

POWER OF PERSUASION

According to bestselling author Robert Cialdini, the principles of influence are a science you can apply throughout your life

Whether you're called upon to make proposals at work or you just want to win people over in your personal life, the principles of persuasion are the keys to success in today's complex world. But how do you get what you want? Give these six scientific strategies a try.

1. RECIPROCITY

Being the first person to give will make other people feel obliged to reciprocate. That's why we can't help but smile at strangers who smile at us first. So, offer something up front. For example, if you start by demanding something unreasonable and are the first to concede, the other person will feel more obliged to do the same. It will be their attempt to try meet you half way.

2. CONSISTENCY AND COMMITMENT

Even though the outside world changes a lot, many of us like to keep our inner worlds constant. We like to be consistent when it comes to our actions, values and beliefs. This is why having people commit to something publicly (for example having friends to hold them accountable to their goals) is powerful.

3. SOCIAL PROOF

When we don't know what to do, we often let other people become our guides. We could either follow the crowd, which is the most common and is the reason statistics such as 'over 1 million copies sold' are so powerful. We could also follow our friends or other groups we identify with and aspire to be like.

4. SIMILARITIES

It's a lot easier to influence people if they like you. And the best way to get people to like you is to show that you are like them. So, try to find things you have in common.

This could be anything from your interests to your background to where your parents grew up.

5. AUTHORITY

We're more likely to act on the advice of an expert, which explains why we opt for a skincare range that's recommended by a dermatologist or the car Jeremy Clarkson raved about on *Top Gear* once upon a time. Authority can also come in the form of knowledge. If you're citing hard statistics from a respected third party, your argument will be a lot stronger.

6. SCARCITY

You could also get more interest by making your offering limited in quantity (lower supply could boost demand), limited in time (only available for a short period, such as Groupon and its countdown clock), or for a limited group (by invitation only). Of course, if you're going to play hard-to-get and make your audience fight to access your exclusive offering, the limit must be real. Otherwise, they won't trust your claims next time around. **Man**

