



A BRIEF SUMMARY OF
DR. ROBERT CIALDINI'S BOOK
INFLUENCE
THE PSYCHOLOGY OF PERSUASION



brought to you by

ACCELERATE

If you've spent any time in marketing, sales, psychology, or the behavioral sciences, you surely have heard the name **Dr. Robert Cialdini**. He is the author of the groundbreaking book **Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion**. He is credited with bringing behavioral science to business and it all started with that book.

Influence is a clear classic and should be in your sales and marketing bookshelf. And, if it's not, then **we've provided this summary just for you.**

Read it. See where you might be able to apply its principles. Then do so today.

A SUMMARY OF “INFLUENCE—THE PSYCHOLOGY OF PERSUASION”

Influence: The Science of Persuasion has six main principles or rules as Cialdini calls them. We'll explain each and present them to you with examples.

1. RECIPROCATION

THIS RULE STATES THAT “...**WE SHOULD TRY TO REPAY, IN KIND, WHAT ANOTHER PERSON HAS PROVIDED US.**”

EXAMPLES:

- If someone buys you lunch, **you feel obligated to buy them lunch** next time (I owe you Janet!)
- At the supermarket, or a warehouse club like Costco, **“free” samples encourage the reciprocity rule** when they make you buy something you wouldn't have otherwise.
- For the ladies, if a guy takes you out to an expensive dinner, **you feel obligated to go out with him again** even though you weren't that into him.

2. COMMITMENT AND CONSISTENCY

ACCORDING TO CIALDINI, HUMANS HAVE A DEEP DESIRE TO BE CONSISTENT. FOR THIS REASON, **ONCE WE'VE MADE A COMMITMENT TO SOMETHING - ANYTHING - WE'RE THEN MORE INCLINED TO GO THROUGH WITH IT.**

SOME EXAMPLES:

- **You've made it public knowledge** that you believe President Obama was born in Kenya and continue to bring up the issue, even though there is substantial evidence indicating he was in fact born in Hawaii.
- You tell everyone you're running your 1st marathon in 3 months. **Making a public announcement will motivate you to be more consistent** in your training so you hit your goal or actually follow through with running the marathon which is 3 months away.

A SUMMARY OF “INFLUENCE—THE PSYCHOLOGY OF PERSUASION”

3. SOCIAL PROOF

SOCIAL PROOF IS WHAT A LOT OF US WOULD REFER TO AS PEER PRESSURE, BUT I THINK IT’S CLOSER TO HERD BEHAVIOR. THIS RULE “...APPLIES ESPECIALLY TO THE WAY WE DECIDE WHAT CONSTITUTES CORRECT BEHAVIOR. **WE VIEW A BEHAVIOR AS MORE CORRECT IN A GIVEN SITUATION TO THE DEGREE THAT WE SEE OTHERS PERFORMING IT.**”

Basically, everyone else is doing it, so I’ll do it too.

FOR EXAMPLES:

- You’re at a bar and your **4 friends order margaritas, so you do the same.**
- You start wearing your jeans really low **because all your friends are doing it.**
- You start wearing really tight jeans **because all the hipster kids are doing it.**
- **You laugh at a joke because your friends are laughing,** but you don’t even get it.
- You see everyone else staring up at the sky, **so you look up too (works every time).**

4. LIKING

CIALDINI CLAIMS THAT **WE ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE INFLUENCED BY PEOPLE WE LIKE.** VERY SIMPLY, THIS JUST MEANS WE PREFER TO SAY YES TO THE REQUESTS OF PEOPLE WE KNOW AND LIKE.

But what are the factors that cause one person to like another person?

A) Physical Attractiveness

This means exactly what it says: if we are attracted to someone, we are more likely to be influenced by them.

A SUMMARY OF “INFLUENCE—THE PSYCHOLOGY OF PERSUASION”

B) Similarity

We like people who are similar to us, whether it’s sharing the same opinion, personality traits, background, lifestyle, etc.

- **A good example are the cliques that form in high school:** athletes, nerds, band geeks, etc. – everyone found a group they associated with the most. And if you were a total social outcast, you probably associated with other outcasts.

C) Compliments

We generally love getting compliments, even if they’re not true. Of course, YOU wouldn’t fall for it. I mean, you’re incredibly smart and fun to be around. Did I mention the fact that you’re insanely good-looking? Yes, YOU!!

D) Contact

We like things that are familiar to us. On the other hand, we often fear what we don’t know.

SOME EXAMPLES:

- Contact is one reason my friend Aran eats at the same restaurants over and over and over again, instead of trying a new place.
- Contact is also why African-American voters overwhelmingly voted for Obama in the last presidential election and why presidential candidates are most likely to win in their home states. Because they’re familiar and “closer to home.”

E) Cooperation

Cooperation works a little differently. **We also like people who work with us,** instead of against us. Working together towards a common goal and being “on the same side” are very powerful.

EXAMPLES:

- It helps us understand why **“Yes We Can”** worked so well as a unifying slogan for the 2008 Obama campaign (**notice the use of “we”?**)
- We see this all the time in reality shows, **like the tribes or alliances formed** in “Survivor” or the other reality TV show.

A SUMMARY OF “INFLUENCE—THE PSYCHOLOGY OF PERSUASION”

F) Conditioning & Association

The principle of **Association** “...is a general one, governing both negative and positive connections. An innocent association with either bad things or good things will influence how people feel about us.”

Everyone wants to be part of a winning team because it raises your social standing. People will therefore try to link themselves to positive events and distance themselves from negative events.

EXAMPLES:

- Ever notice how people says “**WE won!!**” when their team wins, but they say “**THEY lost!!**” when their team loses?
- Of course, **it’s the same idea with brands:** Starbucks, Apple, Coach, etc. We buy these brands largely because of the **Association** rule – at least that’s part of the reason.
- **The same rule applies to name droppers,** who want you to know who they know (did I mention your competitor xyz bought from us last week?)

5. AUTHORITY

VERY SIMPLY, **PEOPLE TEND TO FOLLOW AUTHORITY FIGURES.** WE ARE TAUGHT FROM A VERY YOUNG AGE THAT OBEDIENCE TO AUTHORITY IS RIGHT AND DISOBEDIENCE IS WRONG.

EXAMPLES:

- **Policemen,** firemen, clergy, office managers, etc.
- **Titles** (PhD, Esq, MBA, etc.)
- The **way people are dressed** (Ex: 3-piece suit vs. tank top and board shorts).
- In Advertising, we see this principle at play in **celebrity endorsements.**

A SUMMARY OF “INFLUENCE—THE PSYCHOLOGY OF PERSUASION”

6. SCARCITY

THE SCARCITY PRINCIPLE STATES THAT “**...OPPORTUNITIES SEEM MORE VALUABLE TO US WHEN THEIR AVAILABILITY IS LIMITED.**” FANS OF BEHAVIORAL ECONOMICS MAY SEE HOW THIS TIES INTO THE CONCEPT OF LOSS AVERSION - **THE FEAR OF LOSS IS ALWAYS GREATER THAN THE DESIRE FOR GAIN.**

EXAMPLES:

- **Limited time offers** - A certain product is in short supply that cannot be guaranteed to last long ([Tickle Me Elmo](#) several years ago).
- **Deadlines** - An official time limit is placed on the customer’s opportunity to get the offer. Black Friday and Cyber Monday are great examples.
- Another variant of the deadline tactic is when you’re told that you have to **buy NOW or the price will go up** very soon (Ex: health club memberships, buying a car, etc.).

Why does the Scarcity principle work so effectively?

“...we know that **the things that are difficult to possess are typically better than those that are easy to possess**, we can often use an item’s availability to help us quickly and correctly decide on its quality.”

Rather than weighing all the pros and cons, **we use scarcity as a mental shortcut to make decisions.**

- Scarcity is why you **get more interested in someone when they don’t return your calls**, emails or texts. The other person is “making themselves scarce.”
- Scarcity is also one of the main drivers with collectibles (like baseball cards, artwork, coins) and rare items, like caviar. They eat it because it’s expensive and it’s expensive because it’s rare (scarce).

I can spell for you how to apply each of these principles in a sales context, but my guess is that you know exactly what to do and how you can apply these persuasion principles today. Try them out; see what works. Close more sales.

This guide is brought to you by HireVue Accelerate. HireVue is the leader in candidate video interviewing for human resources, proudly counting over 50% of the fortune 500 as its customers. HireVue has brought that same leadership in video interviewing to Sales with HV Accelerate.

HV Accelerate is a sales video platform focused on solutions for sales training and learning. Improve your Pitch, Close More Sales. **To learn more, please visit, accelerate.hirevue.com today.**

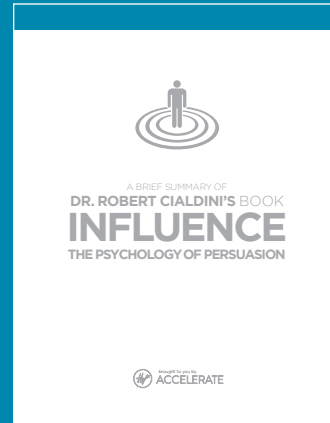


Like what you read?
Please share.

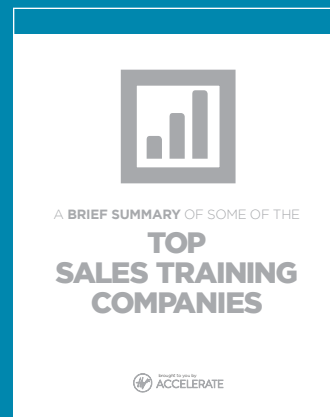


What's Next?

You have just read:



The first book in the series is:



The previous book in the series is:

