Cialdini's Six Principles of Influence Checklist

Reciprocity: As humans, we generally aim to return favors, pay back debts, and treat others as they treat us. According to the idea of reciprocity, this can lead us to feel obliged to offer concessions or discounts to others if they have offered them to us. This is because we're uncomfortable with feeling indebted to them.

Commitment (and Consistency): Cialdini says that we have a deep desire to be consistent. For this reason, once we've committed to something, we're then more inclined to go through with it.

Social Proof: This principle relies on people's sense of "safety in numbers." For example, we're more likely to work late if others in our team are doing the same, put a tip in a jar if it already contains money, or eat in a restaurant if it's busy. Here, we're assuming that if lots of other people are doing something, then it must be OK.

Liking: Cialdini says that we're more likely to be influenced by people we like. Likability comes in many forms – people might be similar or familiar to us, they might give us compliments, or we may just simply trust them.

Authority: We feel a sense of duty or obligation to people in positions of authority. This is why advertisers of pharmaceutical products employ doctors to front their campaigns, and why most of us will do most things that our manager requests.

Scarcity: This principle says that things are more attractive when their availability is limited, or when we stand to lose the opportunity to acquire them on favorable terms.

Resisting Influence Reciprocity: Before accepting a free gift or a discounted service, or before agreeing to hear confidential information, ask yourself whether you're going to feel obliged to give the same or more in return. Should you decline, so that you don't feel indebted?

Resisting Influence Commitment: Before agreeing to a course of action, even at a very preliminary level, think about the consequences of your decision. Will you feel so invested in this new course of action that you won't want to change your mind?

Resisting Influence Social Proof: Though everyone else is pursuing a particular route or buying a product, it may not be right for you. Avoid falling victim to the "herd mentality." You might decide that it's best to go against the trend.

Resisting Influence Liking: When you feel tempted to buy a product or sign up for a service, ask yourself whether you've fallen under the spell of a particularly likable salesperson. Is the salesperson similar to you, familiar to you, or extremely complimentary?

Resisting Influence Authority: Carefully note your reaction to authority figures. Has the person you're negotiating with triggered your respect for authority? Are you making your choice because you want to, or are you swayed by an "expert" opinion? And does this person genuinely have the authority he is implying, or is he merely using the symbols of that authority?

Resisting Influence Scarcity: Before you fall for a sales pitch claiming that a product is running out of stock or that a discount deal is soon to expire, think again. Do you really want or need the product now, or has its lack of availability caught your attention?