

# Logic vs Cunning

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## 1) Required Reading:

[Machiavellian Thinking vs Conventional Logic \(Illimitable Man\)](#)

## 2) Preamble:

**"...logic is antithetical to cunning." -Illimitable Man**

That which is conducive to logic and that which is conducive to cunning are antithetical.

More specifically, that which is conducive to doing rigorous logical reasoning for the sake of finding the truth, and that which is conducive to charm and persuasion (2 key facets of cunning), are antithetical.

When doing logical reasoning, your goal is to get an accurate map of reality. With charm, your goal is to make the other person like you. With persuasion, your goal is to change the other person's opinion or course of action.

Most people don't find logic to be charming, or persuasive. Quite the opposite; they find logic to be offensive, the antithesis of charming. Instead of considering logic to be persuasive, they consider emotion and logical fallacies to be persuasive.

The aim of this essay is to illustrate the specific ways in which Logic and Cunning are antithetical.

### **3) Logic vs Cunning, Antitheticals:**

#### **3A) Emotion: Terrible for Logic, Great for Cunning:**

When doing logical reasoning, experiencing emotion is a liability; the more emotionally detached you are the better. Emotion may bias you positively or negatively, in either case giving you an inaccurate view of reality.

When doing logical reasoning, facts mean everything and feelings mean nothing.

However, when charming or persuading others you certainly should play on their emotions.

In matters of charm and persuasion, facts often mean very little, whereas feelings mean everything.

Emotional people cannot be reasoned with; don't appeal to logic when dealing with them. However they can be manipulated, and with incredible ease.

With both Logic and Cunning, it is best for you yourself to be emotionally detached; calm (low neuroticism).

The benefit for logic is straightforward; a lack of negative emotion will prevent you from being overly pessimistic in your assessment of reality.

Being low on neuroticism is also beneficial for charm and persuasion. Not exhibiting any fear, anger, or sadness causes people to perceive you as likeable (charm) and credible (persuasion).

#### **3B) Emotionality of Language:**

When doing logical reasoning, your speech should be direct and free of emotion; communicating as much critical information as possible in as few words as possible.

When charming and persuading, it is wise to make your language emanate emotion, and it is often wise to communicate your point indirectly; using more words than is absolutely necessary may help with this.

Communicating your point indirectly is critical if it is a point that is likely to offend the sensibilities of your target; they are more likely to accept a bitter truth if it is expressed indirectly and gently, rather than directly and harshly.

For an example of the type of language that is conducive to logical reasoning, see the writings of [WallStreetPlayboys](#). It's direct, zero fluff.

For an example of the type of language that is conducive to charming people, see the writings of [Mark Manson](#). There is a lot of fluff in his writings that is designed to play on people's emotions, rather than to communicate concrete information.

Logical Reasoning = communicate with concrete information

Charm and Persuasion = give people feel good fluff

### **3C) Substance vs Style:**

When doing logical reasoning, substance is all that matters, style means nothing. What is said matters, how it is said means nothing.

When persuading others, substance does matter, but style also matters a great deal. In addition to what you say, *how you say it* is critical. So far as charm and persuasion are concerned, tone matters more than substance.

Most people decide whether or not to believe what you say, not based on the logic and facts you present to support your opinion, but by how you present your opinion. They pay attention to your style, rather than substance.

If you appear calm and confident when speaking, people tend to assume you are credible. If you appear nervous or defensive, you are perceived as uncredible. All of this is the case regardless of whether what you are saying is in actuality true or false.

### **3D) Statistics vs Anecdotes:**

**"Cunning and rhetoric almost always triumph over logic, fact and statistic in matters of persuasion." -Illimitable Man**

For the sake of doing logical reasoning, anecdotes should be ignored as much as possible. Anyone can manufacture an anecdote that will corroborate any narrative imaginable. Statistics should be used, since statistics are the *totality* of all the available anecdotes.

However, when persuading others statistics are usually ineffective; most people are not good enough at logic to process and analyze statistics accurately. As such, use anecdotes. Most people are persuaded by anecdotal evidence, particularly emotionally charged anecdotes.

Humans tend to forget facts and statistics, but remember stories, particularly emotionally charged stories. To be a great persuader, you must be a great storyteller.

### **3E) StraightTalk vs PowerTalk**

**"No one is hated more than he who speaks the truth." –Plato**

'StraightTalk' means saying what you actually think.

'PowerTalk' means *not* saying what you actually think, but instead regulating your speech based on who you are talking to.

For the sake of logical reasoning, StraightTalk should be the modality used; your goal is to find the truth. Blunt, direct language is most effective; if the sensibilities of others are offended, or even if your own sensibilities are offended, it means nothing.

For the sake of charm and persuasion, PowerTalk should be the modality used. Saying what you actually think is most likely counterproductive, since what you actually think is likely to offend a great many people.

Instead, regulate your speech and tell people what they want to hear (charm). When persuading, formulate what you say in a way that will appeal to the biases and sensibilities of the person you are trying to persuade, even if you don't actually believe everything you say.

**Logic and Charm are directly antithetical in the sense that when doing logical reasoning your goal is to find the truth, and the truth of most important matters is ugly. In the words of Illimitable Man, "Reality is not politically correct." If you tell people truths that are ugly, they will not be charmed by you; they will dislike you.**

When charming people, say what is politically correct for the time and place you live in, or tell them things that appeal to their sensibilities (things that won't offend them).

When charming people, prioritize feelings over facts, and political correctness over reality.

When doing logical reasoning, feelings and political correctness mean nothing; facts and reality are all that matter.

In the words of my younger brother, "For charm, put fealz over realz. For the sake of logic, put realz over fealz."

### **3F) Logical Fallacies:**

**"Logical fallacies double as effective Machiavellian power plays, for logic is antithetical to cunning...Where some see logical fallacies, others see Machiavellian tactics." -Illimitable Man**

**"Logic never sells." –WallStreetPlayboys**

When doing logical reasoning, logical fallacies are a liability; they will lead you to an incorrect conclusion.

However, when persuading others logical fallacies are an asset; many people fall for them.

Ad Hominem is a logical fallacy that almost everyone will fall for.

### **3G) Truth vs Persuasion:**

**"In many circumstances, logic and fact are an obstruction to the Machiavellian motive; they expose duplicity by contradicting narrative with fact, and so the Machiavellian practices caution with the logical, for they are less easily duped..."**

**People who understand logic but do not obey its authoritative confines will try to exploit your logic. They are what I refer to as "Rational Machiavellians".**

**They tend to be men blessed with high reasoning faculty, but adept in the ways of cunning, and as such, can switch between rational and Machiavellian modes of thought. Such ability is rare...This ability is a binary cognitive modality that, in my view, all men looking to build or maintain power should embody." -Illimitable Man**

When doing logical reasoning your goal is to find the truth. When persuading, your goal is to change the other person's opinion, not necessarily to what is actually true.

When doing logical reasoning, you need facts and reality to be presented as accurately as possible. **When persuading, you need to present facts and reality in a way that corroborates the story you are trying to sell, not necessarily in a way that accurately reflects reality.**

### **3H) Antitheticals, Big 5 Personality Traits:**

When doing logical reasoning, it is best to be low on enthusiasm (extroversion) and politeness (agreeableness).

Low enthusiasm prevents positive emotion from biasing you, and making your view of reality overly optimistic.

Low politeness is beneficial, since it prevents you from shying away from the truth because it offends the sensibilities of others, or your own sensibilities. People who rank high on politeness will instinctively avoid the truth if it is unpleasant or offensive.

When charming others ranking high on both enthusiasm and politeness is helpful, if not outright necessary.

You must develop the ability to dial your level of enthusiasm up or down, depending on whether in the moment you need to charm, or analyze reality. Illimitable Man refers to this as 'Utilitarian Ambiversion'.

### **3I) Complexity of Language:**

**"You have to become an extremely clear communicator.**

**If people don't understand it quickly they assume \*you\* are dumb.**

**Why? Average people think they are smart so if they don't get it fast, they don't blame themselves. They blame you." -WallStreetPlayboys**

When doing logical reasoning, the language you use will need to be complex. Big words and complex sentence structures will be needed for the sake of expressing all the complexity of the issue.

However, complex language tends to annoy most people. As such, when charming and persuading simplify your language as much as possible; use simple sentence structures and small words. If this requires you to omit some

nuance and complexity from the information you communicate, so be it; being thorough with what you say is not the priority, being likeable is.

With logical reasoning, you should be thinking at a 12th grade level. For charm and persuasion, you should be talking at a 4th grade level.

On rare occasions, you will be attempting to charm someone with an IQ of 130+ and they may be charmed by big words and complex sentence structures that communicate all the nuances associated with the topic being discussed. Be aware that such people are the exception, not the rule.

### **3J) Topic Choice Antitheticals:**

When doing logical reasoning, you will often be dealing with abstract topics (philosophical theories, international monetary policy, ect). However, most people in the population find such topics to be boring or annoying.

As such, when charming people you should make conversation about the banal topics that interest most people (the weather, the local football game, Kardashians).

Note that Kim Kardashian has millions of readers, while Nietzsche's philosophical theories do not.

## **4) Gender Differences and Autism:**

### **4A) Gender Differences:**

Generally speaking men tend towards the traits that are conducive for logical reasoning, while women tend towards the traits that are conducive for charming and persuading people.

Women rank higher on enthusiasm and politeness (extroversion and agreeableness) than men. Women also pay lip service to whatever is currently politically correct more instinctively than men.

Women instinctively prioritize feelings over facts; men do this as well, but not as often and not to the same degree.

The reason men and women would have evolved to be this way is rather straightforward.

In our hunter gatherer past, men survived by being good at hunting. Charming other people was not necessary for success in hunting, but being good or at least decent at logical reasoning was.

Women on the other hand survived by *avoiding ostracism*; making other members of the tribe like them so that they would be provided with protection and resources. Men also benefited by having others in the tribe like them, but not to the same degree.

In a hunter gatherer tribe, ostracism would be damaging for a man's survival prospects, but he could conceivably survive on his own until he found another tribe. However, for a woman ostracism would be a death sentence; the probability she could survive on her own without the aid of a tribe would be practically zero, particularly if she was burdened by pregnancy.

Being good at logic would help a person's survival, and being good at charm would also help a person's survival, the difference being that for men logic would be most important whereas for women charm would have been most important.

**Caveat:** Men and women average equal on the Big 5 Trait 'Extroversion'. Extroversion breaks down into the sub-traits 'Assertiveness' and 'Enthusiasm'. Men average higher on Assertiveness, women average higher on Enthusiasm.

## 4B) Autism:

Autists represent an extreme personality that is great at logic, but terrible at charm.

Autists seem to be incapable of keeping track of what is politically correct or incorrect; they are incapable of predicting in advance what statements will be offensive, and what statements will be charming or at least neutral.

While this is a liability in terms of charming people, it is an asset for logical reasoning; their search for the truth is not in any way impeded by political correctness. Autists don't shy away from the truth because it offends the sensibilities of others, or because it offends their own sensibilities.

Beyond being bad at charm, autists seem to fail with almost *all* facets of cunning.

Many are intelligent enough to be capable of doing calculus in their head, yet at the same time they are utterly incapable of reading the body language, vocal tonality, and psychologies of other people. They are incapable of subtextual communication (detecting the subtext beneath what is said overtly).

Autists are great with computers, but terrible with people; great at logic, terrible at cunning.

Factual correctness and political correctness are often mutually exclusive, and autists instinctively say what they perceive to be factually correct, even if they



know it is politically incorrect (autists instinctively use StraightTalk, not PowerTalk).

This may be giving them too much credit; most autists seem to be incapable of even *knowing* what is currently politically correct; they seem incapable of keeping track of such things.

It's not that they could use StraightTalk or PowerTalk and voluntarily choose to use StraightTalk, but rather that they are capable of StraightTalk and completely incapable of PowerTalk.

#### **4C) Masculinized Logic, Feminized Cunning:**

In terms of the ability to engage in rigorous logical reasoning, men average slightly higher than women and autistic people rank extremely high.

In terms of the ability to charm people, men average slightly lower than women, and autistic people rank extremely low.

Bear in mind that the overwhelming majority of autists are men, and that autism is what happens when a baby is exposed to unusually high amounts of prenatal testosterone. The brain of an autist is *hyper-masculine*.

James DaMore is the iconic example of an autistic man who is incredibly good at logic, and incapable of cunning.

Good enough at logic to write the memo "[Google's Ideological Echo Chamber](#)", yet at the same time so bad at cunning he couldn't predict that publishing such a memo would get him fired.

#### **4D) Corporate Example:**

In most corporations, you will find that the engineering department is filled with men who are great at logic, but terrible at charm. You will also find that the human resources (HR) department is filled with women who are great at charming people, but who suck at logic.

The men in engineering can do calculus, but they can't effectively make conversation with a stranger.

The women in HR can barely make it through high school physics, yet they are capable of charming almost anyone.

The men working in finance and law tend to be at least decent at logic, and very cunning.

An engineer will say something factually correct, but politically incorrect, such as "IQ is real; some people actually are smarter than others", and be at risk of getting fired for doing so.

A woman from HR will say something politically correct, and genuinely believe it is the truth, such as "IQ isn't real. Everyone is smart in their own way!"

A banker or lawyer will say something politically correct to avoid ostracism, but on the inside know it is a lie. Outwardly they will say "IQ isn't real. Everyone is smart in their own way!", while on the inside knowing "IQ is real; some people actually are smarter than others".

## **5) Naturally Logical, Learned Cunning:**

Most people are not particularly good at logic, or at cunning.

A minority of people are good at one, but not the other.

Of those who are good at logic but who are bad at charm, almost all of them are men, and they are disproportionately autistic.

Of those who are bad at logic but who are good at charm, most of them are women.

**There are people who are great at both logic and cunning; such people are exceptionally rare. Generally speaking they are men who are naturally good at logic, and who have taken the time to learn cunning.**

How does one learn cunning? Reading The 48 Laws of Power is a good start.

## **6) Epilogue:**

### **6A) TLDR:**

#### **Logic:**

- Banish emotion; it would only bias you.
- Substance means everything, style means nothing.
- Facts and statistics are what matter, emotionally charged anecdotes are a distraction from reality.
- StraightTalk is the modality you should use.
- Logical Fallacies should be banished.
- Present the facts as accurately as possible.
- Be low on enthusiasm and agreeableness.
- Use complex language, if needed.

## Charm and Persuasion:

- Play on the emotions of others, while remaining calm yourself.
- Style matters more than substance.
- Emotionally charged anecdotes trump statistical reality and fact.
- PowerTalk is the modality you should use.
- Logical fallacies are useful tools.
- Present the facts in a way that corroborates the story you are trying to sell.
- Be high on enthusiasm and agreeableness.
- Use simple language.

## 6B) Logic, More Than Just IQ:

To be good at logic is more than just having a high IQ score.

If a person has a high IQ, it means they have lots of cognitive processing power.

To be good at logic means to be skilled at getting an accurate view of objective reality, and prioritizing finding the truth over not offending the sensibilities of others, or your own sensibilities.

**There are plenty of high IQ people who suck at logic, because they will use their immense cognitive processing power to manufacture rationalizations for lies that appeal to their sensibilities, rather than to figure out what is actually true.**

There's no shortage of high IQ people who will say things like "IQ isn't real" because the fact that some people are smarter than others offends their sensibilities.

## 6C) Detecting Who is Good at Logic:

Is there a way to quickly decipher how good a person is at logical reasoning?

**People who begin statements with the phrase "I feel that...." tend to be bad at logic, while those who begin statements with the phrase "I think that..." tend to be good at logic.**

**If a person asserts that the exception to the rule invalidates the existence of the rule, they have just told you "I suck at logic, and I am statistically illiterate."**

Most people suck at logic, so your baseline assumption should be that the person you are dealing with either cannot understand rigorous logical reasoning, or does not value it.

## 7) Recommended Reading:

[Machiavellian Thinking vs Conventional Logic \(Illimitable Man\)](#)

[Google's Ideological Echo Chamber \(James DaMore\)](#)

## 8) Reflections from Illimitable Man:

### Essay, 'Machiavellian Thinking vs Conventional Logic':

"Unlike the logician, the idiot does not become pre-occupied with their thoughts. The intellectual on the other hand is often immersed deep in abstract thought and thus must "switch into another way of being" to be socially competent. The thought wavelength symptomatic of higher cognitive functions would appear to be incompatible with the social demands of the lower.

As such, the logician must "turn their charm on," that is to say, subdue the honest and mechanical thinking part of their brain, instead turning on their duplicitous social brain. Idiots have little thinking brain to turn off, they're always in social mode. Women likewise thrive in social mode as socialising is their bread and butter, that is to say, women tend to be socially focused and group-orientated as they're more dependant on "the group" than men are. In the ancestral environment where men could hunt and survive alone, a woman would almost certainly perish without tribe acceptance.

Introverts live to think and innovate, they prioritise solitude. Extroverts live to play and consume, they prioritise company. Naturally the prior is more typical of man, and the latter, of women. The seasoned Machiavellian learns how to switch between his rational brain and his social brain so that he can interact as necessary; this is utilitarian ambiversion.

The merits and demerits of logic are so in-conflict with the merits and demerits of Machiavellian logic that the rational man's primary mode of thought: "logical reasoning" impedes his ability to be socially effective. One cannot be socially effective without being sufficiently Machiavellian."

### Illimitable Man Twitter:

"A 140 IQ on a woman is like a 110 IQ on a man." –IM

Given equal IQs, men tend to be better than women at rigorous logical reasoning to find the truth.

"Keeping people on the defence is how you win arguments without actually having a reasoned discussion and forming a strong and cogent argument of your own. Attack is the best defence."

"Very few people give a shit about the facts. Most people just want their biases confirmed. This is annoying if you want an intellectual exchange, but incredibly useful for selling."