

Why persuasion is worth studying



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The concept that persuasion is crucial and well worth learning is true for several reasons. First, persuasion is ubiquitous and can be found almost everywhere throughout human society. Persuasion is considered both an art and science. While much is known about processes of social influence, the scientific study of persuasion is still in its infancy. Additionally, persuasion is essential and indispensable to human interaction. Persuasion is worth studying since it is inevitable as it is an integral part of professions.

According to Poggi (2005), persuasion is perceived as a situation of communicative non-coercive goal hooking since a persuader leads an audience to pursue some goal out of free choice. This involves convincing them that the proposed goal is beneficial for some other purpose that the persuadee already possesses. Furthermore, the Aristotelian effective approaches of rational argumentation, speakers credibility and the appeal to emotion are always present in every persuasive discourse and are exploited to elevate the value of the proposed goal and also to strengthen the surmise of the connection between it and persuades earlier goals.

While arguing to convince seeks to earn the assent of listeners, claiming to persuade attempts to influence their behavior and move them to act upon a conviction. Persuasion aims to close the gap between action and assent. Convincing focuses on the logic of an argument, that is, personal appeal of ethos and involve an appeal to the audience's emotions. Besides the personal and emotional appeals, persuasion also widely exploits the resources of language.

Persuasion is widely used in everyday life. Persuasion is used to create a frame that shapes how we think about and perceive the world. The frame determines what we perceive and what to ignore. While some frames are individually constructed in an attempt to make sense of the world, others are developed by professional persuaders. Politicians, marketers, and advertisers use language and images designed to control frames.

Professional groups such as insurance firms attempt to control the world that frames how the public perceives them. For instance, insurance firms sell homeowners insurance and not house owners insurance since a home is considered a universal desire while a house is considered a mere building. Fashion is considered as framing since we select clothing and hairstyles to showcase our best assets and hide or minimize others. Brain frames are used to skilled publicists to create celebrities who control the frame through which the public sees them. Movies, videos, and photographs are powerful frame shapers and are often the media of choice for propaganda campaigns.

Barker (2018) suggests that persuasion in marketing relates to the ability to influence not only people's actions but also their attitude. Persuasion introduces reciprocity in marketing through special discounts and free demos to encourage purchases. The scarcity principle is used to create a shortage of a compelling commodity forcing clients to make direct purchases rather than making the purchase later. Persuasion is also used to get authority figures to vouch for products and win the trust of a target audience. In healthcare, persuasion is inherent in health promotion. Persuasion is used to develop health promotion interventions such as lifestyle changes and conduct health education.

Although persuasion is a very relative concept, it does not exist in the absence of outcomes. Persuasion is only termed as such if it is useful and reaches its goals. One key reason that can deter the occurrence of outcomes is if the persuader does not appear confident and knowledgeable.