



Persuasive Communication Course Outline

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Persuasive Communication

Introduction

You will need high levels of persuasive skills and sophisticated persuasion strategies if you want to get into leadership positions and to retain them. These days, even plain managing of bosses, colleagues, subordinates, and customers call for heavy doses of persuasion. You also need to guard against being persuaded too easily or fraudulently.

You may be intuitively persuasive and may have managed well so far. But if you want to be a surer persuader in a wide range of contexts, you need to look systematically at the persuasion processes, try out strategies, reflect on them, and refine them. PC attempts to provide you with the context and tools for it.

PC will help you:

- Understand the process and features of persuasive communication
- Identify your own persuasive style and potential
- Enhance your repertoire of persuasive communication techniques
- Make your presentations and public speaking persuasive
- Refine the persuasiveness of your written communication
- Become more resistant to undesirable/fraudulent persuasion

How we go about the job

We will have a blend of learning experiences including (i) analysis of cases, (ii) role-plays and other exercises involving persuasive spoken and written communication followed by analysis and feedback, (iii) articulation of persuasion experiences and their critical analysis, (iv) close examination of persuasive texts and/or episodes from history and literature, (vi) some exposure to theoretical insights through reviews of articles/books on persuasion, and (vii) a project. The essential readings and cases are indicated here; role-play materials and some additional readings will be supplied as we go along.

You will be divided into teams and a substantial part of your work will be done in your team because peer feedback is critical in learning to be persuasive. Intense participation is expected of everyone.

Right from day one all students are urged to contribute to a special, exclusive blog or another social media platform that everyone is comfortable with: It will help us chronicle *extra* explorations of persuasion during the course.

Here is the evaluation scheme. There will be both peer and instructor evaluation.

Class participation	15% (Individual)
Assignments	35% (Individual, Small teams)
Great persuader presentation	20% (Small teams, multi-media presentation)
OR	
Persuasion project, presentation	20% (Small teams)
Final examination	30% (Individual, application of learnings, written mode)

Active participation in class is critical for gaining insights into persuasion. **So you are expected to attend all the sessions and participate in all the activities.**

★ = Articles/book chapters you must read

Day 1, Session 1

Introduction

- a. Getting to know one another
- b. Discussion of student expectations, instructor expectations, methodology, detailed course description, and assignments; adoption of self-government rules; group formation

Day 2, Sessions 2-3

Topic: The ingredients of persuasion

Objective: To sensitize students to the role played in persuasion by persuader-centered, emotional, and rational factors.

Case: McGregor's Ltd. Department Store (role sheets to be supplied to groups)

Read: ★ Jay A. Conger (1998, May-June). The Necessary Art of Persuasion. *HBR*.

Day 3, Sessions 4-5

Topic: The process & techniques of persuasion

Objective: To give students a sound theoretical framework to understand the process of persuasion and tools for analysis.

Case: Recruiting Andrew Yard

Read: ★ Robert B. Cialdini (2001, Oct). Harnessing the Science of Persuasion. *HBR*.

★ Gary Yukl and Cecilia M. Falbe (1990). Influence Tactics and Objectives in Upward, Downward, and Lateral Influence Attempts. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 75(2), 132-140

Day 4, Sessions 6-7

Topic: Framing in persuasion

Objective: To help students discover the critical role played by framing in persuasive communication, both written and spoken.

Case: The Expert Witness

Read: ★ Lyle Sussman (1999, Jul-Aug). How to Frame a Message: The Art of Persuasion and Negotiation. *Business Horizons*

★ G. A. Williams and R. B. Miller (2002, May). Change the Way You Persuade. *HBR*.

Day 5, Sessions 8-9

Topic: Ethos and pathos in persuasion

Objective: To help students understand the role played by persuader-centred factors such as credibility, expertise, sincerity, and physical attractiveness in persuasion on the one hand and emotions on the other even within the supposedly rational corporate context.

Cases: Lamb to the Slaughterhouse, Stories from the *Mahabharata*

Read : ★ Joseph Grenny, et al (2008). How to Have Influence. *MIT Sloan Management Review*

★ Linda Hill (2009). Exercising Influence without Formal Authority. *HBSP* (pp 9-20)

Day 6, Sessions 10-11

Topic: Persuasive arguments and logical fallacies

Objective: To help students appreciate the role and limitations of logic in persuasive efforts, and to help them detect unintended poor logic that weakens one's persuasive force and deliberate logical fallacies that often persuade.

Case: The Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center

Read: ★ Rachelle R. Greer (2011). Reporting Results to a Skeptical Audience. *The American Review of Public Administration*

★ David A Garvin & Michael A Roberto (2001, September). What You Don't Know About Making Decisions. *Harvard Business Review*

Day 7, Session 12-13

Topic: Persuading ethically

Objective: To help students develop persuasive skills within an ethically appropriate framework and to prevent them from being too easily persuaded by others.

Case: The Open Window (Saki), World Class Bull (HBR)

Read: ★ Richard L. Johannesen (2001). Perspectives on Ethics in Persuasion, Ch 2, In C.U. Larson, *Persuasion: Reception and Responsibility* (9th edn). Wadsworth

★ D Barstow (2008, April). Behind TV Analysts, Pentagon's Hidden Hand. *New York Times*.

Day 8, Sessions 14-15

Topic: Persuasive skills for managing change

Objective: To help students manage change and to plan a major persuasion attempt

Case: [To be announced later]

Read: ★ David A. Garvin, & Michael A. Roberto (2005, February). Change Through Persuasion. *HBR*.

★ Perry Buffett (2011, February). Using Influence to Get Things Done. *Organizations & People*.

Day 9, Sessions 16-17

Topic: Mass persuasion

Objective: To help students with techniques of mass persuasion including advertising

Read: ★ Vineet Nayar (2010, June). A Maverick CEO Explains How He Persuaded His Team to Leap into the Future. *HBR*.

★ David Gergen (2002). How Presidents persuade. *HBR*.

★ Peter Guber (2007, December). The Four Truths of the Storyteller. *HBR*

★ Robert McKee (2003). Storytelling that Moves People. *HBR*.

Day 10, Sessions 18-19

Topic: Resisting unwanted persuasion – deception, propaganda

Objective: To help students identify deceptive persuasion and resist unwelcome persuasion attempts.

Case: [To be announced later.]

Read: ★ Frank S. Perri & Richard G. Brody, (2012) The Optics of Fraud: Affiliations that Enhance Offender Credibility, *Journal of Financial Crime*, 19(3), 305 - 320.

★ Paul Krugman (2007). Prostates and Prejudices. *New York Times*

Day 11, Session 20

Topic: Conclusion of the course, personal action plan, review of the course

Objective: To prompt students to draw up an action plan to heighten their persuasive skills and practice at their workplace.

Recommended Additional Readings

- ★Cialdini, R. (1998). *Influence - The Psychology of Persuasion*, 2nd ed. New York: Perennial Currents.
- Cialdini, R. (2009). *Influence: Science and Practice*. Boston: Pearson
- ★Cialdini, R.B. and Sagarin, B.J. (2005). Principles of interpersonal influence. Chapter 7, TC Brock and MC Green, Editors, *Persuasion: Psychological Insights and Perspectives*. Thousand Oaks: Sage
- Conrad, D. (2013). Great Leaders are Great Sales People. *Journal of Business Studies Quarterly*, 4(3), 223-29
- ★Greene, R. (2003). *The Art of Seduction*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Greene, R. (2000). *The 48 Laws of Power*. New York: Penguin Putnam.
- Hogan, K. (1996). *The Psychology of Persuasion*. Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing.
- ★Huczynski, A. (2004). *Influencing within organizations*. (2nd edition). London: Rutledge.
- Jick, T.D. (1987). Influence Tactics. HBS Note No. 9-487-087
- Jowett, G.S. and O'Donnell, V. (2006). *Propaganda and Persuasion* (4th edition). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Kenton, S. B. (1989). Speaker credibility in persuasive business communication: A model which explains gender differences. *The Journal of Business Communication*, 26(2): 143-157
- Kevin, N. (1997). How to convince others by skillfully using twisted logic. Retrieved August 15, 2008 from <http://www.pertinent.com/articles/persuasion/nunleyP1.asp>
- Levine, R. (2003). *The Power of Persuasion*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Monippally, M.M. (2010) *The Persuasive Manager*. New Delhi: Random House.
- Mortensen, K.W. (2004) *Maximum Influence*. New York: Amacom.
- ★Nohria, N. and Harrington, B. (1993). Six Principles of Persuasion. HBS Note 9-494-037
- Pfeffer, J. (2007). How to Turn On the Charm: Building Influence Through Real Human Influence for a Change. *Harvard Business School Press*.
- Simons, H.W. (2001). Framing and reframing, Chapter 6; Reasoning and evidence, Chapter 8 of *Persuasion in society*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Watkins, M.D. (2001). Principles of persuasion. *Negotiation Journal*, 17(2).

➔ Schedule

Persuasive Communication: Tentative Schedule of Activities				
Date and Time	Sessions	Main Topics	Assignments	Submission deadlines
Sep. 22 (Mon) 5:40 pm– 6:55 pm	1	Introduction		
Sep. 23 (Tue) 5:40 pm– 8:15 pm	2-3	The Ingredients of Persuasion	Persuasive Writing HKCC1	1000 hrs. Fri, Sept 26
Sep. 24 (Wed) 5:40 pm– 8:15 pm	4-5	The Process & Techniques of Persuasion	Persuasive Writing HKCC2 (Peer Evaluation)	1000 hrs. Wed, Oct. 1
Oct. 6 (Mon) 5:40 pm– 8:15 pm	6-7	Framing in Persuasion	Persuasive Public Speaking	
Oct. 7 (Tue) 5:40 pm– 8:15 pm	8-9	Ethos and Pathos in Persuasion	Persuasive Public Speaking	
Oct. 8 (Wed) 5:40 pm– 8:15 pm	10-11	Persuasive Argument and Logical Fallacies	Persuasive Public Speaking	
Oct. 27 (Mon) 5:40 pm– 8:15 pm	12-13	Persuading Ethically	Great Persuader Presentation 1	
Oct. 28 (Tue) 5:40 pm– 8:15 pm	14-15	Persuasive Skills for Managing Change	Great Persuader Presentation 2	
Oct. 29 (Wed) 5:40 pm– 10:30 pm	16-18	Persuading Masses	Great Persuader Presentations 3-5	
Oct. 30 (Thu) 7:15 pm– 10:30 pm	19-20	Resisting Unwanted Persuasion, Conclusion of the course, review, personal action plan		
Nov. 3; 4:00 – 6:30 pm		PC Exam (online, 2 hours 30 minutes max)		