

“If you were being banished to a desert island and could take only one record with you, what album would you take?”

I’ve always been fascinated by this question, for two reasons. First, what legal system is handing down island banishments, and how do I get convicted? Second, they still have record players?!

Oddly enough, that’s the question that sparked my idea for this book. After pondering that dilemma, I asked myself, “If someone were to have room on their bookshelf (or space on their Kindle) for just one business book on persuasion, what book would it be?”

I’ve spent almost three decades helping people hear yes more often, and I’ve finally decided to put in one place everything you need to go from zero to persuasion hero. This book will not sway opinions about global warming, bring peace to the Middle East, or abolish man’s inhumanity to man. But it *will* help you.

The world of big business abounds with major persuasion plays. Time Warner Cable wants you to switch from DirecTV. Dunkin’ Donuts wants you to abandon Starbucks. But you want your coworkers to get on board with your idea, and that’s our focus here. (One of the most frequent questions I’m asked: “Will this stuff work on my kids?” It sure will! But use it at the office first, so you can afford college.)

PERSUASION CHALLENGES

The ideas presented here will enable you to get that plum assignment, receive the green light on that project, and vie successfully for your dream job. Along the way, this book will help you solve professional challenges such as:

1. Who do you want to persuade to do what?
2. Are your persuasion objectives ethical?
3. How should you approach your target?
4. When should you make your persuasive move?
5. How do you know if you can trust someone?
6. How can you win someone's trust?
7. How can you make your arguments more compelling?
8. What specifically should you say?
9. How can you recover from a setback?
10. How can you best leverage success?
11. How do you create perpetual yes?

If the science of persuasion were painted by numbers, everyone would be Picasso. It isn't, and they aren't. That's why this book is your competitive advantage. What follows on the pages to come are tools to help you master the art of persuasion.

PERSUASION SOLUTIONS

In Chapter 1, "Persuasion Fundamentals," you'll discover the Persuasion Paradox, and learn if you truly are "made to persuade." You'll develop a specific persuasion priority and set your sights on dramatic career improvement. I'll also reveal the ultimate persuasion principle.

In Chapter 2, "Decision Making," I'll introduce you to the world of heuristics and cognitive biases, showing you how people's brains are wired and how you can use that information to ethically pursue yes. Next, in Chapter 3, "Targets, Technology, and Tactics," I'll uncover the persuasion keys to working with different personality types, gender gaps, and generational differences. I'll also address the changing nature of computer-

mediated communication and include a discussion about how you can identify the fine line between ethical persuasion and manipulation.

Chapters 4 through 7 include what I call the “Persuasion Equation.” This is the combination of factors will add up to your success:

$$\text{(A Great Business Case + Your Outstanding Credibility + Compelling Language)} \times \text{Intelligent Process} = \text{Yes Success}$$

In these chapters, I’ll teach you how to run the numbers by calculating your Return on Investment (even if you’re terrified of a calculator), as well as show you how to leverage emotion and measure the unmeasurable. I’ll help you build your credibility, explain how to win it back when you lose it, and divulge the power of language and the language of power. You’ll learn to weave a tale, tickle a funny bone, and do it all in a way that creates your personal inimitable marketplace superiority. You’ll unwrap a powerful persuasion process that, like following stepping-stones across a stream, will easily lead you to yes. (Learning persuasion skills is so essential to business success that I’ve created a special *Persuasion Equation* section on our website, www.PersuasionMatters.com, that will take you beyond the information in this book.)

Once you’ve conquered the world of one-on-one persuasion, Chapter 8, “Persuasion 360,” will show you how to generate group buy-in and navigate the contentious challenges of organizational politics with a terrific tool called “Political Territory Mapping.” In Chapter 9, “Persuasion 911,” I’ll introduce you to “assent turbulence” and describe emergency actions you can take to pilot your way to a safe landing. In Chapter 10, “Yes Success,” I’ll show you how to respond in that thrilling moment of yes, as well as explain why most people respond to yes incorrectly. You’ll also learn how to leverage testimonials and referrals, while creating personal evangelists to help you achieve perpetual yes.

In Chapter 11, “Your Persuasion Action Plan,” I’ll introduce a step-by-step plan to help you realize a 10,000-to-1 return on your investment in this book. (Yes, it’s exciting stuff—and I guarantee results if you apply the ideas. If you don’t, all bets are off.) In the final chapter, “The

Psychology of Self-Persuasion,” I’ll help you build weapons-grade self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self-confidence, leading to an ever-expanding universe of yes. I call it “Mark’s Psychological Big Bang,” because the first person who needs to say yes is . . . *you*.

PERSUASION CAVEAT

Persuasion is not magic. It doesn’t cure every ill or solve every problem. People constantly say to me, “Well, you’re an expert on persuasion, so just persuade them.” Unfortunately, it’s rarely that simple.

If you practice the ideas in this book, you *will* hear yes more often. But persuasion won’t work every time. If an opposing economic argument is too overpowering, few things will alter that course. However, if you’re close in terms of economic benefit to both parties, the approaches in this book can tip the scales in your favor. In a world where cash is king, persuasion is your ace.

THE PERSUASION EQUATION

When people ask me what album I would take if banished to a desert island, my response comes easily: I would choose the self-titled second album from The Band—a masterpiece from a musical group that used the definite article because its members knew they were the definite article.

So is this book. If you have space on your shelf for only a single book about persuasion, let *this* be the one.