

The data pattern of the \$5-“gift check” experiment (James & Bolstein, 1992) fits with newer research showing that surveys providing payment before participation (wherein the money is included in a request letter) get more compliance than those providing equal or larger payment after participation (Mercer et al., 2015). It fits as well with a study in which hotel guests encountered a card in their rooms asking them to reuse their towels. They also read either that the hotel had already made a financial contribution to an environmental-protection organization in the name of its guests or that it would make such a contribution after guests did reuse their towels. The before-the-act donation proved significantly more effective than the after-the-act one (Goldstein, Grieskevicus, & Cialdini, 2011). Waiters’ gift of a candy before patrons paid their checks significantly increased tips by Americans in a New Jersey restaurant (Strohmetz et al., 2002) and by guests of each of seven nationalities in a Polish restaurant (Żemła & Gladka, 2016). Finally, the McDonald’s gift-balloon study was done by my InfluenceAtWork.com colleagues Steve J. Martin and Helen Mankin in conjunction with Daniel Gertsacov, at the time the chief marketing officer of Arcos Dorados S.A., which owned the McDonald’s locations. For additional details on this and other McDonald’s studies done by our team,



see [www.influenceatwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Persuasion-Pilots-McDonalds-Arcos-Dorados-INFLUENCE-AT-WORKpdf.pdf](http://www.influenceatwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Persuasion-Pilots-McDonalds-Arcos-Dorados-INFLUENCE-AT-WORKpdf.pdf) The benefits of giving first in business are presented and traced forward particularly convincingly in a pair of books by Adam Grant (2013) and Tom Rollins (2020). For a humorous illustration, see [https://youtu.be/c6V\\_zUGVITk](https://youtu.be/c6V_zUGVITk) For 2 collection of reciprocity-based approaches favored by e-marketers, see <https://sleeknote.com/blog/reciprocity-marketing-examples>.

It’s not just the ease that drug companies gifts affect scientists’ findings about the effectiveness of their drugs (Stelfox et al., 1998), such gifts also affect physicians’ tendencies to prescribe them. Pharmaceutical-industry payments to doctors (for educational training, speaking fees, travel, consulting fees, conference registrations, and so on) are linked to the frequency of doctors’ prescriptions for the sponsored drugs (Hadland et al., 2018; Wall & Brown, 2007; Yeh et al., 2016). Even the low price of a single free meal is enough to do the trick—although more expensive meals are associated with higher prescription rates (DeJong et al., 2016). Studies showing the effects of donations to legislators are described by Salant (2003) and Brown, Drake, & Wellman (2014).

6. The most thoroughgoing scholarship supporting the new account of how the Cuban missile crisis ended belongs to Sheldon Stern (2012), who served for twenty-three years as the historian at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library. See also Benjamin Schwartz’s enlightening review at [www.theatlantic.com/Vmagazine/archive/2013/01/the-real-cuban-missile-crisis/309190](http://www.theatlantic.com/Vmagazine/archive/2013/01/the-real-cuban-missile-crisis/309190). (

7 The candy-shop research was performed by Lammers (1991). In another purchasing pattern that fits with the rule of reciprocation, supermarket shoppers given a surprise gift coupon for a particular type of item then bought significantly more additional items from the store, resulting in a 10 percent increase in total purchase size (Heilman, Nakamoto, & Rao, 2002). The Costco experience was described by Pinsker (2014). Anderson & Zimbardo (1984) reported on the reciprocity-rule wisdom of Diane Louie at Jonestown.

8. The key ring-versus-yogurt data pattern (Friedman & Rahman, 2011) also appeared in a supermarket study (Fombelle et al., 2010) that gave entering shoppers either a nonfood gift (key ring) or a food-related gift (Pringles chips), which increased overall purchases by 28 percent and 60 percent, respectively. Michael Schrage (2004) wrote the article describing the disappointing results of a hotel chain’s seamless customer-experience program on customer satisfaction. Customizing the gift to the need doesn’t just work in commercial settings. Giving support within a relationship leads to greater relationship satisfaction only when it fits the recipient’s current need (Maisel & Gable, 2009).

Paese & Gilin (2000) demonstrated the force of unsolicited favors within negotiation situations. Unsolicited cooperative offers produced return acts of cooperation from recipients even when doing so ran counter to their financial interests. In a real-world illustration of the influence of uninvited favors, Uber was able to significantly increase ridership in Boston after giving the city an unsolicited gift: During the 2013 city-bus strike, the company rented buses and provided free service to all Boston public schools.

Marcel Mauss published his masterwork *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies* in 1925, but an excellent English translation can be found in a 1990 reprint published by Routledge.

Although it is clear that we dislike those who take without giving in return (e.g., Wedekind & Milinski, 2000), a cross-cultural study has shown that those who break the reciprocity rule in the reverse direction—by giving without allowing the recipient an opportunity to repay—are also disliked for it. This result was found to hold for each of the three nationalities investigated—Americans, Swedes, and Japanese (Gergen et al., 1975). There’s ample evidence that people frequently fail to ask for aid to avoid feeling socially indebted (DePaulo, Nadler, & Fisher, 1983; Greenberg & Shapiro, 1971; Riley & Eckenrode, 1986). One study is noteworthy for its ten-year duration and its investigation of a dilemma many of us have faced: whether to ask friends and family to help us relocate to a new residence or to give the entire task to commercial movers. The study found that often people avoid enlisting the help of those they know, not from fears that these nonprofessionals would damage valuable property but from fears of the “indebtedness” such assistance would generate in them as a result (Marcoux, 2009). Other research has pointed to the driving force of indebtedness in reciprocal exchanges. For example, Belmi & Pfeffer (2015), Goldstein, Grieskevicus, & Cialdini (2011), and Pillutla, Malhotra, & Murnighan (2003) identified a main reason that giving first can work so well: it produces a sense of obligation on the part of the recipient to give back. Still, it’s worth noting that in the family of factors related to reciprocity, obligation has an equally active but sweeter sister—gratitude—that operates to stimulate returns, not so much because recipients of favors feel a sense debt but because recipients feel a sense of appreciation. Although both feelings reliably spur positive reciprocation, gratitude appears to be related to the intensification of relationships rather than just the instigation or maintenance of them. Evidence in this regard is available in the research of Sara Algoe and her associates (Algoe, 2012; Algoe, Gable, & Maisel, 2010; Algoe & Zhaoyang, 2016). George, Gournic, & McAfee (1988) did the research attesting to the perceived sexual availability of a woman who allows a man to buy her drinks. See Clark,