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| **COURSE TITLE**  Communication & Collaboration III : Influence and Persuasion |
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| A2.1 Executive Summary By: TEAM 11  Hayata Nakamura, Mohamed Lyazid Skalli Chérif, Piyush Kumar, Rahma Tabassi, Siriphan Mongpho |

Persuasion and influence are critical skills for success in today's fast-paced and competitive business environment. Dr. Robert Cialdini's 7 Principles of Persuasion provide a framework for understanding how to influence others effectively. However, understanding and applying these principles in a specific industry can be challenging. By exploring the application of Cialdini's principles in the fitness industry, we will implement valuable insights into the skills, tools, and experience sets required for strategic influence and persuasion. Through meta-analysis and interviews with experienced leaders in sales, marketing, and customer service domains, we will identify strategies and tactics for influencing and persuading within the fitness industry. We will highlight points that will help develop skills in persuasion and influence while gaining a deep understanding of the fitness industry.

The fitness industry is a vast and expanding sector that includes gyms, health clubs, fitness studios, personal trainers, and wellness facilities. Consumer demand for physical health and wellness, technological developments, personalization, and sustainability, drive the sector. The market size of the US Gym, Health & Fitness Clubs industry has declined 6.7% per year on average between 2018 and 2023 (IBISWorld, 2023). Especially in 2019 and 2020, Due to the COVID epidemic, the market size of the Gym, Health & Fitness Clubs business, as measured by revenue, has declined by 33% from $45.3bn in 2019 to $30.3bn in 2020. The two most significant challenges in the fitness industry are accessibility and member acquisition.

**Member acquisition:** Interviews with leaders in the fitness industry revealed that their primary concern in acquiring new customers is gaining their trust and offering a fitness experience that aligns with their customers' needs. They pay close attention to customer complaints, needs, and feedback to increase satisfaction and loyalty, encouraging word-of-mouth referrals.

This aligns with the "principle of liking," which suggests people are more likely to respond to requests from people they like and feel familiar with.

The company also considers the "principle of consistency" by observing macro customer preferences and creating a gym environment that prioritizes sustainability and social activities.

**Accessibility:** Interviews with fitness industry leaders suggest that their most important response to the growth of online fitness experiences is understanding their customers' ideal person and guiding their behavior to align with that empathy. A professional boxer who embodies qualities he wants to see in others, such as dedication, a positive attitude, and a commitment to improvement, he successfully inspires others to follow his lead. This aligns with the "authority principle," which suggests people are more likely to respond to someone perceived as an expert. A marketing manager also uses the "principles of commitment and consistency" by approaching people with similar personalities to the gym's ambassadors and sharing their success stories to spur a desire for self-improvement and an offline fitness experience.

Given these findings about the different challenges in the industry, professionals and leaders can use the principles of influence and persuasion that are already in place to further improve on or overcome these challenges at many levels, such as marketing and sales. EmphasizingIn the interviews with sales professionals, we learned that the principle that they leverage the most is the liking principle through complimenting and finding similarities with the clients that they are talking to, as well as leveraging the social proof principle talking about the successful journeys of current clients at they are gym. Emphasizing the sympathy or liking principle can increase member acquisition by relating better to clients.

These principles can also be applied to other dimensions of the industry. In the marketing dimension, they can also use the principle of Consistency as it relies on the image that one is consistent with their identity and self-image. Marketers can use that to their advantage to create a campaign given the feedback received by current clients said in ((De Backer, 2022)) "Marketers have embraced this principle by working with micro-conversions."

The findings are unique and provocative. They highlight the importance of empathy, trust, and customer feedback in the fitness industry and suggest that offline experiences and influencer marketing can effectively increase customer engagement and loyalty.

The industry might be missing the opportunity to leverage the "principle of consistency" by creating gym environments that prioritize sustainability and social activities based on observing macro customer preferences. Being able to do that will have many gym goers that Identify as an environmentalist to join a gym simply because they identify and trust the mission the gym is taking on.

The influence techniques that are the most effective include the "principle of social proof," where people are more likely to respond positively to a sales pitch if they know that someone that accomplished their goal. The "principle of liking," is where people are more likely to respond to requests from people they like and feel familiar with. The "principles of commitment and consistency" can also spur a desire for self-improvement and an offline fitness experience.

In conclusion, applying Dr. Robert Cialdini's 7 Principles of Persuasion in the fitness industry has revealed valuable insights into the skills, tools, and experience sets required for strategic influence and persuasion. The challenges faced by the fitness industry, including member acquisition and accessibility, can be addressed by leveraging these principles effectively. Through interviews with industry leaders and a meta-analysis of the data, it was found that empathy, trust, and customer feedback are crucial factors in customer acquisition and loyalty. Offline experiences and influencer marketing can also effectively increase customer engagement and loyalty. Furthermore, the principle of Consistency can be leveraged by creating gym environments that prioritize sustainability and social activities based on macro customer preferences. Overall, the findings of this study suggest that understanding and applying the principles of persuasion and influence can lead to significant improvements in the fitness industry's marketing, sales, and customer service domains.

References and interviews

*IBISWorld - Industry Market Research, Reports, and Statistics*. (2023, January 10). Ibisworld. [https://www.ibisworld.com/industry-statistics/market-size/gym-health-fitness-](https://www.ibisworld.com/industry-statistics/market-size/gym-health-fitness-clubs-united-states/) [clubs-united-states/](http://clubs-united-states/)

Interviews:

Naoki Maekawa, Sales representative

Jun Okada, Marketing

Koichi Watanabe, Customer service

Hamza Ghazouani, Gym owner boxing champion

Vignesh Nadar, Sales Representative

K.J.Jagan, Marketing

G Santosh, Customer Service

Nusaba Mattarat, Sales representative

Wipada Pongpalad Customer service

Daanish Majeed, Sales professional

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