

LORRAINE HOPE & WAYNE THOMAS

A-Z OF INFLUENCE TACTICS AND TOPICS



AUTHORITY – people are more likely to be persuaded by an authority they perceive to have expertise (based on knowledge, power or status).

BEHAVIOURAL MIMICRY – can increase compliance to subsequent requests (even third-party requests) and it increases spontaneous helping behaviour.

CONSISTENCY – people prefer to act in ways that are consistent with their previous values and action, particularly when these are known publically.

DOOR IN THE FACE – is a technique that involves preceding a desired request with a larger request that the respondent will most likely turn down. Compliance to the second request is increased as the respondent compromises.

EMPATHY – genuine empathy and positive regard result in greater engagement and more information elicitation. Be careful though faked or trick empathy is likely to backfire!

FOOT IN THE DOOR – is a technique where an initial small request is followed by a related larger request. Once the 'door' is open respondents are more likely to comply with the larger request.



GROUP EFFECTS – people look to the behaviour of others to inform their responses particularly under conditions of uncertainty i.e., they seek social proof.

HOLISTIC considerations such as environmental and situational factors should be taken into account as well as interpersonal ones. Is this the right time and place to make your persuasion attempt? Do the surroundings lend themselves to communication or are there too many distractions? Does the person you are trying to influence have time to listen?

INTENTIONS – is the person you are trying to influence motivated by the same arguments that you find so convincing? Think about their goals and aspirations rather than your own and shape your arguments accordingly.

JOINING – successfully persuading a person to act in a way that is inconsistent with a group they're a member of can depend on when they joined. New members are likely to be enthusiastic and keen to show their allegiance, whereas disillusionment with the group could offer opportunities to exert influence.

KINESICS – forms of (potentially) persuasive nonverbal communication such as use of eye contact, gestures, head nodding, posture and facial expression to convey, for example, emotion, encouragement, rapport and attention.

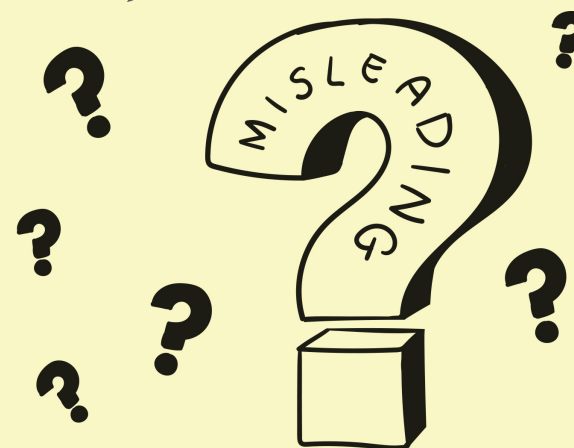
LISTENING – successful influence requires understanding the motivations and goals of the respondent; active and careful listening to what they say and how they say it is critical.

MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING – an effective, goal directed, non-confrontational, non-judgmental and non-adversarial therapeutic technique designed to elicit behaviour change or increase motivation to change problematic or unwanted behaviours through the examination and resolution of ambivalence.

NUDGE – proposes positive reinforcement and indirect persuasion (e.g., altering the choices available) as a means to influence individual or group behaviour in a predictable way, without forbidding or radically manipulating incentives.

OBJECTIONS – acknowledge and refute potential objections (to a request or course of action) before the target of the persuasion has had a chance to raise such them.

PROXEMICS – how space and distance can be used to influence communication through either compliance or breach of norms, such as being aware of public, social, personal and intimate space.



QUESTIONS – questions can be structured and formulated to direct attention, imply certain answers, or facilitate inferences. As a result, questions can be used to deliberately mislead and contaminate individual memory and understanding.

RECIPROCITY – people often feel obliged to reciprocate or have a duty to respond in the same way, i.e., if you do something nice for me, I'll do something nice for you. This is true across many cultures.

SLEEPER EFFECT – messages from low-credibility sources can gain in persuasiveness over time as the (low-credibility) source of the information is dissociated (or forgotten) while the message is retained.

TRUSTWORTHINESS – a component of source credibility trusted sources are viewed as objective and reliable.



UNDERSTANDING – perspective-taking involves modelling an interviewee's perspective and generating alternate hypotheses about their possible reactions to different approaches in order to optimise the impact of influence attempts.

VALENCE FRAMING – presenting critical information pertaining to a decision in a positive (gain) or negative (loss) way, draws on the principle that people are usually loss averse and, as a consequence, will favour choices that avoid losses.

WORRIES – a person is unlikely to consider your point of view if they have more pressing concerns. Addressing someone's welfare issues before attempting to influence them not only introduces an element of reciprocity, it allows them to concentrate on what you are saying.

X-FACTOR – although charisma has only recently been validated as an empirical construct, comprising the ability to both influence and put people at ease, this 'x-factor' has long been associated with persuasion skills.

YOU – first impressions count, so make sure you make the right one. Every-thing you do and say is likely to be judged through the lens of the first few seconds of interaction.

ZEITGEIST – an awareness of contemporary and/or cultural influences likely to be informative about a person's beliefs or activities.