

Persuasion

Persuasion in Everyday Life

- Who has tried to persuade you in the course of your everyday life?
- Whom do you try to persuade in your everyday life?
- What kinds of things do people persuade other people to do?

Definition

- **Persuasion:** the process by which a message induces change in beliefs, attitudes, or behaviors
- Two Routes to Persuasion:
 - Should you focus mostly on building strong **central** arguments?
 - Should you make your message appealing by associating it with favorable **peripheral** cues?

Two Routes to Persuasion

- **Central route persuasion:** occurs when interested people **focus** on the arguments & respond with favorable thoughts.
 - Leads to more enduring change in behavior.
- **Peripheral route persuasion:** occurs when people are influenced by **incidental cues**
 - Visual images - beauty, pleasure,
 - Speaker's attractiveness
 - Similarity

The Elements of Persuasion

- **The Communicator**
 - **Credibility:** believable, a credible communicator is perceived as both expert & trustworthy
 - Perceived expertise
 - Trustworthiness
 - **Attractiveness/likability:** having qualities that appeal to an audience.
 - Physical attractiveness
 - Similarity
- Credibility vs. similarity

The Elements of Persuasion

- **The Message Content**
 - Reason vs. emotion
 - Discrepancy
 - One-sided vs. two-sided appeals
 - Primacy vs. Recency
 - Other things being equal, **information presented first** usually has the most influence
 - **Information presented last** sometimes has the most influence

The Elements of Persuasion

- **The Communication Channel:** the way the message is delivered-whether face to face, in writing, on film, or in some other way.
 - Active experience or passive communication
 - Personal vs. media influence
- **The Audience**
 - How old are they?
 - What are they thinking?
 - Forewarned promotes counterarguing
 - Distraction disarms counterarguing
 - Uninvolved audiences use peripheral cues

Conformity: Cults

- A group typically characterized by
 1. Distinctive ritual and beliefs related to its devotion to a god or a person
 2. Isolation from the surrounding "evil" culture
 3. A charismatic leader

Case Studies in Persuasion: Cult Indoctrination

- Attitudes follow behavior
- Persuasive elements
 - The communicator
 - The message
 - The audience
- Group Effects

Resisting Persuasion:
Attitude Inoculation

- Strengthening personal commitment
- Large scale inoculation programs
- Implications
