


Online Communication in the Digital Age
Prof. Rashmi Gaur
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
Indian Institute of Technology
Lecture – 14
Persuading your Audience

Good morning dear friends and welcome to this module. In the previous module, we had discussed techniques for customizing aspects of our technical communication to suit the needs and expectations of the intended audience. Today, we will look into the persuasive aspects of communication. Persuasive communication relies on understanding our audience, tailoring our messages to meet their specific requirements and preferences and skillfully presenting information in a compelling and convincing manner. Persuasion involves attempting to influence someone's actions, opinions or decisions. It becomes important in the workplace when we have to use persuasive communication to gain support from colleagues for our ideas, seek funding or to attract clients and sell something to the customers.

What Is Persuasion?

- The concept of persuasion involves attempting to influence someone's actions, opinions, or decisions.
- Explicit persuasion refers to a direct attempt to influence someone's beliefs, attitudes, or actions by presenting arguments, evidence, or emotional appeals.
 - It involves making a clear and overt case for a particular point of view or desired outcome.
- Implicit persuasion relies on implicit cues, subtle messaging, storytelling, or creating an environment that nudges individuals toward a desired outcome.
 - It involves shaping perceptions, attitudes, or behaviors.



The diagram consists of a central blue hexagon labeled 'Persuasion'. Surrounding it are six other blue hexagons, each containing a concept related to persuasion: 'Priming' (top-left), 'Social Proof' (top), 'Defaults' (top-right), 'Reciprocity' (right), 'Scarcity' (bottom-right), and 'Messenger' (bottom-left). The hexagons are arranged in a circular pattern around the central one.

2


Persuasion can be of two types, explicit and implicit. Explicit persuasion refers to a direct attempt to influence somebody's beliefs, attitudes or actions by presenting argument,

evidence or even going to the extent of incorporating some emotional appeals in our communication. This is about making a clear, direct and overt case for a particular point of view or the desired outcome. On the other hand, implicit persuasion is based on implicit cues, subtle messaging, storytelling indirectly creating an environment that gradually nudges the individual towards a desired outcome.

It involves gradually shaping the perceptions, attitudes and behaviors without employing any direct methods for this purpose. It is essential to note that persuasion does not imply manipulation or coercion. Ethical aspects of persuasion respect autonomy and free will of individuals allowing them to make informed choices based on correct information and arguments which are presented to them. Explicit persuasion involves making a clear and straightforward argument when for example, presenting to the upper management your idea to gain approval for a new project or a proposal or seeking an additional budget allocation. In contrast, subliminal advertising uses hidden or subtle messages like quick flashes or subtle cues in advertisements or promotional materials to impact the consumer's subconscious mind and evoke specific emotions or desires in the audience.

Claims




- Claims are statements that assert or declare a particular proposition, belief, or point of view.
 - They are the central arguments or main points someone tries to prove or support.
 - Claims can be made in various contexts, such as discussions, debates, writing, or persuasive communication.
- In persuasive communication or argumentative writing, claims serve as the main points that are supported by evidence, reasoning, and appeals to persuade the audience or readers to accept the validity of the claim.
 - When addressing volatile issues, it is crucial to identify the significant claims being made, as they serve as statements of the points one is trying to prove.



Claims about what the facts are

Claims about what the facts mean

Claims about what should be done

   3

The claims can be about what the facts are, about what the facts mean to us or to the other or claims about what should be done. The claims are statements that assert or declare a particular proposition, belief or point of view. They are the central arguments or the main points somebody uses in order to prove or support a particular perspective. They can be made in various contexts as a part of discussion or debate, as a part of writing, as a part of persuasive strategies through different types of advertisements, etc. In persuasive communication, which is also a particular type of argumentative writing, claims serve as

the main points that are supported by evidence, reasoning and appeals to persuade the audience to accept the validity of the claim which is being presented to them.

Even when a fact seems obvious, people can have different interpretations of its meaning or may vary in opinion about what actions should be taken based on the available information. When composing arguments and claims, it is essential to have a clear understanding of the desired outcome substantiated by well-crafted supporting evidence. Arguments can exhibit diverse degree of audience engagement. Let us explore various objectives or levels of audience involvement within arguments. Certain specific goals are listed on this slide.

Specific Persuasive Goals

1. Influencing Opinion

- Some arguments aim to change readers' thinking or persuade them to agree with a specific viewpoint.
- This level of persuasion typically requires minimal involvement from the audience beyond a shift in their thinking.

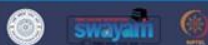
2. Enlisting Support

- Other arguments require people to stand and actively support a cause or initiative.
- These arguments aim to get readers actively involved and willing to help.

Influencing opinion may be the first step in enlisting support, as changing people's perspectives often precedes their active involvement.



Source: <https://youtu.be/0Rt5Agg1ZyA?list=PLm0m8and>



They are influencing the opinion of the people and enlisting support for our own ideas. Certain arguments aim to change the thinking of the readers or the audience and want to persuade them to agree with a specific perspective or point of view. This type of persuasion requires minimal involvement from the audience beyond a shift in their thinking. On the other hand, when we try to enlist the support, we find that these arguments should aim to get readers actively involved and should create a willingness to help for the purpose. Influencing opinion may be the first step in enlisting support as changing people's perspectives often precedes their active involvement in any issue.

While influencing opinion focuses on changing thoughts or beliefs, enlisting support seeks to galvanize individuals into taking concrete actions. The choice between these goals depends on the desired outcome and the level of engagement and commitment required.

3. Submitting a Proposal

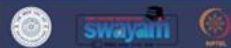
- Here, the focus is on presenting a plan or solution to a problem with a specific course of action to address an issue or achieve a desired outcome.
- These arguments typically require audiences to act directly or approve a particular action.

4. Changing Behavior

- The goal is to influence their behaviors or practices to align with a desired outcome or to improve a situation by altering their actions, habits, or ways of doing things.
- This level of persuasion often requires a more personal approach, as individuals may resist changing their established behaviors.



Source: <https://youtu.be/D810qg12y3k?feature=shared>



When we are talking in the context of submitting a proposal, the focus is on presenting a plan or a solution to a problem with a specific course of action to address an issue or achieve a desired outcome. These arguments typically require audiences to act directly or approve a particular action. When the goal is to influence the behavior of the audience to change it to a certain manner, to align with the desired outcome or to improve a situation by asking them to change their actions, beliefs and ways of doing things, then it also requires a more personal approach as individuals may resist changing their established behaviors.

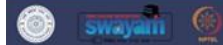
It is worth noting that persuading individuals to change their behaviors can be a more intimate and therefore a potentially challenging endeavor as people often resist changing their established routines. And therefore, in effective persuasion, we must employ strategies that resonate personally and encourage positive adjustments.

Predicting Audience Reaction

- Predicting audience reactions can be a complex task, as individual responses can vary based on factors such as personal beliefs, values, prior knowledge, and emotional state.
- To effectively anticipate potential reactions, it is necessary to gather information about your audience and the organization you are addressing.
 - This includes understanding if your supervisor or manager will support you and if there are support systems in place within the organization.
 - Conducting pilot testing or small-scale communication trials with a subset of your intended audience allows you to gauge their reactions and refine them before reaching a larger audience.
 - Seeking feedback from a representative sample of your audience or individuals who are familiar with their characteristics and preferences can help you understand their likely reactions and make necessary adjustments.



Source: www.iconfinder.com



5

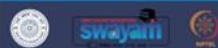
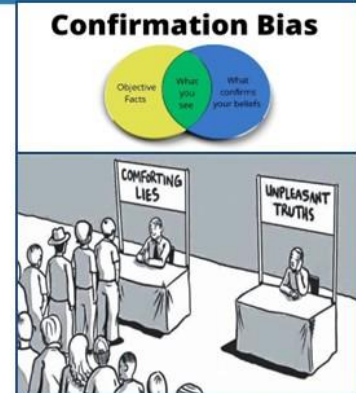
We also must be careful of the fact that individual responses vary based on factors such as personal beliefs, value systems, their prior knowledge about the topic and also the emotional state they might be in at a given moment of time. And therefore, predicting the reaction of the audience remains to be a complex task. To effectively anticipate potential reactions, it is necessary to gather information about your audience and the organization you are addressing.

This includes understanding if your supervisor or manager will support you and if there are support systems in place within the organization which would do a backup of your efforts. Conducting pilot testing or a small scale communication trials with a subset of your intended audience also allows you to assess the reactions and refine them before reaching a larger group of audience. Seeking feedback from a representative sample of the audience or individuals who are familiar with their characteristics and preferences can also help us in understanding the likely reactions and it also allows us to make necessary adjustments to the message. Individuals who have not yet formed a firm opinion or decision are more likely to be receptive to persuasive influence. People normally seek the opinions of other people, seek experiences of others and evidence to help them to make up their mind about any issue.

However, once people have made up their minds, they tend to assume that they are right and often therefore resist changing their views even when presented with solid evidence to the contrary.

Audience Resistance

- Audience resistance refers to the reluctance or opposition that individuals or groups may exhibit toward accepting or embracing a particular message, idea, or argument.
- Confirmation Bias/Cognitive Dissonance refers to the tendency of individuals to seek, interpret, or favor information that confirms their pre-existing beliefs, values, or expectations; while disregarding or downplaying contradictory evidence, justifying/rationalizing negative choices.
 - It is a cognitive bias that can influence decision-making and information processing.
 - Engaging in constructive dialogue and seeking out multiple sources of information can also help mitigate the effects of confirmation bias.



In digital communication, we should also be sensitive to the audience resistance. Audience resistance refers to the reluctance or opposition that individuals of groups may exhibit towards accepting or embracing a particular message, idea or argument. What is known as confirmation bias or cognitive dissonance suggests that there is a tendency amongst individuals to seek, interpret and favour information that confirms their pre-existing beliefs, values and expectations. At the same time, because of these biases, there is a disregard or a tendency to downplay contradictory evidence justifying or rationalising their negative choices.

It is a cognitive bias that can influence decision making and the processing of information at the level of the audience. Engaging in constructive dialogue and seeking out multiple sources of information can help us in mitigating the effects of the confirmation bias. Persuading individuals to consider alternative perspectives requires getting them to admit that they might be wrong and it can be challenging. However, by acknowledging and addressing audience resistance, communicators can increase the chances of successfully persuading and engaging their audience. It can manifest in various forms such as scepticism, disagreement or a simple lack of interest.

Social Influence Theory

- The three processes of influence, as identified by Herbert Kelman in his 1958 work, “Compliance, identification, and internalization three processes of attitude change”:
 - a) Compliance
 - b) Identification
 - c) Internalization
- They can be further described through a function that involves three determinants:
 - (a) The relative importance of the anticipated effect.
 - (b) The relative power of the influencing agent.
 - (c) The prepotency of the induced response.



In 1958 Herbert Kelman identified three broad varieties of social influence:

compliance appear to agree with others, but actually keep dissenting opinions private

identification influenced by someone who is liked and respected

internalization accept a belief or behavior and agree both publicly and privately

Source: www.psychologyforhumanity.info
<https://www.studycart24.com/psychology/1958-herbert-kelman-social-influence-theory>



It would be pertinent at this point to refer to the social influence theory propounded by Herbert Kelman in his 1958 work. He has suggested three processes of influence namely compliance, identification and internalisation. They can be further described through a function that involves three determinants that is the relative importance of the anticipated effect, secondly the relative power of the influencing agent and thirdly the prepotency of the induced response. However, these determinants differ qualitatively for each process giving rise to distinct antecedent conditions. Furthermore, each process results in a unique set of consequent conditions.

Let us explore these three social influence processes more comprehensively.

- Compliance refers to accepting influence and adopting a particular behavior to gain rewards or approval while avoiding punishments or disapproval.

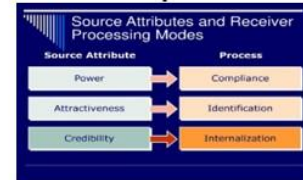
- It occurs when individuals go along with an appeal or request because they like and believe the person/s appealing, want to be liked by them, and feel a sense of commonality or connection.
- The satisfaction derived from compliance stems from the social impact of accepting influence and maintaining positive social relationships.
- “I’m yielding to your demand to get a reward or to avoid punishment. *I don’t accept it, but I feel pressured, so I’ll go along to get along.*”

- Compliance does not necessarily indicate a genuine change in attitudes or beliefs.

- It is primarily a behavioral response influenced by external factors.



Compliance



Source: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/261136782>

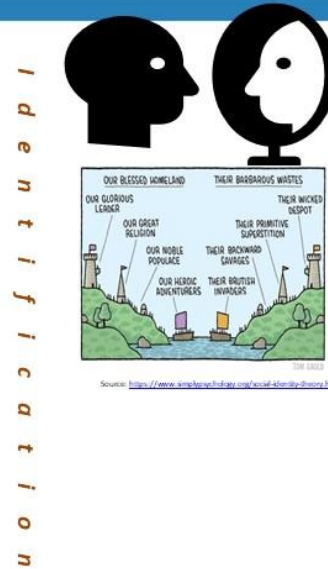


Compliance refers to accepting the influence and adopting a particular behaviour to gain rewards or approvals while avoiding punishments or disapprovals. It occurs when individuals go along with an appeal or request because they like and believe the person's appealing, want to be liked by them and feel a sense of commonality or connection. The satisfaction derived from compliance stems from the social impact of accepting influence and maintaining positive social relationships. For example, this is the attitude which is showcased in the sentence, I am yielding to your demand to get a reward or to avoid punishment.

I do not accept it, but I feel pressured. So, I will go along to get along. Compliance does not necessarily indicate a genuine change in one's attitudes or beliefs. It is primarily only a behavioural response which is influenced by external factors. Still, compliance can be a powerful form of influence, particularly in social settings and hierarchical structures where individuals may feel obligated or pressured to confirm.

Understanding the factors that drive compliance can help individuals and organizations effectively utilize persuasive techniques, manage social dynamics and achieve desired outcomes.

- Identification, as a process of influence, occurs when Individuals adopt a particular behavior to establish or maintain a desired and beneficial relationship with another person or group.
 - Individuals experience a sense of alignment and connection with the influencing agent or group, which contributes to positive social relationships and a sense of belonging.
 - By adopting the induced behavior, individuals seek to create or strengthen a bond with others and to gain acceptance and validation within the desired social context.
 - I'm going along with your appeal *because I like and believe you, I want you to like me, and I feel we have something in common.*
- The act of conforming itself is seen as satisfying and valuable, as it helps individuals establish or reinforce a sense of connection and belonging.



Identification as a process of influence occurs when individuals adopt a particular behaviour to establish or maintain a desired and beneficial relationship with other person or group. Individuals experience a sense of alignment and connection with the influencing agent or group which contributes to positive social relationships and a sense of belonging. Individuals seek to create or strengthen a bond with others by adopting the induced behaviour and they want to gain acceptance and validation within the desired social context. For example, I am going along with your appeal because I like and believe you, I want you to like me and I feel we have something in common.

The act of confirming itself is seen as satisfying and valuable as it helps individuals establish or reinforce a sense of connection and belonging. In this process, the emphasis is not solely on rewards or punishments as in compliance, but on the desire to create or maintain a positive relationship with the influencing agent or group.

- Internalization, as a process of influence, occurs when individuals accept and adopt a particular behavior after perceiving it as rewarding and congruent with their own value system.
 - Internalization is characterized by a deeper level of acceptance and integration of the induced behavior into one's own identity and self-concept.
 - It represents a lasting and meaningful change in attitudes and behaviors, as individuals see the induced behavior as intrinsically rewarding and aligned with their core values.
 - *"I'm yielding because what you're suggesting makes good sense and it fits my goals and values."*
- The acceptance of the induced behavior is not solely driven by external rewards or social pressures but rather by a genuine recognition that the behavior is in line with their own value system.



Internalization

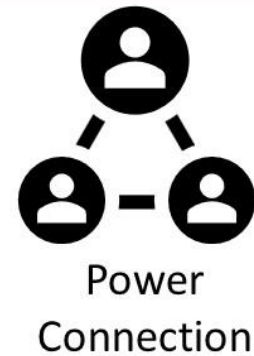


As a process of influence, internalization occurs when individuals accept and adopt a particular behaviour after perceiving it as rewarding and congruent with their own value system. It is characterized by a deeper level of acceptance and integration of the induced behaviour into one's own identity and self-concept. It represents a lasting and meaningful change in attitudes and behaviours as individuals see the induced behaviour as intrinsically rewarding and aligned with the core values.

For example, I am yielding because what you are suggesting makes good sense and it fits my goals and values. The acceptance of the induced behaviour is not solely driven by external rewards or social pressures, but rather by a genuine recognition that the behaviour is in line with their own value system.

Connection Theory

- This strategy involves asserting one's desires or objectives directly and assertively.
 - The power connection emphasizes clear communication and directness in expressing one's intentions.
 - In such a relationship or interaction one party holds a position of authority, control, influence, or dominance over the other.
- The author or communicator may utilize their power, expertise, or credibility position to persuade others to align with their viewpoint or take a specific course of action.
- While the power connection approach can be effective in certain situations, it's important to use it ethically and responsibly.
 - It's crucial to ensure that their autonomy and individual perspectives are respected.



This discussion brings us to look at the connection theory. The strategy involves asserting one's desires or objectives directly and assertively.

The power connection emphasizes clear communication and directness in expressing one's intentions. In such a relationship or interaction, one party holds a position of authority, control and influence and dominance over the other party. The communicators may utilize their power, expertise or credibility or being in a power position in order to persuade others to align with their viewpoint or to take a specific course of action. While the power connection approach can be effective in certain situations, it is important to use it ethically and with a sense of complete responsibility. It is crucial to ensure that the autonomy and individual perspectives are respected.

For instance, supervisors, managers and executives often use their positions of authority to make decisions that affect the entire team, office or department. This can include decisions related to workflow processes, resource allocation and strategic direction. However, building trust and maintaining positive relationships with co-workers is crucial when applying the power connection approach in the workplace.

- Building relationships and establishing rapport with others is key to this strategy which prioritizes aligning their interests with others to gain support and cooperation.
- Through this approach, the communicator encourages the audience to actively participate in the conversation, share their perspectives, and contribute their thoughts and experiences.
 - The communicator may pose questions, provide opportunities for feedback or discussion, or create a collaborative environment where the audience feels comfortable expressing their opinions.
- Crucially, the relationship connection approach respects readers' autonomy by allowing them to make their own choices and decisions.
 - Instead of imposing a specific viewpoint or demanding compliance, the author recognizes the readers as independent thinkers capable of forming their own conclusions.



Relationship Connection

Another aspect of it is known as relationship connection. Building relationships and establishing rapport and friendship with others is key to this strategy which prioritizes aligning their interest with others to gain support and cooperation.

Through this approach, the communicator encourages the audience to actively participate in the conversation, share their perspectives and contribute their thoughts and experiences. The communicator may pose questions, provide opportunities for feedback or discussion or create a collaborative environment where the audience feels comfortable expressing their opinions. Crucially, the relationship connection approach respects the autonomy of the readers, the reader or the audience by allowing them to make their own choices and decisions. Instead of imposing a specific point of view or demanding unquestioning compliance, the communicator recognizes the audience as independent thinkers capable of forming their own conclusions. On social media platforms, individuals and brands use relationship building strategies to connect with their followers.

They respond to comments and messages, engage in conversations and show genuine interest in the opinions of their audience. Even in automated customer support interactions, chatbots can employ relationship building tactics like empathetic language, offering solutions and providing helpful information.

- The rational connection approach often involves presenting credible and authoritative evidence to support the arguments or claims. Some methods employed in such connection include:
 - Consequence Analysis where communicators may outline potential outcomes of choices, aiding audience understanding.
 - Socratic Questioning prompts critical thinking, encouraging self-discovery for deeper understanding.
- It provides alternatives as a strategic approach whereby the communicator demonstrates flexibility and promotes a sense of choice and autonomy for the readers.
 - Offering a compromise can be an effective middle ground where the communicator acknowledges the audience's concerns and is willing to work towards a resolution that satisfies multiple parties.
- Incentives can be used as persuasive tools to motivate readers to take a desired action or adopt a particular viewpoint.



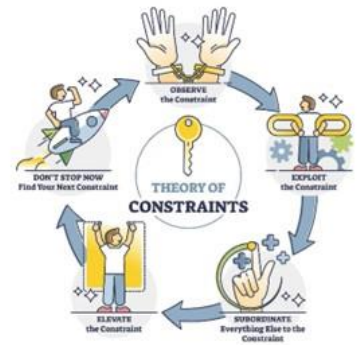
On the other hand, the rational connection approach often involves presenting credible and authoritative evidence to support the arguments or claims. Some methods employed in such connection include consequence analysis and Socratic questioning method. Consequence analysis occurs when communicators may outline potential outcomes of choices aiding audience understanding.

Socratic questioning prompts critical thinking, encouraging self-discovery for deeper understanding. It provides alternatives as a strategic approach whereby the communicator demonstrates flexibility and promotes a sense of choice and autonomy for the readers. Offering a compromise can be an effective middle ground where the communicator acknowledges the audience's concerns and is willing to work towards a resolution that satisfies multiple parties. Incentives can also be used as persuasive tools to motivate readers to take a desired action or adopt a particular perspective. These three strategies of connection can be employed individually or in combination depending on the context and the audience.

Effective persuaders have the skill to adapt their approach and choose the most appropriate strategy or a combination of them to achieve their persuasive goals.

Constraints

- Organizational constraints refer to the company's rules, guidelines, and procedures.
 - It is crucial to adhere to these stated and unstated constraints to maintain positive work relationships and avoid potential conflicts.
 - Understanding the communication channels, appropriate timing, and the key people involved is essential in navigating organizational constraints.
- Ethical constraints go beyond legal requirements and involve honesty, fairness, and ethical behavior considerations.
 - Adhering to ethical constraints promotes personal and professional growth as it requires individuals to reflect on their values, examine their beliefs, and make choices aligned with their moral principles.
 - Ethical constraints promote equal treatment, respect for human rights, and avoiding discrimination or bias.



Source: www.vksapp.com

But in the context of professional communication, digital and offline communication also, we find that there are certain constraints on our persuasive strategies. The organizational constraints refer to the rules and regulations of the company, the guidelines and procedures established by the company. It is crucial to adhere to these stated as well as unstated constraints to maintain positive work relationships and avoid potential conflicts. Understanding various communication channels, efficacy of appropriate timing and an understanding about the key people who might be involved is essential in overcoming organizational constraints.

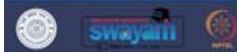
Ethical constraints go beyond organizational constraints or legal requirements. They involve honesty, a sense of fairness and considerations for ethical behavior. Adhering to ethical constraints promotes personal and professional growth as it requires individuals to reflect on their values, examine their own belief system and make choices in line with their moral principles. These constraints are necessary to promote treatment, a respect for human rights and avoidance of discrimination or biases against people. Organizational constraints provide structure, compliance, efficiency and they also promote collaboration.

Adhering to these constraints improves efficiency and goal achievement whereas ethical constraints establish responsible behavior guiding choices that aligned with values and benefit society fostering a long term success.



- Time constraints refer to the limitations or pressures the available time imposes when engaging in persuasive communication.
 - The timing of persuasive messages can significantly impact their effectiveness since choosing the right moment to deliver the message can enhance its reception and response.
 - Strategies such as concise and targeted messaging, providing key information upfront, and allowing for follow-up interactions can help overcome time-related resistance.
- Social and psychological constraints refer to the factors related to social dynamics and individual psychology that can influence how communication is received and interpreted.
 - Factors such as the relationship with the audience, individual and group personalities, confirmation bias, and the perceived size and urgency of the issue can affect persuasion.

Source: <https://youtu.be/LI7Fm0KXZM?feature=shared>



Time constraints refer to the deadlines, limitations or pressures which the available time imposes while engaging in persuasive communication. The timing of persuasive communication can also significantly impact the effectiveness. Strategies such as concise and targeted messaging providing key information upfront and allowing for follow up interactions can help overcome time related constraints. Social and psychological constraints refer to the factors related to social dynamics and individual psychology that can influence how communication is received and interpreted.

A well structured argument is a carefully organized and coherent presentation of ideas or claims aimed at persuading others. It follows a logical and effective structure to effectively convey the messages and convince the audience. Now that we have examined the various constraints and elements of persuasion, let us also explore the methods for crafting a well structured argument.

Sharing an Argument

- Appealing and identifying common goals and values is essential in persuasive communication as it helps create consensus and understanding.
 - Cultural differences in communication styles, tolerance for debate, tone, relationship-building, the importance of evidence and logic, and the value of disagreement should be considered.
- Convincing evidence is crucial in making arguments more convincing and credible.
 - It must be strong, specific, novel, unique, and verifiable and should directly relate to the argument's specific point, bolstering its overall strength.
 - Up-to-date information is vital for its relevance whereas reproducibility enhances validity and reliability.



Source: <https://youtu.be/2850gg3Zydk?feature=shared>



One of the tested methods is sharing an argument. Appealing and identifying common goals and values is essential in persuasive communication as it helps create a consensus and understanding.

Cultural several differences in styles, tolerance for debate, tolerance for different tones, relationship building and the importance of evidence and logic as well as the value of disagreement should be considered. Convincing evidence is crucial in making arguments more convincing and credible. Your arguments must be strong, specific, novel, unique and above all very favorable and they should directly relate to the arguments specific point. Up to date information is also vital for its relevance whereas reproducibility enhances validity and reliability.

I Have a Dream by Martin Luther King Jr. is a highly influential and powerful speech known for its effective persuasive techniques. Key features of this speech include the use of rhetoric to captivate the audience, appeals to shared values, emotional resonance, credibility, authority, inclusive language, vision and above all hope and a strong call to action. These elements combine to create a persuasive argument that inspired millions of people to join the civil rights movement and drive significant social change in contemporary society.

Types of Evidences

- **Factual evidence** refers to concrete and verifiable information that supports an argument or claim.
 - By being selective, you can choose the most relevant and compelling facts, ensuring your argument is solid and persuasive.
 - When presenting factual evidence, it is important to ensure its accuracy, relevance, and reliability by citing credible sources and providing specific details.
- **Statistics** are powerful in persuasion as they provide numerical evidence that can be highly convincing to readers.
 - When using statistics, it is important to focus on key figures such as costs, savings, losses, and profits, as these are often the bottom-line concerns for many individuals.



Source: www.elearningindustry.com



19

When we talk of different types of evidences, they may be in the form of facts and they may also be in the form of statistical data. Factual evidence refers to concrete and very favorable information that supports our argument and claim.

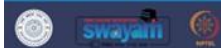
By being selective, one can choose the most relevant and compelling facts ensuring that the argument is solid, persuasive and also argumentative. When presenting factual evidence, it is important to ensure the accuracy and relevance of the facts. The inclusion of statistical data is an important aspect in persuasion as it provides numerical evidence that can be highly convincing to the readers. When using statistics, it is important to focus on key figures such as cost saving, losses and profits as these are often the bottom line concerns for many individuals. This statistics should also be presented in a visual manner whenever it is possible for us to do.

Properly citing and referring credible sources such as academic journals, books or reputable websites can provide factual evidence. Quoting or paraphrasing information from these sources adds credibility and demonstrates that the information is supported by reliable research or expertise.

- Statistical data allows for comparisons and benchmarking across different groups, regions, or time periods.
 - It provides a common framework for evaluating performance, measuring progress, and identifying disparities.
 - Statistical comparisons can highlight best practices, areas of success, and areas that need attention or improvement.
- Expert testimony holds significant weight in persuasion as it adds authority and credibility to a claim.
 - When expert opinions are unbiased and recognized by people, they can enhance the persuasiveness of an argument.
 - However, it is important to note that in contentious cases, opposing sides may present their own experts.
 - To determine the credibility of an expert, factors such as recognition by the highest level of professional society, and degrees from reputable educational institutions are considered.



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6tK3u8f8e>



20

Statistical data allows for comparisons and benchmarking across different groups, regions or time periods etcetera. It helps us in analyzing a common framework for evaluating performance, measuring progress and also for identifying disparities and differences. These comparisons can highlight best practices, areas of success and areas that need attention or improvement.

Expert testimony also holds significant weight in persuasion as it adds authority and credibility to a claim. Particularly when it is seen that the expert opinion is unbiased and the expert is recognized by people for one's unbiased approach, it can enhance the persuasiveness of an argument. However, it is important to note that in contentious cases opposing sides may present their own experts and to determine the credibility of an expert factors such as recognition by the highest level of professional society, degrees from reputable educational institutions, once professional background etcetera are considered as important. Experts often have their work and opinions subjected to rigorous peer review and validation processes within their respected fields. This ensures that their expertise is reliable and based on established principles, methodologies and research.

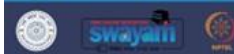
Moreover, experts are skilled at communicating complex ideas in a way that is accessible and understandable to a broader audience.

Digital Persuasion

- Digital persuasion encompasses various modes and techniques to influence or convince an audience online.
 - Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is optimizing digital content for search engines to increase visibility and reach. Appearing in top search results can persuade users to click on a website or page.
 - Displaying social proof elements such as customer reviews, ratings, testimonials, or user-generated content to persuade visitors that others have had positive experiences.
 - Incorporating game-like elements, rewards, and challenges into digital experiences to engage users and motivate them to achieve specific goals or actions.
 - Conducting experiments on digital assets such as websites and landing pages to identify the most persuasive variations and optimize for conversions.

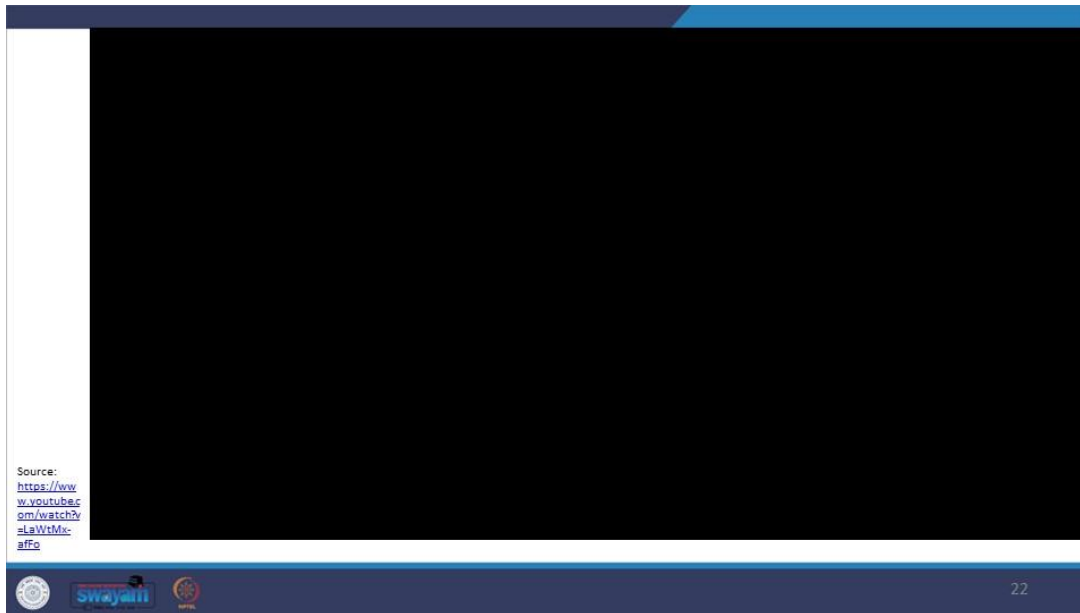


Source: www.blacksmithdigital.com



Digital persuasion encompasses various modes and techniques to influence or convince the audience in an online way. Search engine optimizing digital content for search engines to increase visibility and reach. Appearing in top search results can persuade users to click on a website or a webpage. Displaying social proof elements such as customer reviews, ratings, testimonials or user generated content to persuade visitors that others have had positive experiences earlier.

Incorporating game like elements, rewards and challenges into digital experience to engage users also motivates them to have a better trust. Conducting experiments on digital assets such as websites and landing pages to identify the most persuasive variations and optimize for conversions is also a useful technique. These modes of digital persuasion are often used in combination to create comprehensive digital marketing and communication strategies. They are used to effectively influence and engage online audience. The choice of mode depends on the specific goals, target audience and context.



The following video provides additional insights into various facets of digital persuasion including web analytics, social listening, influence and sharing analysis. Web analytics is the measurement, collection, analysis and reporting of web data to understand and optimize web usage. It is information about the number of visitors to a website and the number of page views. And it gauge traffic and popularity trends.

Another tool is social listening. Social listening is the process of understanding the online conversation about a company or brand as well as its products and services. Social listening tools can help companies gather and analyze customer data from a variety of social media and online review platforms in order to use the data to improve marketing, operational and business metrics. Social listening will also help you to identify influencers in your industry. Why are these important? 1. Most consumers rely on social media to guide their decisions to move forward with the purchase of a product or service.

2. Consumers are more likely to trust peer reviews rather than advertisements. Influence Analysis. Digital influence is the ability to create an effect, change opinions and behaviors and drive measurable outcomes online.

Things to remember. Don't measure influence. Measure the outcomes. This obviously requires you know your goals and realize what word of mouth means for your business. Reach is a measure of potential impact, not a goal as such. Relevance is key, always, in fact, it's the glue of relationships on the social web and thus of word of mouth and influence. Define metrics and KPIs in alignment with your goals. Examples, sales or referrals, brand lift, make sure you know the impact of brand awareness on your business as well if you want to measure all the way.

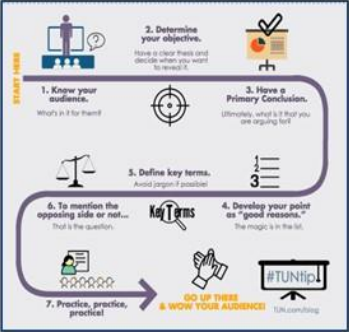
Develop a plan of action with the following three key components, 1. Objectives, 2. Steps,

and 3. Elements that require definition. Another tool is sharing analysis. Sharing analysis are tools specifically dedicated to tracking share activity of content across digital platforms.

Unlike advertisements or other marketing assets, social shares is an organic form of promotion generated by the public. Consumers share products, blog posts and inspirational images because they want to. When social connections, including friends, family and co-workers, see shared content, it resonates more than a message displayed directly by a business.

Conclusion

- In conclusion, persuading an audience requires a thoughtful and strategic approach that considers the audience's needs, values, and preferences.
- Effective persuasion involves clear communication, credible evidence, and the use of various persuasive techniques and modes.
- Building trust and rapport, providing relevant and compelling content, and fostering a sense of connection are essential elements in influencing an audience's attitudes, behaviors, and decisions.
- Ultimately, successful persuasion hinges on understanding the audience, tailoring the message, and creating a compelling narrative that resonates with their interests and motivations.



Source: www.tun.com

23

In conclusion, it can be said that persuading an audience requires a thoughtful and strategic approach that considers the audience's needs, values and preferences. Effective persuasion involves clear communication, credible evidence and the use of various persuasive techniques and modes.

Building trust and rapport, providing relevant and compelling content and fostering a sense of connection are essential elements in influencing an audience's attitude, behaviour and decisions. Ultimately, successful persuasion hinges on understanding the audience, tailoring the message and creating a compelling narrative that resonates with their interests and motivations. In the next module, we will look into the topics of teamwork and global factors that should be considered in the context of technical and digital communication in today's environment. Thank you.