

ART OF PERSUSASION

INTRODUCTION

In persuasion, we must deal with others' perceptions and inferences as well as convince them of the validity of our arguments.

Therefore, in persuading people, your job is to lead them with information demonstrating that the result you want is beneficial, or not harmful, to them.

You have a better chance at persuasion when you can show that a proposal is good for both (all) sides.

PREPARING YOUR ARGUMENTS TO PERSUADE

Common Tips

- You must find and advance a benefit for the other party while admitting the benefits to you.
- You must arm yourself with sound support for your argued positions.
- You must communicate in an empathic way that connects the parties.
- You must be credible.
- You must advance a reason for the other to agree.

A.C.E.S. METHOD

A.C.E.S. Method is applied when you want to find a reason for the other party to agree.

A: Appropriateness

- Arguing appropriateness is arguing that it is the right thing to do.
- If you believe that something is appropriate but your counterpart holds a different value system, your appeal may be rejected.
- Usually, however, appeals to appropriateness hinge on professional, ethical, or legal standards generally observed.

C: Consistency

- Consistency arguments appeal to a person's sense of justice and fairness.
- They also provide the comfort of psychological balance.
- You may appeal on the grounds of consistency where, for example, you are asking the other to return a reciprocal action on your part.
- You may also use consistency where your proposal would rectify a prior error or injustice.

E: Effectiveness

- Effectiveness is found in an outcome desired and in solutions that bring about the best result for all parties.
- Effectiveness is often the most successful appeal. Everyone wants their problems solved

S: Special

- A special appeal may be used where, despite extreme effort on both sides, circumstances do not permit the most desired outcome.
- Your proposal may be the next best alternative, albeit only partially effective.

C.R.E.E.K METHOD

The acronym may help you remember the tools you need for successful Persuasion

C: Common Ground

- If you want to accomplish your goals, that is, persuade the other to do as you desire, you must find mutuality / Common Ground.
- You find common ground where both parties want the same outcome.
- You also find common ground by looking for things you can do for or provide to the other.
- Structuring arguments consistent with the other's frame of reference or perspective is also part of finding common ground.

R: Reinforcement

- Reinforcing is to support your positions with those things that lead to your conclusions.
- You may use logic and reasoning; Here, the focus is on what may be viewed as hard data—or external evidence—to support validity.

E: Emotional Connection

- What helps to persuade is to make a connection to the emotions of the other party.
- Resist the automatic tendency to think that the other person is just like you.
- It is harder to make this emotional connection with those about whom you know little. So you should seek information about the person you hope to persuade as well as seeking information about the substantive issues and problems to be addressed.

E: Empathy

- Being empathetic is to acknowledge and respect the differences.
- It is also to acknowledge and respect the other person's values, needs, goals, and positions with the same deference you give to your own.
- Trying to put yourself into the other person's shoes will create empathy.

- When you are able to place yourself in others' shoes and recognize what they hold important, you stand a greater chance of recognizing how your proposal relates to their prior attitudes.
- Working on being empathetic also often opens one's eyes to common ground that would otherwise be missed

K: Keeping Your Credibility

- Since the common human error is to make attributions to the person, you want to be viewed in the best possible light.
- If you are not trusted or believed, you will not persuade.
- Since your self-interest in what you propose is presumed, your credibility is key to believing your common ground and reinforcement.
- Your credibility comes from your
 - Expertise
 - Knowledge of the problem and related issues
 - Composure
 - Approach,
 - Confidence
 - Reputation
 - Trust that others have in you

WHEN PERSUASION FAILS

Despite all our best efforts, the persuasion is bound to fail. Here is what you can do in the situation

- You may attempt to reframe your arguments
- You may provide further clarification
- You may also seek different or additional common ground.
- You may ask why the person is not convinced.

If all of these attempts fail, it is likely that the other person cannot and will not be convinced. You should consider a postponement to prepare a different resolution.

You should check *your* perceptions and *your* emotional hot spots in reevaluating your arguments and alternatives. Perhaps you are experiencing selective perception, failing to understand their counterarguments fully.

Sources:

Barbara A. Budjac Corvette - Conflict Management, Pg 183-200 (pdf)