

## ***Read This First***

There are certain triggers that influence our decisions to say YES to some things, and say NO to others.

In the first part of this document, you find five email messages that led to meetings and collaborations with CEOs and thought leaders.

At the end of this document is an overview of 23 mental triggers you can leverage in your communication with decision makers and influencers, so you can exponentially increase your chances to get YES' to phone calls, meetings and eventually the commitment a deal.

Let me clarify something upfront.

This is not about persuading people to buy from you, partner with you, invest in you, or whatever.

When you try to persuade people, you come from a place of desperation and you are not seen as an equal by the other person.

This is about inspiring people to say YES.

When you inspire, you come from a place of inspiration and are seen as an equal because you invite people to join your mission to create something bigger together.

As you can see in the five message examples in this workbook, they have all been created to inspire and not persuade and that is why they work so well.

## ***Case Study CEO & Investor***

I sent the LinkedIn message below to a very successful CEO & Investor in Zurich who had no idea who I was before I reached out to him. The message led to an offer for lunch without any further effort from my side.

InMail | Creators Retreat

**eYe and solving European unemployment through entrepreneurship**

May 21, 2015, 10:02 AM

Hi Marc

I watched the launch event video on eYe and I'm inspired by what you are building by leveraging alliances and collaboration between stakeholders in education and employment to solve a huge global issue.

I've worked in recruitment for 8 years and now work with entrepreneurs and investors since 2 years, so I get the pain and inefficiencies.

It's a long shot, but I'd love to exchange some thoughts over lunch or dinner when I'm in Zurich on 4th June about solving unemployment through entrepreneurship and why jobs are at the edge of extinction the way we know them.

Even if I wanted to, I don't have anything to sell to you except for a thought-provoking conversation.

Looking forward to it!  
Daniel

Some mental triggers in this message are:

### **Event-based**

The specific date is 4<sup>th</sup> June which makes the message more urgent.

### **Stories**

The story that I worked in recruitment helps the CEO relate to me.

### **Authority & Credibility**

8 years in recruitment, 2 years with entrepreneurs and investors.

I also build credibility because I re-phrase what he is building in my own words so he can see that I get it.

### **Scarcity**

Again, 4<sup>th</sup> June is the deadline.

### **Common enemy**

The enemy is unemployment. I mentioned that in the 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph.

### **Controversy**

When I say “solving unemployment through entrepreneurship”, I start a debate and challenge him on the way he tackles the issue. I basically say “Maybe there is an even better way of doing it”.

### **Interaction / Conversation**

My call to action is “a thought-provoking conversation”.

### **Likability**

“I get the pain and inefficiencies” suggests that I can very much relate to the issues in this field.

By saying I’m inspired, I also build likability.

### **Being Interesting**

I’m interesting because I suggest we have a conversation about “why jobs are at the edge of extinction the way we know them”. This is different than what most people say.

### **Reason Why**

I explain very clearly why we should meet (to exchange some thoughts). And in the beginning, I answer the CEO’s question of “Why should I care?”.

**Simplicity**

Even though I use some jargon like “stakeholders” and “alliances”, I mention them because that’s the way he talked in his speech I watched. I speak his language and that’s the most simple way to explain things.

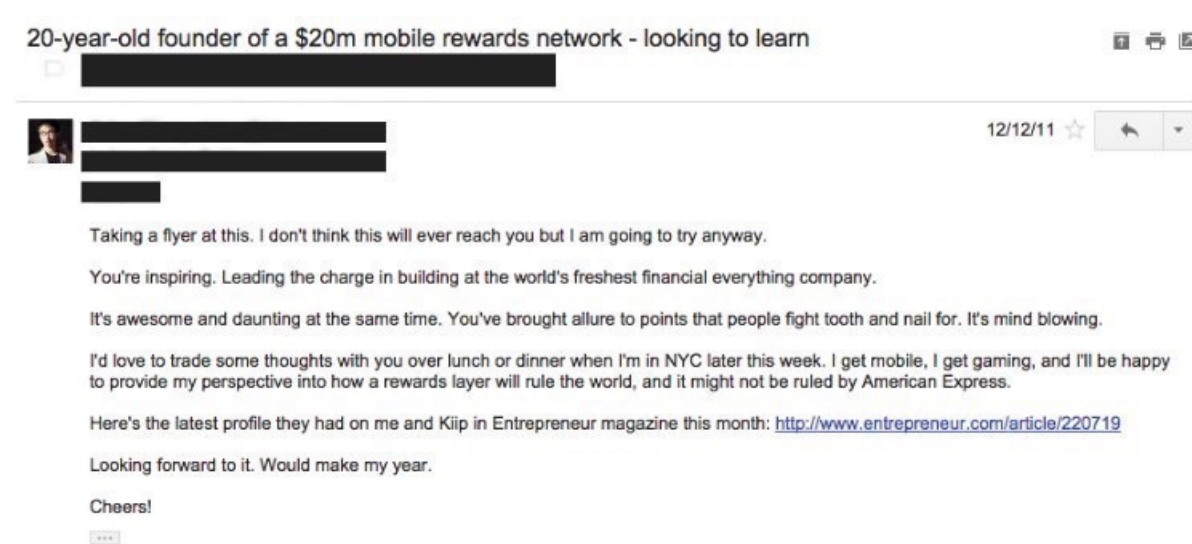
**Specificity / Concreteness**

“Exchange some thoughts over lunch or dinner” is much more specific than “Have a meeting for coffee”.

Furthermore, every single word is carefully chosen to express something very specific. I made sure to not waste a word.

## Case Study CEO American Express

Here's another example of a very powerful message an entrepreneur sent to the CEO of American Express, which eventually led American Express to invest in his venture.



Some mental triggers in this message are:

### Event-based & Scarcity

"Over lunch or dinner when I'm in NYC later this week" makes it clear he is only there for a short period of time.

### Stories

"Would make my year" is a story of the future.

### Authority, Credibility & Social Proof

Builds authority and demonstrates social proof through his interview in Entrepreneur Magazine.

"I get mobile, I get gaming" suggests he knows what he is talking about.

### Controversy

"And it might not be ruled by American Express" certainly got the attention of the CEO pretty quickly.

**Likability**

“It’s awesome and daunting at the same time” is a compliment and builds likability.

**Being Interesting**

“My perspective into how a rewards layer will rule the world” is not something most people say. Makes him interesting and different.

**Reason Why**

Lots of them. The reason why they should meet is to “trade some thoughts”. One reason why the CEO should meet him is because it “Would make my year”.

**Simplicity**

No corporate jargon and no formal speech. Simple enough for a kid to understand this message.

**Specificity / Concreteness**

“Over lunch or dinner” is more specific than “to meet up”. “When I’m in NYC later this week” is more concrete than “In the coming weeks”.

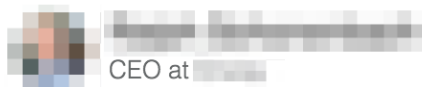
**Community**

Because Entrepreneur Magazine takes him serious, maybe the CEO should do so too.

## Case Study CEO & Influencer

I sent this LinkedIn message to the CEO of a major consulting group. He's also the co-founder of a very well established foundation.

I ended up becoming a member of the Steering Committee at the foundation and had the honor of co-creating the training program that is now delivered to 20'000 women entrepreneurs in emerging economies.



...

4/1/2014

Dear Ralph

I just wanted to congratulate you to what you have built with the [blurred] and sincerely wanted to thank you for making the world a better place. We need more leaders like you who are doing what they love while making a difference.

I am committed to "help those who help others". I hope we have the chance to meet in the near future in Zurich for coffee or lunch because I would love to hear about your vision and support you in any way I can.

Wish you a wonderful and sunny week.  
Daniel

10:24 AM

Some mental triggers in this message are:

### Likability

The message starts out all about him. I simply thank and congratulate him for what he is building and say why it inspires me. That by itself is one of the most powerful things you can ever do in a message.

### Being Interesting

Once again, I share why I do what I do with him. His foundation is focused on supporting women entrepreneurs and by doing that he is helping those who help others. I simply add that I'm in this for the same reason.

**Reason Why**

I make it clear that the reason we should talk is because I want to support him “in any way I can”. Not just to get him as a client or to help him so he can help me. It’s unconditional, even if nothing should come back immediately.

**Simplicity & Specificity**

The message is short and very concise. That’s especially important because he’s a very busy man and probably skips everything that is longer than a 15-second read. The busier the people are you want to reach, the more specific and simple your message needs to be.



## ***Case Study Thought Leader***

I sent this email to a very influential thought leader in personal development. She immediately agreed to a Skype call and we ended up doing a joint venture partnership for one of her programs as well as co-create other programs. She also became a major ambassador for the launch of my [LinkedREvolution](#) program.

**Name:** Daniel Jordi

**Email Address:** [daniel@jordico.com](mailto:daniel@jordico.com)

**Subject:** True ChangeMakers

**Message:** Hi Robin

Thank you for reaching out on Twitter. It's always amazing how disconnected we sometimes are in a world of connections.

I am very inspired by your vision and what you do. You are leading a movement that our world desperately needs.

I envision a world where people most people live their dreams instead of hiding from them.

If you have the chance over the coming weeks, I would love to chat with you on Skype and learn more about your vision and mission.

Let me know what you think  
Daniel

Some mental triggers in this message are:

### **Community**

When I say “It’s always amazing how disconnected we sometimes are in a world of connections”, I make it clear that we are in the same boat and that there is something we all have in common.

### **Common Enemy**

I goes hand in hand with the Community trigger. The common enemy here is our “disconnectedness”.

### **Likability & Reason Why**

The message is not about me, it’s about her. I tell her why I’m inspired by what she does and why it resonates with me. When I say “and learn more about your vision and mission”, I make it clear that I want to talk because we have a similar vision for the future and that’s what connects us.

**Being Interesting**

I'm interesting simply because I fully express myself by sharing my vision. And I'm even more interesting because my vision aligns with hers.

**Simplicity & Specificity**

The whole message is very short but every word has meat to it. There is no empty talk and every sentence in the message has a purpose.

## Case Study Influencer

This LinkedIn message was sent to an influencer in the field of education and entrepreneurship.

The message led into a Skype call and a close relationship. Seb ended up becoming one of the biggest ambassadors for the launch of my [LinkedREvolution](#) program.



Some mental triggers in this message are:

### Story

I share the story of how I was involved in “Social Entrepreneurship for Kids Academy” and why it’s relevant to what he is building.

### Social Proof

By talking about the “Social Entrepreneurship for Kids Academy”, I demonstrate that other people like him are interested in working with me on similar projects.

### Common Enemy

“Humanity’s grand challenges” are the enemy in this case and I express that we are

in this journey to overcome these challenges through entrepreneurship.

### **Likability**

This message is really not about me, it's about him. I express that by starting out with talking about his article and why I'm inspired by what he is building.

### **Being Interesting**

I am interesting for him because I have been involved in a similar project before. I'm also interesting because I have a strong vision that I express when I say "I believe entrepreneurship is the panacea for humanity's grand challenges".

### **Reason Why**

Especially when I say "I'd love to learn more about your plans and see if there is any way I can help you", I give him a strong reason why we should talk.

### **Simplicity & Specificity**

The whole message is very simple. No corporate speech and no jargon only I understand. It's also very specific. The reason I want to talk to him is very specific and not just a "We should talk". Even the dates and times I offer him as options for our conversation are very specific.

## ***23 Mental Triggers That Make Busy People Say YES***

Here's a list of 23 mental triggers you can use every time before you send a message to a decision makers or influencers, or when you prepare for a meeting.

### **Stories**

People love stories, we all do. They are extremely effective sales tools.

Every exceptional marketing message is essentially a story. Your vision of the future is a story. Your belief about why the status quo is broken, and the way to change that, is a story.

Storytelling has become the new big thing in marketing for a reason.

### **Event-based**

A product launch, for example, is event based. So is one of your visits to a town where the decision maker or influencer resides.

If something is event-based, it's more exclusive because it only happens for a certain amount of time. It's more scarce.

So when you message a decision maker or influencer about a meeting opportunity, make it clear you are not always around, only on a certain date and time.

### **Community**

Much of our behavior is influenced by the communities we are part of. If that community says it's a good thing to contribute to a certain social cause, we are more likely to believe so as well.

Community also means people want to belong. So if you can make your venture something the decision maker or influencer can be part of and belong to, it's more likely he will get involved one or the other way.

### **Social Proof**

How do you decide which hotel to book or restaurant to go to? Chances are that you check TripAdvisor, hotel websites or simply look for signals as to which restaurant has more people eating there.

We believe that if many people eat at a restaurant, it has to be good. Or if 129 people say this hotel is great, it has to be great. We always look for social proof in our decisions.

Testimonials of people who talk about you or your business are a powerful way to reinforce social proof. Having other influencers talk about you is social proof. Having a thought leader in your field on your board of advisors is social proof.

## **Scarcity**

When there is less of something, people usually want it more. Think about diamonds, rolexes or ferraris for example.

Deadlines are a great way to reinforce scarcity. If you are closing an offer on a certain date, that creates scarcity. If you will only take on one more participant, it makes the opportunity to buy more enticing.

Event-based offers naturally bring scarcity with them. When something is scarce, it often reflects social proof as well. If your time is scarce it's assumed that you are in demand.

## **Authority**

When the doctor walks into the room in his white coat, we respect him. At least, we used to.

Authority can be demonstrated by your background or history. It can also be built by knowing what you talk about. If you can demonstrate domain expertise, it shows authority. If people look up to you or listen to you, it demonstrates authority. If thought leaders in your market talk about you, you're seen as an authority.

## **Anticipation**

Movie trailers are so powerful because they build anticipation. And so do sporting events and product launches.

You can build anticipation by sending regular updates to decision makers or influencers about progress and upcoming creations.

You can also use LinkedIn connection requests to build anticipation when you mention that you will follow up soon.

## **Common Enemy**

The worst example of where common enemy is mis-used is in war. Revolutions are also started mostly because of a common enemy.

Your common enemy is probably the Status Quo. If you and the person you try to get to share a common enemy, it instantly puts you in the same boat and now you're in this together.

## **Proof**

Do you have proof that your product or service works? Do you have a track record of getting your clients results?

Proof is very powerful because people assume if something is done once, the results can be re-produced.

You can show proof by having clients, government buy-in or influencers talking about you.

## **Controversy**

This is extremely powerful because people love debating. You are challenging the status quo so there is a natural debate happening.

Now it's on you to bring that controversy into the conversation with the decision maker or influencer. You can do this by expressing your belief about why the status quo is broken. You can also challenge the other person on their beliefs.

## **Commitment and Consistency**

People tend to act similarly as to how they acted in the past. So if an influencer has endorsed a personal development event, it's likely he will do it again.

You can also build your YES from a small one to a big one by consistently getting the decision maker or influencer to say YES to something small over and over again.

This can be saying YES to connecting with you on LinkedIn, then saying YES to a perspective you express and then saying YES to meeting with you.

Getting lots of small YES' dramatically increases the chances for a big YES at the end.

## **Interaction / Conversation**

People are more engaged in a conversation than in a lecture. Also, people rather talk than listen.

Make your messages a conversation by asking questions even if they are just rhetorical. This will grab and hold the other person's attention much longer.

## **Reciprocity**

If you give people something, they often want to give something back. That's why sampling works so well in marketing and sales.

There are lots of things you can give. Your perspective, an insight, a compliment, a thank you or a question.

You can thank the decision maker or influencer for building a business that makes a difference or congratulate her on an accomplishment.

## **Surprise / Unexpectedness**

We love surprises but only positive ones. As much as we love steadiness, we also love unexpectedness.

You can build in surprises in calls, messages and meetings. Say something shocking, something unexpected to grab the other person's attention even more.

## **Likability**

People buy from people they like and trust. The more likable you are, the better you are off.

If you can relate to the person you want to reach in some way, you build likability. If you are in it for the greater good, you build likability.

## **Credibility**

This has a lot to do with authority. People are bombarded with sales messages every day so they believe strangers less and less.

You build credibility through articles and books you write or through interviews and speeches you give. You build credibility by demonstrating that you can make things happen.

Past achievements show credibility. When meeting with an influencer or decision maker, you build credibility by showing up confident, being clear in your communication and knowing what you talk about.

## **Being Interesting**

When you have a different perspective than most people have, you are interesting.

You can demonstrate “being interesting” by speaking up. When you give an interview, this demonstrates you are interesting. Thought Leaders are interesting.

Being different is interesting so your USP matters a lot. Doing something nobody has ever done before is interesting.

## **Reason Why**

Simon Sinek talks about this quite a bit in his brilliant book “Start with Why” and [his TED talk](#).

This can be extremely simple. Just by adding the word “because” and then a reason why behind a sentence has a big effect on the outcome.

In Robert Cialdini’s book “Influence”, he talks about an experiment he did with students and a copy machine. One set of students were asked to stand in line at the copy machine and ask the person in front of them “Can I cut in front of you?”. The compliance was something like 50% and the person in front of them said “Yes, sure”. The other set of students were asked to do the same thing but ask “Can I cut in front of you because I need to make some copies and I’m late for class?”. The results were astonishing. More than 90% complied and said “Yes, sure”.

Your reason why does not have to be perfect, there just has to be a reason.

So when you say “I’d love to meet you for lunch”, add “because I’d love to learn more about you and your perspective” or something like that.



## **Competition**

Especially in sports, people are drawn in by competition. The same happens in business when there is friendly competition in a team or between teams.

You can also let decision makers or influencers compete with each other. This requires a good deal of confidence from your side or a powerful position to be in. If you can honestly say “We have a few discussions with potential collaborators but I’d like to add you to the conversation”, competition is activated.

This is one reason why startup pitching events draw so many people. It’s like the Olympics with winners and losers. It’s exciting for the entrepreneurs because there is a chance to win the jackpot but also for the investors because entrepreneurs have to compete to work with them.

See how powerful competition is?

## **Take-away-sale**

This is where you come from a very powerful position. You basically say “Take it or leave it”.

Often, when you do this with confidence, people want what you offer even more. It’s like a little kid that is tired of playing with a toy. When you attempt to take the toy away, the kid wants it more than anything else. This sense of take-away never leaves us.

If you are confident enough to express “We’d love to have you but we don’t need you”, you communicate from a very powerful position.

## **Simplicity**

If you explain things in a simple way, people don’t need to invest mental resources in order to understand what you actually want to say.

We are overloaded by decisions we have to make every day. From grocery shopping to hiring new team members, we have to make so many decisions that we are naturally looking for ways to simplify things.

By making your messaging simple to understand, you make it easier for the other person to make a decision. Unconsciously, she really appreciates that and is more likely to say YES.

## **Specificity / Concreteness**

Get to the point and don’t use generic language. Storytelling can help with this and so can painting a picture.

For example, it’s more effective to say “91% of our customers would recommend us to a friend” than “More than 90% of our customers would recommend us to a friend”. It just makes it more believable.

Make sure you apply this when talking about what you do as well as when explaining

what you want. Be extremely specific. Re-read your message and ask “Can I paint a picture that reflects this message?”

### **Emotion**

Getting decision makers or influencers emotionally involved is extremely powerful. Going from emotionally involved to financially involved is a much smaller leap than going from zero to purchasing decision.

Get them excited. Share your progress with them.

A great way to get influencers emotionally involved is by asking them for inputs and feedback on something they have expertise in.