!

✓ Personal Appeal & Rhetorical Questions:

Imagine how much better your life will be with this!

Do you really want to miss out on this opportunity?



4. Choose a theme and create short, persuasive one-liners that could be used in ads, campaigns, or promotions.

- A new energy drink that boosts focus and performance
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- A revolutionary language-learning app
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- A sustainable, eco-friendly clothing brand
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- A charity campaign asking for donations
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- A new political candidate promises free university education and lower rent for young people.
.....

Swap lines, rate each other's for impact and persuasiveness, and then vote on the most persuasive!



5. Read the following quotes about persuasion and discuss the following questions.

If you can't convince them, confuse them.

- Harry S. Truman

Persuasion is when you convince your friend to order fries so you can eat some.

- Unknown

Arguing with a fool proves there are two.

- Doris M. Smith

The key to persuasion is to ask for more than you want, then settle for what you need.

- Unknown

People don't buy what you do; they buy why you do it. - Simon Sinek

You can't convince a man he's wrong until he believes you're right.

- Unknown

- a. Which quote stands out to you the most? Why?
- b. Do you think any of these quotes reveal a deeper truth about persuasion? If so, which one and why?
- c. Do you agree or disagree with any of these quotes? Explain.
- d. Can you think of a time when you (or someone else) used persuasion in a way that connects to one of these quotes?



6. We've explored persuasive writing—now, what about speaking? Match the key vocabulary before we watch a video.

- a. He kept judging me for taking my full lunch break. →
 - b. He's always spreading gossip about people in the office. →
 - c. I try to avoid her—she's so full of negativity all the time. →
 - d. His dogmatism makes real conversation impossible. →
 - e. I admire her authenticity. →
 - f. You can trust him. He's known for his integrity →
1. Deciding something about someone without really knowing them.
 2. Talking negatively about someone who isn't there.
 3. Focusing only on bad things.
 4. Following through on your promises.
 5. Acting according to your values and being honest.
 6. Presenting opinions as if they are absolute facts.



7. Watch the TED Talk: "[How to Speak So That People Want to Listen](#)"¹ by Julian Treasure and answer the following questions.

a. What are the seven deadly sins of speaking according to Julian Treasure?

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b. What does "HAIL" stand for? How can it improve our communication?

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c. What are some techniques to improve voice delivery?

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Opinion & Reflection:

- d. What did you think of the talk?
- e. Which of the seven speaking habits do you think is the worst? Why?
- f. How can you apply "HAIL" in real-life situations?



¹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=elho2S0Zahl&ab_channel=TED



8. Present a pitch. Instructions:

In small groups, choose one of the ideas below above or create your own.

1. Prepare a 2–3 minute pitch. Your pitch must include:

- At least 3 persuasive techniques (e.g. authority, scarcity, social proof)
- At least 2 persuasive sentence structures (e.g. conditionals, rhetorical questions, emphatic language)
- A slogan or catchphrase

2. Present your pitch to the class!

Company ideas:

zz Napify

A company that builds high-tech public nap pods—then lets you find and reserve them through a sleek app. Tired in town? Open Napify and locate your nearest sleep zone.

SmartSpoon

A Bluetooth-enabled spoon that tells you when you're eating too fast, suggests better portion sizes, and even compliments your cooking. (*"Delicious choice!"*)

Pawliday Inn

A luxury hotel for pets. Spa treatments, gourmet meals, and even yoga for dogs. Owners can check in on the app, leave voice notes, and rate tail wags.

