

Compliance Gaining

Rationale: This lesson orients students to various compliance-gaining strategies and their relationship with persuasion.

By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to:

- Define compliance-gaining
- Identify common compliance-gaining strategies

{video}

No visual aid is used for this lesson.

Outline of the Lesson

- I. Review of previous session's content
- II. Lesson opening:
- III. Overview
 - A. Typology of compliance-gaining
 - B. Choosing compliance-gaining strategies

Body

- I. Review: Compliance-gaining is distinct from persuasion because it is focused on changing behavior only
 - No interest in any change in attitudes, beliefs, or values
 - Compliance-gaining can often be ethical
- II. Marwell & Schmidt's Typology of Compliance-Gaining Strategies. Marwell & Schmitt did a large study in 1967 and identified 16 common ways that people try to get other people to do what they want.
 - A. Promise
 - I will take you out to lunch tomorrow if you go vote.
 - B. Threat (a "negative promise")
 - I will never make you cookies again if you don't vote. (I will also taunt you with every bad decision the elected leader makes if the wrong person wins.)
 - C. Liking
 - Gosh, you're so awesome. I'm glad we're friends. You're one of the smartest people I know. So, who are you going to vote for tomorrow?
 - D. Pre-giving
 - Look at these scrumptious cookies I baked for you. Ready to go vote with me tomorrow?
 - E. Aversive Stimulation
 - We will watch political ads on television and YouTube until you agree to vote.
 - F. Altruism
 - Vote for the sake of future generations!
 - G. Debt

- Many people who have died in wars to protect our democracy. You owe it to them to vote.

H. Moral Appeal

- It is your duty as an American to vote.

I. Expertise (positive outcome)

- I know from experience that if you vote, the right person will win by one vote.

J. Expertise (negative outcome)

- I know from experience that if you don't vote, the wrong person will win by one vote.

K. Self-Feeling (positive)

- Just think of how great you're going to feel if the right person wins the election.

L. Self-Feeling (negative)

- Just think of how lousy you're going to feel if the wrong person wins the election.

M. Altercasting (positive)

- A good person would vote.

N. Altercasting (negative)

- Only a bad person wouldn't vote.

O. Esteem (positive)

- Democracy matters to me, so I will think more of you if you do vote.

P. Esteem (negative)

- Democracy matters to me, so I will think worse of you if you don't vote.

III. Choosing influence strategies

A. Review: People tend to prefer using friendly strategies in general.

B. Review: Primary dimensions: Our decisions about how to pursue an influence goal can be thought of as belonging to one of two primary dimensions:

1. **Efficiency:** What will work the best?
2. **Appropriateness:** What is socially acceptable?

C. Review: Secondary dimensions (other considerations we take into account) include:

1. **Identity goals:** our moral standards for who we want to be
2. **Interaction goals:** creating and maintaining a good impression
3. **Resource goals:** maintaining important relationships and increasing personal rewards
4. **Arousal goals:** wanting not to get too nervous, overwhelmed, or stressed out- either by going through with the influence attempt or by not doing anything about getting what we want

D. Review: Our choices also depend on our knowledge of the other person

1. We are more likely to use threats or other harsh strategies with strangers we don't have to see again.
2. We use a wider variety of strategies with strangers than intimates (trial and error).

E. Compliance-gaining strategy choice depends on assessments of:

1. **Importance of getting compliance.** We are more willing to accept harsher strategies when we believe that getting compliance is very important.

2. **How successful we think the strategy will be.** We adapt our strategy to the person who is our target and we use what we think will work best with them.
3. **Power and control.** Our dominance in the relationship. If we have more reward, coercive, and legitimate power, we have a wider range of strategies at our disposal.
4. **Intimacy.** The degree of emotional attachment. Impersonal/short-term relationships vs. Interpersonal/long-term relationships
5. **Relational consequences.** (Long vs. short term) We're unlikely to want to create long-term damage to a relationship we want to preserve
6. **Resistance.** Whether we think the other person will defy us
7. **Rights.** The belief that our request is justified (Note: corresponds to legitimate power)
8. **Personal benefits.** An assessment of what we think will benefit either/both of us the most. (Why would we engage in compliance gaining if it benefits someone other than ourselves?)
9. **Apprehension.** Nerves may keep us from acting the way we would like to

Conclusion

- I. Review
 - A. Typology of compliance-gaining
 - B. Choosing compliance-gaining strategies
- II. Learning activity
- III. Lesson closing

References

Marwell, G., & Schmitt, D. (1967). Dimensions of compliance-gaining behavior: An empirical analysis. *Sociometry*, 30(4), 350-364. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2786181>

Learning Activity

Complete one of these two class activity options.

In the Classroom

1. Persuasion GO! ([Gass, Seiter, & Gass, 2018](#))

Remote

1. Download this document: [L02-compliance-gaining-activity.docx](#)
2. Watch an episode of the television show of your choice (the show should tell a story about people in relationships with one another. It should not be sports or documentary content)
3. Complete the activity document while watching the show
4. Submit the completed activity document to this assignment

Variations and Accommodations

Follow guidance from local accommodation authorities. Please contact your instructor if any accommodations are necessary.