

Notebook Export

Pre-Suasion: A Revolutionary Way to Influence and Persuade

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Part 1: Pre-Suasion: The Frontloading of Attention

Highlight(yellow) - 1: Pre-Suasion: An Introduction > Page 4 · Location 115

PRE-SUASION The highest achievers spent more time crafting what they did and said before making a request.

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accepted; they recognized that the psychological frame in which an appeal is first placed can carry equal or even greater weight.

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Their responsibility was to present it most productively. To accomplish that, they did something that gave them a singular kind of persuasive traction: before introducing their message, they arranged to make their audience sympathetic to it.

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what we present first changes the way people experience what we present to them next.

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Trust is one of those qualities that leads to compliance with requests, provided that it has been planted before the request is made.

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“Think, Bob: Who do you let walk in and out of your house on their own? Only somebody you trust, right? I want to be associated with trust in those families’ minds.”

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I identified only six psychological principles that appeared to be deployed routinely in long-prospering influence businesses. I’ve claimed that the six—reciprocation, liking, social proof, authority, scarcity, and consistency—represent certain psychological universals of persuasion;

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Whether operating as a moment monitor or a moment maker, the individual who knows how to time a request, recommendation, or proposal properly will do exceedingly well.

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pre-suasive practices create windows of opportunity that are far from propped open permanently. I am confident that I would have been able to muster the resources to decline the man's request if he had made it in a separate, subsequent phone call.

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"positive test strategy." But it comes down to this: in deciding whether a possibility is correct, people typically look for hits rather than misses; for confirmations of the idea rather than for disconfirmations. It is easier to register the presence of something than its absence.

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"Do you consider yourself a helpful person?" Following brief reflection, nearly everyone answered yes. In that privileged moment—after subjects had confirmed privately and affirmed publicly their helpful natures—the researchers pounced, requesting help with their survey. Now 77.3 percent volunteered.

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frequently the factor most likely to determine a person's choice in a situation is not the one that counsels most wisely there; it is one that has been elevated in attention (and, thereby, in privilege) at the time of the decision.

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"Do you consider yourself to be somebody who is adventurous and likes to try new things?" Almost all said yes—following which, 75.7 percent gave their email addresses. 11

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In this regard, my car's CD player is structured to work like my brain, allowing me but a single track of music at a time. That's for good reason, as it would be folly to play more than one simultaneously. I'd just hear noise. So it is with human cognition. Even though there are always multiple "tracks" of information available, we consciously select only the one we want to register at that moment.

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attentional blink, when we can't register the newly highlighted information consciously.

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phone conversation with someone you can tell is engaged in another task,

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envisioned themselves moving toward (rather than away from) a container of snack food came to like it better and were willing to pay over four times more to obtain it.

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bag. Finally, Elizabeth leaned forward and advised, “You should answer that, dear. It might be someone important.”

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anything that draws focused attention to itself can lead observers to overestimate its importance. Who, on the other end of the line, could conceivably have been more important at that singular moment than Her Majesty, the Queen of the Realm, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of her reign? I can’t think of anyone. Yet the unknown caller was proclaimed worthy of it—by the queen, no less.

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“the focusing illusion,” his answer is neatly summarized in the essay’s title: “Nothing in life is as important as you think it is while you are thinking about it.” 18

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pre-loads it with importance. This form of pre-suasion accounts for what many see as the principle role (labeled agenda setting) that the news media play in influencing public opinion. The central tenet of agenda-setting theory is that the media rarely produce change directly, by presenting compelling evidence that sweeps an audience to new positions; they are much more likely to persuade indirectly, by giving selected issues and facts better coverage than other issues and facts.

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“The press may not be successful most of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling them what to think about.”

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“There’s no such thing as bad publicity.”

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persuader who artfully draws outside attention to the most favorable feature of an offer becomes a successful pre-suader.

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“We always instruct them not to get caught up in a price war against an inferior product, because they’ll lose.

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placing fluffy clouds on the background wallpaper of the site’s landing page. That maneuver led those visitors to assign elevated

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levels of importance to comfort when asked what they were looking for in a sofa.

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pennies instead of clouds.

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preferred an inexpensive sofa.

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the more often the ad had appeared while they were reading the article, the more they came to like it.

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never processed the ads consciously, so there was no recognized information to be identified as tedious or untrustworthy.

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who in the advertising community would have thought that the absence of memory for a commercial message could be a plus?

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One study found that the reading scores of students in a New York City elementary school were significantly lower if their classrooms were situated close to elevated subway tracks on which trains rattled past every four to five minutes.

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It is clear that background information can both guide and distract focus of attention; anyone seeking to influence optimally must manage that information thoughtfully. 21

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Thus, to receive the benefits of focused attention, the key is to keep the focus unitary. Some impressive research demonstrates that merely engaging in a single-chute evaluation of one of several established hotel and restaurant chains, consumer products, and even charity organizations can automatically cause people to value the focused-upon entity more and become more willing to support it financially. One applicable tactic being employed with increasing frequency by various organizations is to request evaluation of their products and services—only their products and services.

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“How are we doing?” question asks me to assess features of an ongoing partnership with my travel agency,

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But surely the typical highly placed decision maker wouldn't settle on an important course of action without evaluating all viable alternatives fully, and he or she certainly wouldn't make that choice after evaluating just one strong option, right? Wrong and wrong, for a pair of reasons. First, a thorough analysis of all legitimate roads to success is time consuming, requiring potentially lengthy delays for identifying, vetting, and then mapping out each of the promising routes; and highly placed decision makers didn't get to their lofty positions by being known as bottlenecks inside their organizations. Second, for any decision maker, a painstaking comparative assessment of multiple options is difficult and stressful, akin to the juggler's task of trying to keep several objects in the air all at once.

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selecting the first practicable candidate that presents itself. This tendency has a quirky name, “satisficing”—a term coined by economist and Nobel laureate Herbert Simon—to serve as a blend of the words satisfy and suffice.

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make it good and to make it gone—which, according to Simon, usually means making it good enough.

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were not reporting in any meaningful way on the broader political issues involved, such as the justifications for the war (as an example, the absence of weapons of mass destruction was mentioned in just 2 percent of all stories) or the operation’s impact on US standing and power abroad. How could we expect anything else of them? Their eager superiors assigned them to cover what one analysis termed “the minutiae of the conflict,” which absorbed all of their time, energy, and consideration.

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The stealthy impact of bringing selective attention to a favorable type of information is not limited to the beneficial shaping of an assigned task. As we’ve seen, the persuasive consequences of managing background information and inviting singular evaluation went unrecognized by individuals subjected to those procedures, too. Through this cloaked influence, techniques designed merely to channel temporary attention can be particularly effective as pre-suasive devices. But there’s another driving reason.

Highlight(yellow) - 4: What’s Focal Is Causal > Page 51 · Location 857

What’s Focal Is Causal

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almost no one took the money.

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bigger cash incentives upped compliance with the line cutter’s wish, they didn’t increase acceptance of the payment; richer deals increasingly caused people to sacrifice their places in line but without taking the greater compensation.

Highlight(yellow) - 4: What’s Focal Is Causal > Page 52 · Location 877

the helping norm, which behavioral scientists sometimes call the norm of social responsibility. It states that we should aid those who need assistance in proportion to their need.

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the more someone needs our help, the more obligated we feel to provide it, the more guilty we feel if we don't provide it, and the more likely we are to provide it.

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This account explains why larger financial inducements increased consent even though most people weren't willing to pocket them: more money signaled a stronger need on the part of the requester.

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lotteries

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Because of all the publicity surrounding them, they had become focal in attention; and what is focal is seen to have causal properties—to have the ability to make events occur.

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the what's-focal-is-presumed-causal phenomenon.

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a conversation in which it was critical for each discussion partner to contribute about equally.

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Standing alternately behind first one and then the other person, she found herself criticizing whomever she was facing for “dominating the exchange.”

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I can relate to as a student of social influence: by deciding to persist through the interview on my own, I might subject myself to a set of techniques perfected by interrogators over centuries to get confessions from suspects. Some of the techniques are devious and have been shown by research to increase the likelihood of false confessions: lying about the existence of incriminating fingerprints or eyewitness testimony; pressing suspects to repeatedly imagine committing the crime; and putting them into a brain-clouded psychological state through sleep deprivation and relentless, exhaustive questioning. Defenders of such tactics insist that they are designed to extract the truth. An accompanying, complicating truth, however, is that sometimes they just extract confessions that are verifiably untrue.

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An analysis of 125 cases involving fabricated confessions found that suspects who first confessed but then renounced their statements and pled not guilty were still convicted at trial 81 percent of the time—yet these, recall, were all false confessions!

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Nothing could change the camera angle's prejudicial impact—except changing the camera angle itself. The bias disappeared when the recording showed the interrogation and confession from the side, so that the suspect and questioner were equally focal.

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There is. It comes in two steps, straight from the research of Professors Taylor and Lassiter. First, find the camera in the room, which will usually be above and behind the police officer. Second, move your chair. Position yourself so that the recording of the session will depict your face and your questioner's face equally. Don't allow the what's-focal-is-presumed-causal effect to disadvantage you at trial. Otherwise, as Justice Brennan believed, your trial might already be over. 31

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blame me. Say that, although you'd like to cooperate fully on your own, you once read a book that urged you to consider extensive police questioning unsafe, even for innocent individuals.

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1 percent of what the CEO is paid. If that discrepancy seems hard to account for on grounds of economic or social fairness, perhaps we can account for it on other grounds: the person at the top is visually prominent, psychologically salient, and, hence, assigned an unduly causal role in the course of events. 32

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In sum, because what's salient is deemed important and what's focal is deemed causal, a communicator who ushers audience members' attention to selected facets of a message reaps a significant persuasive advantage: recipients' receptivity to considering those facets prior to actually considering them. In a real sense, then, channeled attention can make recipients more open to a message pre-suasively, before they process it. It's a persuader's dream, because very often the biggest challenge for a communicator is not in providing a meritorious case but in convincing recipients to devote their limited time and energy to considering its merits. Perceptions of issue importance and causality meet this challenge exquisitely. If captured attention does indeed provide pre-suasive leverage to a communicator, a related issue arises: Are there any features of information that don't even require a communicator's special efforts to draw attention to them because, by their nature, they draw attention to themselves?

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people frequently buy for sexually related purposes. Cosmetics (lipstick, hair color), body scents (perfume, cologne), and form-fitting clothing (jeans, swimwear) fall into this category.

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strong connection, then, between a person's current romantic/ sexual goals and that person's tendency to pay concentrated attention to even highly attractive others.

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In our relationships, then, we might want to be sensitive to any sustained upswing in our partner's (or our own) attentiveness to attractive alternatives, as it might well offer an early signal of a partnership in peril.

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Violence, with its associated threat to safety, has always been able to draw human attention.

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As a rule, communications that present the most frightening consequences of poor health habits work better than milder messages or messages

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What's the persuasive alchemy that allows a communicator to trouble recipients deeply about the negative outcomes of their bad habits without pushing them to deny the problem in an attempt to control their now-heightened fears? The communicator has only to add to the chilling message clear information about legitimate, available steps the recipients can take to change their health-threatening habits. In this way, the fright can be dealt with not through self-delusional baloney that deters positive action but through genuine change opportunities that mobilize such action.

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that humans encountering threatening circumstances would have developed early on a strong tendency to be part of a group (where there is safety and strength in numbers) and to avoid being separate (where there is vulnerability to a predator or enemy). The opposite would be true, however, in a situation with sexual possibilities. There a person would want distance from the pack in order to be the prime recipient of romantic consideration. We also realized that these two contrary motivations, to fit in and to stand out, map perfectly onto a pair of longtime favorite commercial appeals.

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When we tested this idea in an experiment, the results stunned me. An advertisement we created stressing the popularity of San Francisco's Museum of Modern Art ("Visited by over a million people each year") supercharged favorability toward the museum among people who had been watching a violent movie at the time; yet among those who'd been watching a romantic movie, the identical ad deflated attraction to the museum. But a slightly altered ad—formulated to emphasize the distinctiveness rather than the popularity of museum attendance ("Stand out from the crowd")—had the opposite effect. The distinctiveness ad was exceedingly successful among individuals who'd been watching the romantic film, and it was particularly unsuccessful among those who'd been viewing the violent one. Although the data pattern seems complex, it becomes simplified when viewed through the prism of a core claim of this book: the effectiveness of persuasive messages—in this case, carrying two influence themes that have been commonly used for centuries—will be drastically affected by the type of opener experienced immediately in advance. Put people in a wary state of mind via that opener, and, driven by a desire for safety, a popularity-based appeal will soar, whereas a distinctiveness-based appeal will sink. But use it to put people in an amorous state of mind, and, driven by a consequent desire to stand out, the reverse will occur.

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I'd bet, for instance, that if Ford media buyers plan to purchase TV slots for ads trumpeting the Ford F-150 pickup as "America's largest-selling truck for thirty-nine years" (as some ads do), they never consider favoring placements during crime dramas, scary movies, and news programming, while shunning romantic comedies and love stories. Conversely, I'd bet that if they plan to purchase slots for F-150 ads touting the distinctive FX Appearance Package to prod buyers to "Get ready to stand out!" (as some ads do), they never consider prioritizing those placements in the opposite fashion. Too bad for Ford.

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Pavlov recognized its purpose in the label he gave it: the investigatory reflex. He understood that in order to survive, any animal needs to be acutely aware of immediate changes to its environment, investigating and evaluating these differences for the dangers or opportunities they might present. So forceful is this reflex that it supersedes all other operations.

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You walk from one room to another to do something specific, but, once there, you forget why you made the trip.

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“Don’t worry, Cialdini, it wasn’t you; it was the damned doorway.”

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adding three models with durable cushions made the Dream stand out as distinct from the other four possibilities on the feature of cushion softness and comfort—and distinctiveness, as we’ve seen, swings attention to the distinguishing factor, which in this instance led to cushion comfort’s greater perceived importance.

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“After all these years, people might accept that antiperspirants just aren’t gonna get any better. They might even accept the ugly stains on clothes from hot days and hard work. They won’t have to anymore.”

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It would be to replace the externalizing words people and they in the opener with the personalizing pronoun you.

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when you have a good case to make, you can employ—as openers—simple self-

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relevant cues (such as the word you) to predispose your audience toward a full consideration

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strong case before they see or hear it. 41 There’s

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I never saw it. I missed it completely, and I know why: I was focused on myself and my upcoming speech,

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next-in-line effect,

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Whether you offer your statement just before or after his, according to the next-in-line effect, Alex will have a hard time processing your solution, no matter how good it is. If your statement comes immediately prior to Alex's, he'll likely miss the specifics because he'll be mentally rehearsing what he plans to say. If it comes immediately following Alex's, he'll likely miss those specifics because he'll be internally rehashing what he just said.

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I'd propose charting a course that takes into account both the next-in-line effect and the what's-focal-is-presumed-causal effect. Take a spot at the table across from Alex where (1) he'll be sufficiently distant from his own presentation to hear yours fully, and (2), because of your visual prominence, he'll see you as fully responsible for the insights within your fine recommendation for resolving the problem. Of

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Zeigarnik effect.

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First (and altogether consistent with the beer garden series of events), on a task that we feel committed to performing, we will remember all sorts of elements of it better if we have not yet had the chance to finish, because our attention will remain drawn to it. Second, if we are engaged in such a task and are interrupted or pulled away, we'll feel a discomforting, gnawing desire to get back to it. That desire—which also pushes us to return to incomplete narratives, unresolved problems, unanswered questions, and unachieved goals—reflects a craving for cognitive closure.

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greatest recall occurred for details of ads that the researchers stopped five to six seconds before their natural endings. What's more, better memory for specifics of the unfinished ads was evident immediately, two days later, and (especially) two weeks later, demonstrating the holding power that a lack of closure possesses.

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important outcome is unknown to people, "they can hardly think of anything else."

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And because, as we know, regular attention to something makes it seem more worthy of attention, the women's repeated refocusing on those guys made them appear the most attractive. 43

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She never lets herself finish a writing session at the end of a paragraph or even a thought. She assured me she knows precisely what she wants to say at the end of that last paragraph or thought; she just doesn't allow herself to say it until the next time.

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Brilliant! By keeping the final feature of every writing session near-finished, she uses the motivating force of the drive for closure to get her back to her chair quickly, impatient to write again.

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vivid examples, and humor. But I also found something I had not anticipated: the most successful of the pieces each began with a mystery story. The authors described a state of affairs that seemed perplexing and then invited the reader into the subsequent material as a way of dispatching the enigma.

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They would not let me stop until I had given them closure on the mystery. I remember thinking, "Cialdini, you've stumbled onto dynamite here!"

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1. Pose the Mystery. Most people are familiar with legendary cigarette advertising campaign successes featuring Joe Camel, the Marlboro Man, and Virginia Slims's "You've come a long way, baby." But perhaps the most effective marketing decision ever made by the tobacco companies lies buried and almost unknown in the industry's history: after a three-year slide of 10 percent in tobacco consumption in the United States during the late 1960s, Big Tobacco did something that had the extraordinary effect of ending the decline and boosting consumption while slashing advertising expenditures by a third. What was it? 2. Deepen the Mystery. The answer also seems extraordinary. On July 22, 1969, during US congressional hearings, representatives of the major American tobacco companies strongly advocated a proposal to ban

all of their own ads from television and radio, even though industry studies showed that the broadcast media provided the most effective routes to new sales. As a consequence of that unprecedented move, tobacco advertising has been absent from the airwaves in the United States since 1971. 3. Home In on the Proper Explanation by Considering (and Offering Evidence Against) Alternative Explanations. Could it be that American business interests, sobered by the 1964 Surgeon General's report that detailed the deadly denouement of tobacco use, decided to forgo some of their profits to improve the well-being of fellow citizens? That appears unlikely, because representatives of the other major US business affected by the ban—the broadcast industry—filed suit in US Supreme Court to overturn the law one month after it was enacted. Thus, it was only the tobacco industry that supported the restriction on its ads. Could it have been the tobacco company executives, then, who became suddenly concerned with the health of the nation? Hardly. They didn't reduce their concentrated efforts to increase tobacco sales one whit. They merely shifted their routes for marketing their products away from the broadcast media to print ads, sports sponsorships, promotional giveaways, and movie projects. For instance, one tobacco company, Brown & Williamson, paid for product placements in twenty-two films in just a four-year period. 4. Provide a Clue to the Proper Explanation. So, by tobacco executives' logic, magazines, newspapers, billboards, and films were fair game; only the airwaves should be off-limits to their marketing efforts. What was special about the broadcast media? In 1967, the US Federal Communications Commission (FCC) had ruled that its "fairness doctrine" applied to

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the issue of tobacco advertising. The fairness doctrine required that equal advertising time be granted on radio and television—solely on radio and television—to all sides of important and controversial topics. If one side purchased broadcast time on these media, the opposing side must be given free time to counterargue. 5. Resolve the Mystery. That decision had an immediate impact on the landscape of broadcast advertising. For the first time, anti-tobacco forces such as the American Cancer Society could afford to air counterarguments to the tobacco company messages. They did so via counter-ads that disputed the truthfulness of the images displayed in tobacco company commercials. If a tobacco ad featured healthy, attractive, independent characters, the opposing ads would counterargue that, in fact, tobacco use led to diseased health, damaged attractiveness, and slavish dependence. During the three years that they ran, those anti-tobacco spots slashed tobacco consumption in the United States by nearly 10 percent. At first the tobacco companies responded predictably, increasing their advertising budgets to try to meet the challenge. But, by the rules of the fairness doctrine, for each tobacco ad, equal time had to be provided for a counter-ad that would take another bite out of industry profits. When the logic of the situation hit them, the tobacco companies worked politically to ban their own ads, but solely on the air where the fairness doctrine applied—thereby ensuring that the anti-tobacco forces would no longer get free airtime to make their counterargument. As a consequence, in the year following the elimination of tobacco commercials on air, the tobacco companies witnessed a significant jump in sales coupled with a significant reduction in advertising expenditures. 6. Draw the Implication for the Phenomenon Under Study. Tobacco

opponents found that they could use counterarguments to undercut tobacco ad effectiveness. But the tobacco executives learned (and profited from) a related lesson: one of the best ways to enhance audience acceptance of one's message is to reduce the availability of strong counterarguments to it—because counterarguments are typically more powerful than arguments. At this stage in the sequence, the teaching

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point about the superior impact and necessary availability of counterarguments is an explanation. As such, it produces more than recognition of basic facts (for example, “US tobacco companies argued successfully for a ban of their ads from TV and radio”) or answers to related questions (“What was the result? The companies witnessed a jump in sales and a reduction in advertising costs”). It produces an understanding of how certain psychological processes associated with the prepotency of counterarguments brought about both

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Oh, by the way, there's a telling answer to the question of what Albert Einstein claimed was so remarkable it could be labeled as both “the most beautiful thing we can experience” and “the source of all true science and art.” His contention: the mysterious.

Part 2: Processes: The Role of Association

Highlight(yellow) - 7: The Primacy of Associations: I Link, Therefore I Think > Page 99 · Location 1564

In the family of ideas, there are no orphans. Each notion exists within a network of relatives linked through a shared system of associations.

Highlight(yellow) - 7: The Primacy of Associations: I Link, Therefore I Think > Page 99 · Location 1571

associations can be called the building blocks of thought.

Highlight(yellow) - 7: The Primacy of Associations: I Link, Therefore I Think > Page 100 · Location 1578

the main purpose of speech is to direct listeners' attention to a selected sector of reality.

Highlight(yellow) - 7: The Primacy of Associations: I Link, Therefore I Think > Page 100 · Location 1580

For issues of persuasion, this assertion seems to me groundbreaking. No longer should we think of language as primarily a mechanism of conveyance; as a means for delivering a communicator's conception of reality. Instead, we should think of language as primarily a

mechanism of influence; as a means for inducing recipients to share that conception or, at least, to act in accord with it.

Highlight(yellow) - 7: The Primacy of Associations: I Link, Therefore I Think > Page 103 · Location 1632

replaced such words possessing menacing associations (target, beat) with comparable words that did not (goal, outdistance).

Highlight(yellow) - 7: The Primacy of Associations: I Link, Therefore I Think > Page 103 · Location 1636

subtly exposing individuals to words that connote achievement (win, attain, succeed, master) increases their performance on an assigned task and more than doubles their willingness to keep working at it.

Highlight(yellow) - 7: The Primacy of Associations: I Link, Therefore I Think > Page 108 · Location 1705

people didn't die, they "walked out" of life—a characterization that benefitted from associations to a breach in one's family responsibilities that would need to be filled. He was then quick to depict life insurance as the (metaphorically aligned) solution: "When you walk out," he would say, "your insurance money walks in."

Highlight(yellow) - 7: The Primacy of Associations: I Link, Therefore I Think > Page 108 · Location 1709

Although metaphors require a language-based link between two things to work, once that link is in place, metaphoric persuasion can be triggered nonverbally.

Highlight(yellow) - 7: The Primacy of Associations: I Link, Therefore I Think > Page 109 · Location 1727

counseled against telling customers the "cost" or "price" of their offerings, which are terms associated with the loss of resources; rather, they are to speak of the "purchase" or "investment" amount involved—terms that make contact with the concept of gain.

Highlight(yellow) - 7: The Primacy of Associations: I Link, Therefore I Think > Page 110 · Location 1736

The concept pre-loaded with associations most damaging to immediate assessments and future dealings is untrustworthiness, along with its concomitants, such as lying and cheating.

Highlight(yellow) - 7: The Primacy of Associations: I Link, Therefore I Think > Page 110 · Location 1745

Learning of such connections online offers no immunity: young women are twice as likely to "friend" a man who contacts them on Facebook if he claims to have the same birthday.

Highlight(yellow) - 7: The Primacy of Associations: I Link, Therefore I Think > Page 110 · Location 1746

The small-business loans to citizens of developing nations brokered through a microfinance website are significantly more likely to be offered by loan providers to recipients whose names share their initials.

Highlight(yellow) - 7: The Primacy of Associations: I Link, Therefore I Think > Page 111 · Location 1760

The overvalued self isn't always the personal self. It can also be the social self—the one framed not by the characteristics of the individual but by the characteristics of that individual's group.

Highlight(yellow) - 7: The Primacy of Associations: I Link, Therefore I Think > Page 112 · Location 1776

"When our counterparts saw that our negotiator was speaking their language, Pashtun, they developed a kind of strong intimacy with us, and so the talks went well."

Highlight(yellow) - 7: The Primacy of Associations: I Link, Therefore I Think > Page 112 · Location 1784

cognitive poetics have even found that the fluency-producing properties of rhyme lead to enhanced persuasion. The statement "Caution and measure will win you riches" is seen as more true when changed to "Caution and measure win you treasure."

Highlight(yellow) - 7: The Primacy of Associations: I Link, Therefore I Think > Page 113 · Location 1789

An analysis of the names of five hundred attorneys at ten US law firms found that the harder an attorney's name was to pronounce, the lower he or she stayed in the firm's hierarchy.

Highlight(yellow) - 8: Persuasive Geographies: All the Right Places, All the Right Traces > Page 120 · Location 1888

"One cougher begins his horrid work in an audience, and the cough spreads until the house is in bedlam, the actors in a rage, and the playwright in retreat to the nearest saloon."

Highlight(yellow) - 8: Persuasive Geographies: All the Right Places, All the Right Traces > Page 122 · Location 1911

"Medical instructors are continually consulted by students who fear that they have the diseases they are studying.

Highlight(yellow) - 8: Persuasive Geographies: All the Right Places, All the Right Traces > Page 123 · Location 1939

To a greater extent than younger individuals, seniors recall positive memories, entertain pleasant thoughts, seek out and retain favorable information, search for and gaze at happy

faces, and focus on the upsides of their consumer products. Notice that they route their travels to these sunny locales through a highly effective mental maneuver we've encountered before: they focus their attentions on those spots. Indeed, the seniors with the best "attention management" skills (those good at orienting to and staying fixed on positive material) show the greatest mood enhancement.

Highlight(yellow) - 8: Persuasive Geographies: All the Right Places, All the Right Traces > Page 125 · Location 1969

1. Count your blessings and gratitudes at the start of every day, and then give yourself concentrated time with them by writing them down. 2. Cultivate optimism by choosing beforehand to look on the bright side of situations, events, and future possibilities. 3. Negate the negative by deliberately limiting time spent dwelling on problems or on unhealthy comparisons with others.

Highlight(yellow) - 8: Persuasive Geographies: All the Right Places, All the Right Traces > Page 125 · Location 1974

"You can make yourself happier just like you can make yourself lose weight," Dr. Lyubomirsky assured me. "But like eating differently and going to the gym faithfully, you have to put in the effort every day. You have to stay with it."

Highlight(yellow) - 8: Persuasive Geographies: All the Right Places, All the Right Traces > Page 128 · Location 2021

His was a particular type of smart: a kind of tactical intelligence that allowed him to turn common general knowledge—for example, that fear worsens test takers' performance but earned confidence improves it—into specific applications with desirable outcomes. That's a useful sort of intelligence.

Highlight(yellow) - 8: Persuasive Geographies: All the Right Places, All the Right Traces > Page 130 · Location 2048

1. Assign test takers to a room on the basis of a relevant factor (their gender), not an irrelevant one (the first letter of their last names).

Highlight(yellow) - 8: Persuasive Geographies: All the Right Places, All the Right Traces > Page 130 · Location 2053

Girls' monitors should be female science and mathematics teachers.

Highlight(yellow) - 8: Persuasive Geographies: All the Right Places, All the Right Traces > Page 130 · Location 2057

ask the girls to pick a personal value of importance to them (such as maintaining relationships with friends or helping others) and to write down why they find that value important. Why? This sort of "self-affirmation" procedure directs initial attention to an interpersonal strength and reduces the effects of threatening stereotypes. In

Highlight(yellow) - 8: Persuasive Geographies: All the Right Places, All the Right Traces > Page 131 · Location 2061

4. Do not instruct students to record their gender at the start of the math exam, as that will likely remind female test takers of the mathematics-and-gender stereotype.

Highlight(yellow) - 9: The Mechanics of Pre-Suasion: Causes, Constraints, and Correctives > Page 136 · Location 2144

the strength of the association between an opener concept and a related concept will determine the strength of the pre-suasive effect. Therefore, an aspiring pre-suader wishing to prompt an action (helping, let's say) should find a concept already associated strongly and positively

Highlight(yellow) - 9: The Mechanics of Pre-Suasion: Causes, Constraints, and Correctives > Page 136 · Location 2146

with the action (togetherness would be a good choice) and bring that concept to mind in potential helpers just before requesting their aid.

Highlight(yellow) - 9: The Mechanics of Pre-Suasion: Causes, Constraints, and Correctives > Page 137 · Location 2161

device works nonetheless, the takeaway here is that an effective linkage between concepts doesn't have to be located in prevailing reality. It can be constructed.

Highlight(yellow) - 9: The Mechanics of Pre-Suasion: Causes, Constraints, and Correctives > Page 138 · Location 2170

Subliminally exposing thirsty people eight times to pictures of happy (versus angry) faces just before having them taste a new soft drink caused them to consume more of the beverage and to be willing to pay three times more for it in the store.

Highlight(yellow) - 9: The Mechanics of Pre-Suasion: Causes, Constraints, and Correctives > Page 139 · Location 2192

A relevant if/ when-then plan might be, "If/ when lunch is over and space has become available at the lunchroom table, then I will start writing my employment history there." By day's end, not one person in the control group had performed the task, which might not seem surprising—after all, these were drug addicts in the process of opiate withdrawal! Yet at the end of the same day, 80 percent of those in the relevant if/ when-then treatment group had turned in a completed job résumé.

Highlight(yellow) - 9: The Mechanics of Pre-Suasion: Causes, Constraints, and Correctives > Page 140 · Location 2199

achievement. The "if/ when-then" wording is designed to put us on high alert for a particular time or circumstance when a productive action could be performed. We become prepared, first, to

notice the favorable time or circumstance and, second, to associate it automatically and directly with desired conduct. Noteworthy is the self-tailored nature of this pre-suasive process.

Highlight(yellow) - 9: The Mechanics of Pre-Suasion: Causes, Constraints, and Correctives > Page 141 · Location 2222

(1) what is more accessible in mind becomes more probable in action, and (2) this accessibility is influenced by the informational cues around us and by our raw associations to them.

Highlight(yellow) - 9: The Mechanics of Pre-Suasion: Causes, Constraints, and Correctives > Page 142 · Location 2238

man who complimented young women and then asked for their phone numbers to arrange a date was considerably more successful when he asked on a sunny morning versus a cloudy morning (22.4 percent and 13.9 percent success rates, respectively).

Highlight(yellow) - 9: The Mechanics of Pre-Suasion: Causes, Constraints, and Correctives > Page 143 · Location 2257

suasion: immediate, large-scale adjustments begin frequently with practices that do little more than redirect attention. 69

Highlight(yellow) - 9: The Mechanics of Pre-Suasion: Causes, Constraints, and Correctives > Page 146 · Location 2305

teams that are fully rested often challenge orders to fire on hospitals or other civilian targets. But after twenty-four to thirty-six sleepless hours, they often obey superiors' directives without question and become more likely to shell anything.

Highlight(yellow) - 9: The Mechanics of Pre-Suasion: Causes, Constraints, and Correctives > Page 146 · Location 2307

Similarly, in criminal interrogations, even innocent suspects often can't resist interrogators' pressure for them to confess after hours of mentally exhausting

Part 3: Best Practices: The Optimization of Pre-Suasion

Highlight(yellow) - 10: Six Main Roads to Change: Broad Boulevards as Smart Shortcuts > Page 151 · Location 2343

If we want them to buy a box of expensive chocolates, we can first arrange for them to write down a number that's much larger than the price of the chocolates. If we want them to choose a bottle of French wine, we can expose them to French background music before they decide. If we want them to agree to try an untested product, we can first inquire whether they consider themselves adventurous. If we want to convince them to select a highly popular item, we can begin by showing them a scary movie. If we want them to feel warmly toward us, we can hand them a hot drink. If we want them to be more helpful to us, we can have them look at photos of individuals standing close together. If we want them to be more achievement oriented, we can

provide them with an image of a runner winning a race. If we want them to make careful assessments, we can show them a picture of Auguste Rodin's The Thinker.

**Highlight(yellow) - 10: Six Main Roads to Change: Broad Boulevards as Smart Shortcuts
> Page 152 · Location 2359**

They are reciprocity, liking, social proof, authority, scarcity, and consistency. These principles are highly effective general generators of acceptance because they typically counsel people correctly regarding when to say yes to influence attempts.

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> Page 153 · Location 2374**

Reciprocity People say yes to those they owe. Not

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> Page 153 · Location 2380**

42 percent more likely to make a purchase if they'd received a gift piece of chocolate upon entry.

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> Page 154 · Location 2383**

In the United States, companies making sizable campaign contributions to lawmakers who sit on tax policy-making committees see significant reductions in their tax rates.

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> Page 155 · Location 2401**

Meaningful and Unexpected. The first two of these optimizing features have been shown to affect the size of tips that food servers receive. Some diners in a New Jersey restaurant were offered a piece of chocolate at the end of their meals, one per person, from a basket carried to the table by the waitress. Her tips went up 3.3 percent compared with those from guests who weren't offered chocolate. However, when other diners were invited to take two chocolates from the basket, the waitress's tips rose by 14.1 percent. What could account for the dramatic difference? For one, the second chocolate represented a meaningful increase in the size of the gift—a doubling. Plainly, meaningful is not the same as expensive, as the second chocolate cost only pennies. Providing a costly gift can often be meaningful, but costliness isn't necessary.

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> Page 155 · Location 2414**

Customized. When a first favor is customized to the needs, preferences, or current circumstances of the recipient, it gains leverage. Consider as evidence what happened in a fast-food restaurant where visitors were greeted as they entered and given one of two equally priced gifts. If the gift was not food related (a key chain), the amount they then spent increased

by 12 percent compared with visitors who were greeted without being given a gift. But if the gift was food related (a cup of yogurt), their increased outlay climbed to 24 percent.

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> Page 156 · Location 2422**

If a gift, favor, or service incorporates all three features of meaningfulness, unexpectedness, and customization, it can become a formidable source of change. But

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> Page 156 · Location 2427**

11. Attempts to get him to reveal information about Al Qaeda's leadership structure appeared hopeless, as his responses consisted only of screeds against the ways of the West. But when interrogators noticed that he never ate the cookies he was served with food and learned that the man was diabetic, they did something for him that was meaningful, unexpected, and customized: At the next interrogation session, they brought him sugar-free cookies to eat with tea. According to one of those interrogators, that was a key turning point: "We had shown him respect, and we had done this nice thing for him. So he started talking to us instead of giving us lectures."

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> Page 158 · Location 2448**

attention. We were instructed to highlight similarities and provide compliments.

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> Page 158 · Location 2450**

Similarities. We like those who are like us. It's a tendency that's part of the human experience almost from the start: infants smile more at adults whose facial expressions match their own.

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> Page 158 · Location 2457**

But it is in the business arena where the impact on assent seems most direct. Waitresses coached to mimic the verbal style of customers doubled their tips. Negotiators coached to do the same with their opponents got significantly better final outcomes. Salespeople who mimicked the language styles and nonverbal behaviors (gestures, postures) of

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> Page 159 · Location 2463**

Compliments. "I can live for two months," confessed Mark Twain, "on a good compliment."

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> Page 159 · Location 2466**

In the first of these categories, consider what happened in one hair salon when stylists complimented customers by saying, “Any hairstyle would look good on you.” Their tips rose by 37 percent. Indeed, we seem so charmed by flattery that it can work on us even when it appears to have an ulterior motive.

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> Page 160 · Location 2479

Similarities and compliments cause people to feel that you like them, and once they come to recognize that you like them, they’ll want to do business with you. That’s because people trust that those who like them will try to steer them correctly. So by my lights, the number one rule for salespeople is to show customers that you genuinely like them. There’s a wise adage that fits this logic well: people don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care. 79

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> Page 161 · Location 2497

In addition to clarifying what’s right morally, social proof reduces uncertainty about what’s right pragmatically. Not every time, but the crowd is usually correct about the wisdom of actions, making the popularity of an activity a stand-in for its soundness. As a result, we typically follow the lead of those around us who are like us. The upshots can be remarkable, creating simple, almost costless solutions to traditional influence challenges.

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> Page 163 · Location 2519

Three of the messages contained a frequently employed reason for conserving energy: the environment will benefit; or it’s the socially responsible thing to do; or it will save you significant money on your next power bill. The fourth message played the social-proof card, stating (honestly) that most of your fellow community residents do try to conserve energy at home. At the end of the month, we recorded how much energy was used and learned that the social-

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proof-based message had generated 3.5 times as

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much energy savings

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> Page 165 · Location 2567

(1) in legal settings, where a trial attorney who admits to a weakness before the rival attorney points it out is viewed as more credible and wins more often; (2) in political campaigns, where a candidate who begins with something positive to say about an opponent gains trustworthiness

and voting intentions; and (3) in advertising messages, where merchandisers who acknowledge a drawback before highlighting strengths often see large increases in sales.

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> Page 166 · Location 2572

Another enhancement occurs when the speaker uses a transitional word—such as however, or but, or yet—that channels the listeners’ attention away from the weakness and onto a countervailing strength.

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> Page 166 · Location 2582

“And though you have had, and may have, many mightier and wiser princes sitting in this seat, yet you have never had, nor shall have, any that will love you better.” According to British historian Richard Cavendish,

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> Page 168 · Location 2606

Although there are several reasons that scarcity drives desire, our aversion to losing something of value is a key factor. After all, loss is the ultimate form of scarcity, rendering the valued item or opportunity unavailable. At a financial services conference, I heard the CEO of a large brokerage firm make the point about the motivating power of loss by describing a lesson his mentor once taught him: “If you wake a multimillionaire client at five in the morning and say, ‘If you act now, you will gain twenty thousand dollars,’ he’ll scream at you and slam down the phone. But if you say, ‘If you don’t act now, you will lose twenty thousand dollars,’ he’ll thank you.”

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> Page 169 · Location 2629

Brands can deepen the loyalty of customers by getting them to recommend the brand to a friend. Organizations can raise the probability that an individual will appear at a meeting or event by switching from saying at the end of a reminder phone call, “We’ll mark you on the list as coming then. Thank you!” to “We’ll mark you on the list as coming then, okay? [Pause for confirmation.] Thank you.” One blood services organization that made this tiny, commitment-inducing wording change increased the participation of likely donors in a blood drive from 70 percent to 82.4 percent.

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> Page 171 · Location 2660

At the first stage, the main goal involves cultivating a positive association, as people are more favorable to a communication if they are favorable to the communicator. Two principles of influence, reciprocity and liking, seem particularly appropriate to the task. Giving first (in a

meaningful, unexpected, and customized fashion), highlighting genuine commonalities, and offering true compliments establish mutual rapport that facilitates all future dealings.

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At the second stage, reducing uncertainty becomes a priority. A positive relationship with a communicator doesn't ensure persuasive success. Before people are likely to change, they want to see any decision as wise. Under these circumstances, the principles of social proof and authority offer the best match. Pointing to evidence that a choice is well regarded by peers or experts significantly increases confidence in its wisdom. But even with a positive association cultivated and uncertainty reduced, a remaining step needs to be taken. At this third stage, motivating action is the main objective. That is, a well-liked friend might show me sufficient proof that experts recommend (and almost all my peers believe) that daily exercise is a good thing, but that might not be enough to get me to do it. The friend would do well to include in his appeal

Highlight(yellow) - 11: Unity 1: Being Together > Page 174 · Location 2696

I was less convinced, though. Certainly I could see that my student's initial decision to send a card fit with the obligation to reciprocate. But the Harrisons' decision to let Skip stay with them didn't fit with that obligation at all. There was no outstanding debt to be repaid by the Harrisons when they'd agreed. Holiday cards (and accompanying year-end letters) had been exchanged equally; thus, in terms of obligations, the two families were even. It seemed upon reflection that, although the rule for reciprocation might have started the process, it was the ten-year resultant relationship between the families that compelled the Harrisons to open their home to an eighteen-year-old they'd never met. That

Highlight(yellow) - 11: Unity 1: Being Together > Page 175 · Location 2703

There's a lesson here. Our ability to create change in others is often and importantly grounded in shared personal relationships, which create a pre-suasive context for assent. It's a poor trade-off, then, for social influence when we allow present-day forces of separation—distancing societal changes, insulating modern technologies—to take a shared

Highlight(yellow) - 11: Unity 1: Being Together > Page 175 · Location 2705

sense of human connection out of our exchanges. The relation gets removed, leaving just the ships, passing at sea. 87

Highlight(yellow) - 11: Unity 1: Being Together > Page 177 · Location 2744

Getting a set of college students to perform the task wasn't difficult; I assigned the questionnaire as a course exercise in a large psychology class I was teaching. The harder problem was finding a way to get their parents to comply, since I had no money to offer, and I knew that adult participation rates in such surveys are dismal—often below 20 percent. A colleague suggested that I play the kinship card by offering an extra point on my next test (one of several in the class) to each student whose parent responded to the questionnaire. The effect was astounding. All

163 of my students sent the questionnaire to a parent, 159 of whom (97 percent) mailed back a completed copy within a week. For one point, on one test, in one course, in one semester, for one of their children. As an influence researcher, I've never experienced anything like it.

Highlight(yellow) - 11: Unity 1: Being Together > Page 179 · Location 2774

For instance, to establish his credibility early (usually in the first one or two pages of text), he describes a mistake he's made or a problem the company has encountered during the past year and examines the implications for future outcomes. Rather than burying, minimizing, or papering over difficulties, which seems to be the tack taken all too frequently in other annual reports, Buffett demonstrates that he is, first, fully aware of problems inside the company and, second, fully willing to reveal them.

Highlight(yellow) - 11: Unity 1: Being Together > Page 181 · Location 2808

(in the case of these guys, way smart enough) to recognize the benefits of gaining pivotal trust through pre-suasive, truthful disclosures.

Highlight(yellow) - 11: Unity 1: Being Together > Page 186 · Location 2889

help. His experience suggests a piece of advice for prospective parents who want their children to develop a broadly charitable nature: give them contact in the home with individuals from a wide spectrum of backgrounds and treat those individuals there like family. 91

Highlight(yellow) - 12: Unity 2: Acting Together > Page 198 · Location 3061

Behavioral scientists have long asserted the existence of two ways of assessing and knowing. The most recent such assertion to gain widespread attention is Daniel Kahneman's treatment of the distinction between System 1 and System 2 thinking. The first is fast, associative, intuitive, and often emotional, whereas the second is slower, deliberative, analytical, and rational. Support for the separateness of the two approaches comes from evidence that activating one inhibits the other.

Highlight(yellow) - 12: Unity 2: Acting Together > Page 198 · Location 3065

There's an implication for influence: persuaders would be wise to match the System 1 versus 2 orientation of any appeal to the corresponding orientation of the recipient. Thus, if you are considering a car purchase primarily from the standpoint of its emotionally relevant features (attractive looks and exhilarating acceleration), a salesperson would be well advised to convince you by using feelings-related arguments.

Highlight(yellow) - 12: Unity 2: Acting Together > Page 198 · Location 3071

Music's influence is of the System 1 variety.

Highlight(yellow) - 12: Unity 2: Acting Together > Page 198 · Location 3072

other. Rarely do they think analytically while music is prominent in consciousness.

Highlight(yellow) - 12: Unity 2: Acting Together > Page 199 · Location 3075

“Anything too stupid to be spoken,” he asserted, “is sung.” The second, an adage from the advertising profession, is tactical: “If you can’t make your case to an audience with facts, sing it to them.”

Highlight(yellow) - 12: Unity 2: Acting Together > Page 199 · Location 3083

Besides, because of their common grounding in emotion and harmony, music and romance are

Highlight(yellow) - 12: Unity 2: Acting Together > Page 199 · Location 3084

strongly associated with one another in life.

Highlight(yellow) - 12: Unity 2: Acting Together > Page 199 · Location 3086

sing. So now I understand why young women, who are at a peak age for interest in both romance and music, have a weakness for musicians.

Highlight(yellow) - 12: Unity 2: Acting Together > Page 201 · Location 3111

“To Fall in Love with Anyone, Do This,” its author, Mandy Len Catron, claimed to have found a marvelously effective way to produce the intense emotional closeness and social bonds of love—in the space of forty-five minutes! She knew it worked, she said, because it had worked for her.

Highlight(yellow) - 12: Unity 2: Acting Together > Page 201 · Location 3114

relationships. It involves a specific form of coordinated action, in which partners engage in a reciprocal, turn-taking exchange sequence. Other psychologists have demonstrated that a history of reciprocally exchanged favors leads individuals to give additional favors to their exchange partner, no matter who provided the last one.

Highlight(yellow) - 12: Unity 2: Acting Together > Page 202 · Location 3122

The procedure was not complicated: In pairs, participants took turns reading questions to their partner, who would answer, and who would then receive their partner’s answer to the same item. Advancing through the thirty-six questions required participants to disclose progressively more personal information about themselves and, in turn, to learn more personal information about their partner. An early question would be, “What would constitute a perfect day for you?” whereas later in the sequence, a question would be, “What do you value most in a friendship?” And near the end of the list, a question would be, “Of all the people in your family, whose death would be the most disturbing?”

Highlight(yellow) - 12: Unity 2: Acting Together > Page 202 · Location 3127

Relationships deepened beyond all expectations. The procedure generated feelings of emotional closeness and interpersonal unity that are unparalleled within a forty-five-minute span, especially among complete strangers in an emotionally sterile laboratory setting.

Moreover, the outcome was no chance occurrence. According to an interview with Elaine Aron, hundreds of studies using the method have since confirmed the effect, and some participants have even gotten married as a result. In that same interview, Dr. Aron described two aspects of the procedure that she felt are key to its effectiveness. First, the items escalate in personal disclosure. Thus, when responding, participants increasingly open themselves up to one another in a trusting way representative of tightly bonded pairs. Second, and in keeping with the overarching theme of this chapter, participants do so by acting together—that is, in a coordinated, back-and-forth fashion, making the interaction inherently and continuously synchronous. 100

Highlight(yellow) - 12: Unity 2: Acting Together > Page 203 · Location 3145

“Well, first of all, I planted the pine with my shovel, whereas the birch crawled in under the fence and planted itself. My bias is thus to some extent paternal. . . .” 101 Leopold was not unique in feeling a special affinity for something he had a hand in creating. It’s a common human occurrence.

Highlight(yellow) - 12: Unity 2: Acting Together > Page 204 · Location 3159

A portion of that confidence comes from the results of a study I helped conduct to investigate the effects of managers’ degree of personal involvement in the creation of a work product. I’d expected that the more involvement managers felt they’d had in generating the final product in concert with an employee, the higher they would rate its quality, which is what we found: managers led to believe that they’d had a large role in developing the end product (an ad for a new wristwatch) rated the ad 50 percent more favorably than did managers led to believe they’d had little developmental involvement—even though the final ad they saw was identical in all cases. In addition, we found that the managers with the greatest perceived involvement rated themselves more responsible for the ad’s quality in terms of their much greater perceived managerial control over their employee, which I’d also expected. But I didn’t expect a third finding at all. The more the managers attributed the success of the project to themselves, the more they also attributed it to the ability of their employee. I recall, data table in hand, experiencing a moment of surprise—perhaps not as striking as Leopold’s ax-in-hand moment, but a moment of surprise nonetheless. How could supervisors with greater perceived involvement in the development of a work product see themselves and a single coworker on the project as each more responsible for its successful final form? Only 100 percent of personal responsibility can be distributed, right? And if one party’s perceived personal contribution goes up, by simple logic, the work partner’s should go down, not up. I just didn’t get it at the time, but now I think I do. If co-creation causes at least a temporary merging of identities, then what applies to one partner also applies to the other, distributional logic notwithstanding.

Highlight(yellow) - 12: Unity 2: Acting Together > Page 205 · Location 3178

Children below the age of six or seven are typically selfish when it comes to sharing rewards, rarely distributing them equally with playmates—unless they have obtained those rewards

through a collaborative effort with a playmate, whereupon even three-year-olds share equally the majority of the time.

Highlight(yellow) - 12: Unity 2: Acting Together > Page 207 · Location 3212

It's time to look back at—and, more dauntingly—look past what we've seen as the mostly favorable consequences of being together and acting together. We learned, for instance, that by installing one or another of those two unitizing experiences in people pre-suasively, we can arrange to solidify support from a company's shareholders as well as its customers, and to help ensure that soldiers will stand and fight rather than flee in wartime. In addition, we found that we can use those same two unitizing experiences to arrange for playmates, classmates, and workmates to like, help, and cooperate with one another; for nearly any parent to fill out a long survey with no financial compensation; and even for love to emerge in a lab. But here's an unanswered question: Might it be possible to apply the lessons from these arenas to much larger stages, such as those involving age-old international enmities, violent religious clashes, and simmering racial antagonisms? Could those lessons from what we know about being together and acting together increase our chance of getting together, as a species?

Highlight(yellow) - 13: Ethical Use: A Pre-Pre-Suasive Consideration > Page 212 · Location 3289

Despite understanding the risks, close to half of high-ranking executives reported they would act unethically to get or retain business. In addition, sales and marketing staffers, who were most likely to endorse ethically dubious conduct to secure a win, were least likely to be questioned about it by the company.

Highlight(yellow) - 14: Post-Suasion: Aftereffects > Page 228 · Location 3529

First, it was hard to think hard in that rolling, noisy, bumpy, crowded, emotionally agitating environment, and hard thinking is the chief foe of pyramid sales systems. Second, when people can't deliberate carefully, can't concentrate fully, they are much more likely to respond automatically to whatever decision-making cues are present in the situation.

Highlight(yellow) - 14: Post-Suasion: Aftereffects > Page 228 · Location 3539

Modern life is becoming more and more like that bus hurtling down the highway: speedy, turbulent, stimulus saturated, and mobile. As a result, we are all becoming less and less able to think hard and well about what best to do in many situations. Hence, even the most careful-minded of us are increasingly likely to react automatically to the cues for action that exist in those settings. So, given the quickening pace and concentration-disrupting character of today's world, are we all fated to be bozos on this bus? Not if, rather than raging against the invading automaticity, we invite it in but take systematic control of the way it operates on us. We have to become interior designers of our regular living spaces, furnishing them with features that will send us unthinkingly in the directions we most want to go in those spaces. This approach provides another way (besides making immediate, forceful commitments) to arrange for initially formed preferences to guide our future actions. By assuring that we regularly

encounter cues that automatically link to and activate those preferences, we can commission the machinery in our behalf.

Highlight(yellow) - 14: Post-Suasion: Aftereffects > Page 229 · Location 3547

Previous chapters offered some examples of how we might go about it: if you want to write in a way that connects with a particular audience, perhaps as you are preparing a report or presentation, surround yourself with cues linked to the group: for instance, typical audience members' faces. If you want to approach a task while possessing a strong achievement orientation, perhaps at work, give yourself contact with images of success, striving, and accomplishment, such as a runner winning a race. If you want to approach a different task while possessing an analytical orientation, perhaps when figuring a budget, give yourself access to images of contemplation, thoughtfulness, and examination: for example, Rodin's *The Thinker*. And so on. You might even be able to optimize the performance of each of these types of tasks in the same place on the same computer by changing the desktop wallpaper to show a series of images appropriate to whichever orientation you want to apply to a specific task. If/ when-then plans provide yet another way to harness the power of associative connections for our long-term advantage. It's something they do by associating desirable goals and actions with cues that we will experience in regularly occurring future situations: "If, after my business lunches, the server asks for dessert choices, then I will order mint tea," or "When it's eight in the morning, and I've finished brushing my teeth, then I'll take my prescribed dose of medicine." Although each of these suggested tactics is consistent with research presented earlier in this book, there's another worthy tactic that gets its support from research we haven't yet seen on the role of mere reminders. 110

Highlight(yellow) - 14: Post-Suasion: Aftereffects > Page 234 · Location 3619

It's also a conclusion that provides a fitting close to this book: In large measure, who we are with respect to any choice is where we are, attentionally, in the moment before the choice. We can be channeled to that privileged moment by (choice-relevant) cues we haphazardly bump into in our daily settings; or, of greater concern, by the cues a knowing communicator has tactically placed there; or, to much better and lasting effect, by the cues we have stored in those recurring sites to send us consistently in desired directions. In each case, the made moment is pre-suasive. Whether we are wary of the underlying process, attracted to its potential, or both, we'd be right to acknowledge its considerable power and wise to understand its inner workings.