

Influence – Robert Cialdini

Notes and Takeaways via Duncan Kelm

We will always have more success asking for favors if you provide a reason

We all have automated tapes that play in response to specific communications and experiences

- o Our auto tapes usually develop from physiological principles or stereotypes we have learned to accept

The contrast principle:

- o When compared to something of lesser appeal the original will always look more attractive
- o Example: Two women, one who is decent looking and then an unattractive woman walks up, the other decent looking woman is instantly more attractive
- o When using the contrast principle in sales, ALWAYS present the MORE EXPENSIVE item first
 - This will employ the contrast principle in regards to price in your favor

Rule of RECIPROCATION:

- o People feel obligated to repay in kind when provided with something
- o Although the obligation to repay constitutes the essence of the reciprocity rule, it is the OBLIGATION to RECEIVE that makes the rule so easy to exploit
- o The uninvited first favor must not come across as a sales pitch, and must have the ability to create an obligation
 - Taking a client to a game or going golfing
 - Small gifts in the mail
- o There is a strong cultural pressure to reciprocate a gift even an unwanted one; but there is no such pressure to purchase an unwanted commercial product
- o This rule is so powerful because it triggers the UNPLEASANT feeling of INDEBTEDNESS
 - It weighs heavily on us and demands to be removed
- o A person who violates the reciprocity rule by accepting without attempting to return the good acts of others is actively disliked by social groups
- o People will often give back more than they receive
- o People will also often make CONCESSIONS for those that make concessions for us
 - Example: Sales rejection then retreat technique, make a larger request one that you know will likely be turned down, then make a smaller request that you were really interested in all along
 - APPLICABLE EXAMPLE: I would like your business, if no, then would you allow me to draft a financial plan for you free of charge

- If the first set of demands is seen as unreasonable this tactic will backfire
- The concession tactic will also cause people to feel more responsible for having “dictated” the final agreement
- Since this tactic brings about compliance, the person is likely to feel more satisfied with the result
- o Favors are to be met with favors, it does not require tricks to be met with favors
 - The tactic must seem entirely genuine

Commitment and CONSISTENCY

- o Once a stand has been taken, the need for consistency caused people to bring what they felt and believed into line with what they had already done
- o People tend to keep their thoughts consistent with what was already done or decided
- o If a person makes a public commitment about something, e.g. “I think the stock market is going down” they will have a hard time refuting that commitment anytime soon
- o A high degree of consistency is normally associated with people of high intellectual strength
- o Commitment is key, small commitments of yes can help result in the larger commitment
- o Get clients to say yes and commit to small things, e.g. “do you think we have a good strategy?” “Do you understand how I explained this to you?” “Does this make sense?”
- o If I can get you to make a commitment (that is, go on record), I will have set the stage for your automatic and ill-considered consistency with that earlier commitment
- o Example:
 - Hello Mr. Target, how are you feeling this evening?
 - The caller’s intent is to get you to respond with a polite comment that you are doing well. Once all is fine then the salesperson can begin the tactics
 - People who explain they are fine will then have trouble to appear stingy afterwards
- o The tactic of starting with a little request in order to gain eventual compliance with related larger requests is known as the “foot in the door” technique
- o You can use small commitments to manipulate a person’s self-image, once they have made enough small commitments they become pot committed to that idea
- o When you set goals, write them down, you then have something for which to aim
- o Something special happens when you put commitments ON PAPER
 - Maybe seek to have all clients sign a document to get a commitment that is harder to release
 - “I am committed to the “long term,” I will not let the short term volatility of the market sway my objectives and goals.”

- o Public commitments tend to be lasting commitments
- o Written commitments are also more effective because they require more work

Social Proof

- o Social scientists have determined that we accept inner responsibility for behavior when we think we have chosen to perform it in the absence of strong outside pressure
- o Since 95% of people are imitators, people are persuaded more by the actions of others
- o Convince and ye shall be convinced
- o Without a doubt when people are uncertain they are most likely to use others' actions to decide how they themselves should act
 - REFERRALS and WORD OF MOUTH
- o We will use actions of others to decide on proper behavior for ourselves, especially when we view the “others” as SIMILAR TO OURSELVES
- o When we are uncertain we are willing to place an enormous amount of trust in the collective knowledge of the crowd
- o An auto-pilot device, like social proof, should never be trusted fully
- o People are much more likely to listen to someone who is like them in AGE, SEX, RELIGION, POLITICS, and HEALTH habits
- o People are phenomenal suckers for flattery

Liking

- o The “luncheon technique” can cause people to value things and experiences when they are eating
- o In order to be liked, try to connect yourself to good news as much as possible and disassociate yourself from bad news

Authority

- o People have a deep-seated sense of duty to authority
- o Adults will go to almost any length on the command of authority
- o Actions are often more frequently influenced by a person's “title” than by the nature of the person claiming it
- o Size and status matter

Scarcity

- o Things are decidedly more attractive if they soon will be unavailable
 - Limited time offers
- o The idea of potential loss plays a large role in human decision making
- o Deadline tactic is an artificial time limit which is placed on the opportunity
- o The “right now” decision tactic is much favored by high pressure sellers