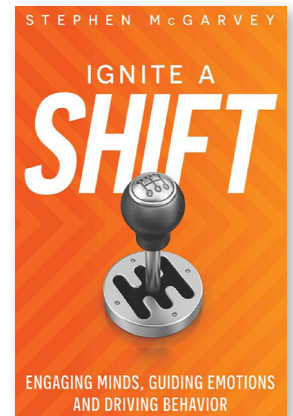


# Ignite a Shift

Engaging Minds, Guiding Emotions  
and Driving Behavior

by **Stephen McGarvey**



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## THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

Spark a transformation, professionally and personally! No person is an island. Every day, we realize more and more how interconnected we all are, and how much we impact each other, both consciously and unconsciously. And each and every day, our individual success relies to some extent on our ability to persuade and influence others.

The ability to persuade and influence is the cornerstone of success. In *Ignite a Shift: Engaging Minds, Guiding Emotions and Driving Behavior*, internationally acclaimed speaker Stephen McGarvey explores the subtleties of effective communication and highlights the essential fact that thinking impacts emotions which drive behavior.

*Ignite a Shift* is the quintessential guide to communication, positive persuasion and influencing with integrity. It reveals the proven techniques that the world's most effective leaders are using to motivate themselves and others to excel professionally and personally.

## IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- The importance of rapport as the foundation for persuasion and influence.
- The impact that language has on engaging and guiding others.
- How to identify and harness various motivational factors that drive people's choices and behaviors.
- How to negotiate effectively.

### Are You On The Right Road?

In our daily lives, thoughts and various other cognitive processes impact the emotions we experience moment to moment, and these emotions ultimately drive our behaviors. As we shift thinking, we can alter emotions which then drive a different set of behaviors. When we understand how this process works, we can create more congruent and purposeful behaviors both in ourselves and in others.

The goal of persuasion is to change someone else's behavior. This usually begins by changing one or more of their thoughts, beliefs, and values. Once we influence their thinking process, then their feelings and behaviors will change as well. We can use these techniques to change our own thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, too.

As a persuader, your goal is to move a person from their Current State to a Desired State. There are many techniques for leading someone to a Desired State, all of which boil down to this: engage and guide the person's thoughts. When that happens, their feelings and behavior will follow.

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### Perception Is Real – Even When It Isn't

As persuaders, we have the opportunity to consider how we are communicating based on our expectations of others and how our expectations may cause other people to react and behave accordingly.

Our minds tend to seek subjective validation and search for evidence to support our existing beliefs. Rather than being intractable or permanent, these beliefs can be altered because they are actually processes rather than things. The processes of believing something and valuing something are closely connected, and usually even interconnected.

Your values serve as an internal navigation system, so when you're cognizant of what you value and why you value it, you can make better and more congruent choices in your life. In doing so, you will be drawn toward people, ideas, and situations that support and assist you as you achieve your goals. If you happen to identify a values conflict, examine your criteria and work to realign them with your values.

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### Can You Trust Your Mind?

The mind is easily influenced by others—and by itself. In addition to being open to presuppositions, our minds regularly delete information and create distortions and general-

izations by changing things and “filling in the blanks” when information is lacking.

While the human mind is able to process a seemingly infinite amount of information at the subconscious level, it appears to be limited to processing between five and nine (seven, plus or minus two) chunks of information at the conscious level at any given moment in time.

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### Igniting Motivation

As persuaders, identifying what motivates a person in any given context teaches us a great deal about their Current State, how they think and feel, and why they do what they do. This knowledge combines to help us move them toward the Desired State. When we think about the factors that motivate us, we can generally divide them into two categories: motivational traits and working traits.

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### Diving Into Your Unconscious

Most of what we consciously think about is based on deleted, distorted, or generalized information. This is problematic because it's this filtered information that we use to communicate with each other. As a result, our communication is inherently ambiguous since it is based on summarized, incomplete, and distorted information.

It's important to note that there are a variety of different language patterns to look out for when recognizing deletions, distortions, and generalizations. Comparative deletions, mind reading, and universal quantifiers are just a few examples.

The Meta Model and the Milton Model are opposite sides of the same coin. Each uses language strategically, yet differently, for specific purposes. As persuaders, it is critical for us to understand and use both models in order to gain a deeper understanding of a person's Current State and to shift them toward the Desired State.

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### The Experience Of Being Understood

Masterful persuaders first build rapport with the person they are persuading and ask questions in order to gain a deeper understanding of that person's model of the world including their beliefs and values. Then, as progress is made toward the Desired State, the persuader knows how to connect what they are offering to something of relevance to the person, something that is meaningful to

them. Of all the concepts and techniques that we'll explore in this book, rapport is the most important because it is the foundation for influence.

Why is rapport so critical to persuasion? Because everyone craves the feeling of being understood; it validates our model of the world and gives us a sense of connection. By understanding how a person thinks and reflecting that understanding back to them, you provide them with the experience of being understood and they will be much more likely to trust you and follow your lead.

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## Horse Sense

People communicate constantly, and a great deal of that communication takes place outside of spoken or written words. This can include facial expressions, eye contact, tone of voice, touch, our overall appearance, and countless other subtle gestures such as nodding our head or waving our hands.

We each use all of these representational systems to various degrees and in different ways. For example, one person might be mostly visual, moderately auditory, and slightly kinesthetic, while another person might be mostly kinesthetic, moderately visual, and slightly auditory—really, any combination is possible! It's also important to note that smell and taste also play a role in how some people process information.

The better you, the persuader, are at communicating in all of the sensory modalities, the better you will be at matching your communication to another person's dominant or primary processing style.

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## The Million Dollar Question

The kinds of questions we ask guide our thoughts, emotions, and actions. The mind has a system for filing information, much the same as we would store information in a filing cabinet in different folders. Where a physical filing cabinet is limited by its size, the unconscious mind can store almost unlimited amounts of information. And the better the "files"—or memories—are organized, the easier it is to access the information. Effective questions can act as your access codes to the information.

Each question sends a person's mind on a quest, enabling us to elicit historical memories and information, allowing us to uncover Current State thinking, beliefs, and values, and

giving us the opportunity to engage and guide the individual toward the Desired State.

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## The Persuasive Power Of Stories

I've said it before and it's worth saying again: anything that we vividly imagine, our bodies will respond to as if it is real. Hence, stories can cause our neurons to fire the same way they would if we were actually performing the action that we are imagining.

Stories have the potential to shift a person from their Current State to a Desired State. This shift is accomplished by placing questions strategically throughout your story in a way that includes and engages the listener. If you ask the right questions at the right points in the story, then the person will find themselves involved in the storyline and will engage emotionally in the story. It's this engagement in the story that triggers and leverages the Think, Feel, Do process.

Using questions to engage and associate the listener into the storyline means that they actively become a part of the story, which evokes an emotional reaction. Stories that persuade people will engage their imaginations to enter into the storyline.

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## Making, Breaking, And Reinforcing Connections

As persuaders, our goal is to engage and guide a person's imagination toward a Desired State because we know that once the desired thoughts are in place, feelings and behavior will follow.

There are many ways to make, reinforce, or break connections with words, tones, gestures, repetition, music, scents, images, and so on. Using presuppositions, you can guide a person's imagination, emotional state, and ultimately their behavior, from where it is now (the Current State) to where you want it to be (the Desired State). Be aware of presuppositions in your everyday language and either use them with intention or avoid them.

Words, gestures, tonality, and the whole range of verbal and non-verbal communication are highly influential in making, breaking, and reinforcing connections. You can use the totality of the options for communication to lead a person from their Current State to a more Desired State. Always use words mindfully because language is ultimately one of

the most powerful tools available to the persuader... and it's a skill that is worth mastering!

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### Smarten Up!

When we think of goals, it's easy to set "big picture" objectives for ourselves that vary in terms of whether we can realistically achieve them.

You can help shift another person to the Desired State by ensuring that their goals, and yours, follow the SMART methodology. Setting a goal using the SMART model engages the Reticular Activating System (RAS), the part of the brain that plays an important role in attention. When refining our Desired State in the context of persuasion, remember that we need to ensure that we make the desired outcome relevant to the other person by connecting it to their current beliefs and values. This relevance activates their RAS and primes their mind to pay attention.

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### Question Confidently, Challenge Respectfully, And Always Negotiate

The art of persuasion almost always involves some negotiation, whether the process takes two minutes, two months, or two years. Negotiations are most likely to fall apart if we move too quickly into details without ensuring that we have alignment and agreement at a higher level.

Remember it is our rapport and how we relate to another person, rather than a relationship, that allows us to lead someone from their Current State to the Desired State. Understanding the difference between rapport and a relationship will increase your ability to be bold and con-

fidant because you'll remember that rapport is elastic. Just as rapport can be stretched and even broken, it can also be repaired. You simply back up, re-establish it, and move ahead again using the techniques we have outlined in this book. This awareness allows you to be courageous and to challenge respectfully.

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### Influence In Action

Results seem magical when you master the science and art of persuasion and influence, and as we well know, there is usually more at play than meets the eye. In your journey to mastering the arts of persuasion, influence, and effective communication, strive to always remain curious, authentic, and sincere as you engage and guide others toward a Desired State. To take control of your journey and reach your intended destination, begin by accurately mapping out your Current State and remain clear as to your Desired State. Doing so will allow you to engage and shift your own mind, emotions, and actions through the Think, Feel, Do process.

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### Conclusion

The art of negotiation involves skillfully applying the valuable knowledge you've gathered through the totality of your life experiences along with the powerful persuasive techniques that you've learned as you've worked through this book.



**Stephen McGarvey** is a world-leading authority on unconscious communication, positive persuasion and influencing with integrity. Stephen has worked with businesses around the world to optimize their performance by helping them understand how their staff and their customers think and what unconscious elements/patterns drive their behavior. He has improved the performance of his clients internationally by speaking to a variety of audiences in a myriad of venues, ranging from the American Psychiatric Association Conference to numerous Fortune 500 companies.

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