



# Maximum Influence

## The 12 Universal Laws of Power Persuasion

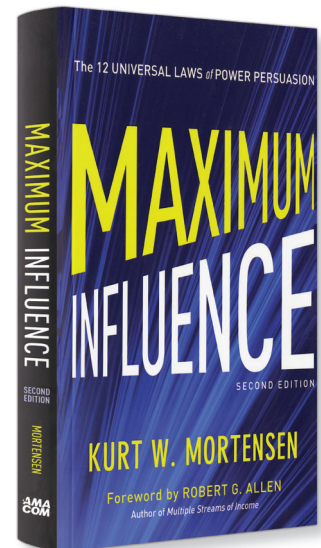
### THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

Salespeople, consultants, managers, executives, entrepreneurs — everyone depends on influence to achieve success and prosperity. And everyone can develop their skills with *Maximum Influence*, the most authoritative and effective arsenal of persuasion tactics ever assembled.

Updated with the latest findings from behavioral science, new case studies and cutting-edge techniques, *Maximum Influence* uncovers secrets of the master influencers, including the Law of Dissonance, the Law of Contrast, the Law of Expectations — and nine other proven principles that consciously and unconsciously propel people to act. It's the ultimate guide to getting what you want, anytime you want it.

### IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- The 12 Laws of Persuasion and how they can be applied for Maximum Influence.
- Four steps to use the Law of Dissonance to get your foot in the door.
- Learn how to use praise to release positive energy in all business and personal dealings.
- How to use the Law of Association to take advantage of association triggers to evoke positive feelings.



by Kurt W. Mortensen

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# THE COMPLETE SUMMARY: **MAXIMUM INFLUENCE**

by Kurt W. Mortensen

**The author:** Kurt W. Mortensen is a leading authority on persuasion, negotiation and influence. Kurt shows how easy it is to apply influence in every situation and how valuable influence can be in increasing income. He offers his speaking, training and consulting programs nationwide, helping thousands achieve unprecedented success in business and personal endeavors. He is the author of *Persuasion IQ* and *The Laws of Charisma*.

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## The Power of Persuasion

Has this happened to you? You are talking to a potential client, a prospect or a manager of another department. In your mind what you are proposing is a no-brainer, and it will take only a few minutes to influence the other person to do what you want done. The more you talk, the more they resist. What happened? Why weren't you able to persuade them?

Or even worse, have you ever met someone who did not seem very smart but was making ten times more money than you? Didn't seem that bright, but could persuade anyone to do anything? What do they have that you don't have? They have mastered the *power of persuasion*.

### Persuasion: The Engine to your Success

The power of persuasion is of extraordinary and critical importance in today's business world. Nearly every human encounter includes an attempt to gain influence or persuade others to our way of thinking. Some people define persuasion as being forceful, manipulative, or pushy. Such an assumption is dead wrong. Tactics like these might get instant results and maintain influence for the short term, but Maximum Influence is about getting short-term compliance while maintaining the long-term relationship. Lasting influence isn't derived from calculated maneuvers, deliberate tactics or intimidation. Rather, proper implementation of the latest persuasion strategies will allow you to influence with integrity. People will naturally and automatically trust you, have confidence in you, and want to be persuaded by you.

The art of persuasion must be customized to every group or individual, to every situation or event.

Getting people to do what you want is not an accident or coincidence. You must use techniques based on the proven Laws of Persuasion to achieve such results.

Professional negotiators, sales professionals and upper management around the world use these 12 laws. They are the same principles that help thousands of people gain control of their lives and their financial futures. Mastery of all the 12 laws is crucial for Maximum Influence. You will learn to act instead of being acted on, speak and be heard, lead and be followed. Master the implementation and timing of these laws, and you will become a Power Persuader. ●

## The Law of Connectivity

We have all had the experience of feeling an instant connection or bond with someone after just a few seconds of being in their presence. This is the Law of Connectivity.

The Law of Connectivity states that the more someone feels connected to, similar to, liked by or attracted to you, the more persuasive you become. Connectivity involves four main factors:

- **Attraction.** The Halo Effect. Attraction operates by making one of your positive characteristics affect other people's overall perception of you. As a result of what is called the Halo Effect, people automatically associate traits of kindness, trust and intelligence with attractiveness.

- **Similarity.** Similar is Familiar. Similarity theory states that familiar objects are more liked than less familiar ones. The same holds true with people: We like people who are similar to us. The theory seems to hold true whether the commonality is in the area of opinions, personality traits, background or lifestyle.



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- **People Skills.** Winning Instant Acceptance. The ability to connect and work well with people tops the list for common skills and habits of highly successful people. Studies show that 91 percent of those surveyed assert that people skills are important in business. People skills are crucial because they have a huge impact on our success.

- **Rapport.** The Instant Connection. Rapport is the secret ingredient that makes us feel a harmonious link with someone else. It is equivalent to being on the same wavelength with the other person. Rapport is the key that makes mutual trust materialize. ●

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### The Law of Involvement

When you can get others involved, get them to participate; they are easier to persuade. The Law of Involvement suggests that the more you engage someone's five senses, involve them mentally and physically and create the right atmosphere for persuasion, the more effective and persuasive you'll be.

As a persuader, you need to move your audience one step closer to taking action. As a Power Persuader, your goal is to decrease the distance someone has to go to reach your objective.

#### Increasing Participation

You can create involvement through increased participation. The more individuals take an active role and get involved, the more open to persuasion they become. You will have more success involving your prospects in the solution if you give them the option of participating.

Feeling that it was their choice and their solution, your prospects will take ownership: They have persuaded themselves. It becomes their own problem and their own solution. By nature, people will support what they help create.

#### Creating the Right Atmosphere

Another way to boost participation is with atmosphere. Atmosphere is really just a state of mind that you can create.

Atmosphere can also include the tension in the air. Are customers rushing or relaxed? What type of climate are you trying to create? Do you want a quick, fast decision, or do you want your customers to feel comfortable enough to stay for a while?

#### Using the Art of Questioning

Of all the tools in your persuasion toolbox, questioning is probably the one that Power Persuaders use the most.

Questions are used in the persuasion process to create mental involvement, to guide the conversation and to find out what your prospect needs.

One questioning technique is the use of leading questions. Leading questions not only alter the way we interpret facts, but they also influence what we remember. When you are probing for information, ask open-ended questions. Responding to a question that can be answered with a simple yes or not is just too easy. For example, instead of saying, "Do you wish you had decided differently?," ask, "How did you feel after you made that decision?"

#### Engaging the Senses

Our five senses help us create generalizations about our world. You should engage as many senses as possible when trying to persuade an audience. When we learn, 75 percent comes to us visually, 13 percent comes through hearing and 12 percent comes through smell, taste and touch.

Keep in mind that we gravitate toward three dominant senses: sight, hearing and feeling, and most people tend to favor one of these perceptions over the others. As a Power Persuader, you need to identify and use your prospect's dominant perspective of the world. ●

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### The Law of Esteem

The Law of Esteem identifies that all humans need and want praise, recognition and acceptance. Acceptance and praise are two of our deepest cravings; we can never get enough. William James once said, "The deepest principle of human nature is the craving to be appreciated." Human beings have a psychological need to be respected and accepted.

Compliments have the power to change behavior because they make the recipient feel needed and valued. The individual now has a reputation to live up to or an opportunity to prove the validity of the compliment. To use the Law of Esteem effectively, you must clearly understand the relationship between an inflated ego and a healthy self-esteem.

#### Self-esteem

People who possess self-esteem are strong and secure; that is, they can admit when they are wrong. They are not unraveled by criticism. Their self-confidence permeates into all aspects of their lives: their jobs, their education, their relationships and their income.

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Unfortunately, several studies show that Americans overall do not enjoy high self-esteem. Two out of three Americans suffer from varying levels of low self-esteem. The short list of symptoms attributable to low self-esteem includes

- The inability to trust others;
- Aggressive behavior;
- Gossiping;
- Defensiveness.

Esteem is definitely among the very top of the list of all the human needs. When you're in a persuasive situation and not sure what to do, helping your prospect feel important is a fail-proof place to start.

### The Leverage of Praise

Sincere praise and compliments can have a powerful effect on people. Praise boosts one's self-esteem. When you genuinely give praise, it releases energy in the other person. When you receive sincere compliments or praise, you smile, your spirits soar and you have a new aura. When our own esteem is low or our ego is bruised, we tend not to praise others.

Always be sincere in giving praise to others. Even the most cunning flatterer is ultimately detected and discovered. Complimenting someone sincerely for something small is better than complimenting someone insincerely for something big. ●

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### The Law of Obligation

The key to obligation is knowing that the results might not be instant but that the sense of reciprocity will put you higher on the list for a presentation or consideration for future business. Obligation has been used as a persuasive technique since the beginning of time.

The Law of Obligation, also known as pre-giving or reciprocity, states that when others do something for us, we feel a strong need, or urge, to return the favor. Returning the favor rids us of the obligation created by the first good deed. The adage "one good turn deserves another" is a part of social conditioning in every culture.

People often trigger feelings of indebtedness and obligation in others by carrying out an uninvited favor.

The drive to alleviate feelings of obligation is so powerful that it can make us bend toward people we don't even know. Accepting gifts or favors without attempting to return them is universally viewed as selfish, greedy and heartless. It is often strictly due to this internal and external pressure that people conform to the rule of reciprocity.

### Give a Gift, Expect a Gift in Return

Before a negotiation starts, offer some sort of gift. Note, however, that offering the gift before and not during the negotiation is of prime importance, or your token will come across as bribery. Your gift will almost always be accepted, even if only out of social custom and courtesy. Whether your recipient likes or wants your gift or not, the psychological need to reciprocate will take root, increasing the likelihood that your request will be met affirmatively.

The Law of Obligation is a very simple law to implement. Ask yourself what you can do, give or say that would create that indebtedness in your prospect's mind. ●

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### The Law of Dissonance

Cognitive dissonance is a psychological discomfort that happens when someone's actions or decisions are not congruent with their values, beliefs or past commitments. Creating dissonance will increase your ability to persuade. When someone senses you are going to try to persuade them, say, to buy something — even though they need it, want it, like it and can afford it — they will resist you. Dissonance will help people persuade themselves.

The Law of Dissonance states that people will naturally act in a manner that is consistent with their cognitions and commitments. Basically that means when people behave in a manner that is inconsistent with these cognitions, they find themselves in a state of discomfort. To eliminate or reduce that tension, we will do everything possible to adjust our beliefs, even if it means doing something we don't want to do.

### The Human Brain

Neuroscientists have made significant progress on how the brain processes information. Our brain can be very biased, especially in politics. As a persuader, you need to help people feel dissonance about where they are now and where they want or need to go. Just paint the picture for them, and let them feel the internal pressure. They have a problem, and as a persuader you are there to help them solve it.

Dissonance is a powerful tool in helping others make and keep commitments. Most people try to follow through when they promise to do something, especially if it is in writing. This is why corporations sponsor writing contests about social issues or their products. They really don't care about your writing style. They're really looking for consumer endorsement. You increase persuasion by using commitments through your presentation.

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### Getting Your Foot in the Door

One aspect of the Law of Dissonance is the urge to remain consistent with our answers and our commitments. This technique of capitalizing on such a principle has been called by several names, including foot-in-the-door (FITD), self-perception theory or the sequential request. The principle is a means of using a person's self-perception to motivate her to take a desired action.

### Four Steps to Using the Law of Dissonance

**Step 1: Find their Cognition.** What are your prospect's beliefs about, past experiences with and attitude about you, your product or service?

**Step 2: Get a Commitment.** Commitments from your prospects should be public, affirmative and voluntary.

**Step 3: Create Dissonance.** Once you have the commitment, you can create dissonance. You create that dissonance by showing your prospects that they have not kept their commitment.

**Step 4: Offer a Solution.** Whenever you create dissonance, you always need to offer a way out by showing or explaining how your product or service can reduce the dissonance your prospect feels. ●

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## The Law of Verbal Packaging

Over 60 percent of your day is spent in verbal communication, in which you could be persuading, explaining, influencing, motivating or instructing. You can create movement, excitement and vision with the words you use. As Mark Twain said, "The difference between the right word and the wrong word is the difference between lightning and a lightning bug." The bottom line is that the words you use attract or repel your prospects.

Properly used and packaged, language is a powerful instrument that can be fine-tuned to your advantage. The proper use of verbal packaging makes you adaptable, easier to understand and more persuasive.

### Word Choice in Marketing

Word choice in marketing and advertising is absolutely critical. Even in copywriting, every word matters. When you write copy, an email or a letter, every word can attract or distract the reader. Use words that capture their curiosity, grab their attention and trigger emotions.

Skilled advertisers can get us to absorb their message unconsciously. They might even package an identical product with different words and phrases to reach a wider segment of the public.

Simple is better than complex. Because we are unable to recapture or replay our spoken words, we hope that they will be correctly interpreted the first time they are heard or read. When you are in a persuasive situation, use simple, direct and concise language, rather than fretting about how eloquent you are sounding.

### Vocal Techniques: Keep People Attentive and Listening

Voice plays a critical role in influence. How we say the words we choose is just as important as the words themselves. Our voice is a powerful instrument that can motivate the troops or lull them to sleep. There is a huge difference between presenting and persuading, informing and influencing, and communicating and convincing. Your voice is a complete arsenal of persuasive techniques in and of itself.

You can change your rate of speech, the volume, pitch, inflections, emphasis and even the pauses that you use. You can keep your audience's attention, increase their energy and render them absolutely spellbound because of the power of your voice. It must be interesting and easy to listen to in order to help, rather than hinder, your ability to persuade. ●

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## The Law of Association

To maintain order in the world, our brains link objects, gestures and symbols with our feelings, memories and life experiences. We mentally associate ourselves with such things as sights, sounds, colors, music and symbols. These associations create quick subconscious triggers, and the feelings you generate can help or hurt your ability to persuade.

Power Persuaders take advantage of association triggers to evoke positive feelings and thoughts that correspond with the message they are trying to convey. In this sense, you, as a persuader, can actually arouse a certain feeling in your audience by finding the right association key to unlock their door.

### Anchors: Capture the Feeling

Anchoring is a technique that captures the feelings, memories and emotions of certain events, places or things. The psychology lies in the use of elements from a previous situation to replay the emotions and feelings of that experience. An anchor can be anything that brings up a thought or feeling and reminds you of something you

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have previously experienced. It will usually reproduce the exact prior emotion or feeling.

An anchor can be produced either externally or internally. Anchors don't have to be conditioned over a period of several years to be established. They can be learned in a single event. The three primary sets of anchors include smells, music and symbols.

### **Affiliation: Create the Link**

Another aspect of the Law of Association is the use of affiliation. Persuaders want you to affiliate their company with positive images, feelings and attitudes. The idea is to link something positive in the environment with the message. For example, a good game of golf, a weekend at the beach, NFL tickets or an exotic cruise would all typically build positive associations and feelings in your prospects.

Three affiliation techniques are the most often used: advertising, images and color. Each has a unique role in affiliation. Advertisers and marketers use affiliation to evoke valuable associations in the minds of their prospects. They know that babies and puppy dogs automatically carry great associations of warmth and comfort in the minds of their audience. ●

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## The Law of Balance

The Law of Balance states that logic and emotion must be blended and balanced. Emotions will trigger action, whereas logic will justify the agreement. The proper fusion of emotion and logic will speak to both the conscious and subconscious parts of the mind and increase your ability to persuade.

Power Persuaders know that each audience and individual has a different balance of logic and emotion. Analytical personalities need more logic than emotion. Amiable personalities require more emotion and less logic. A Power Persuader will create a proper balance between logic and emotion to create the perfect persuasive situation and message.

### **Logic: What Stirs an Audience?**

We generally think we make decisions based on facts, but truly this is not the case. It has been found that, when people agree with a message, they tend to perceive it as being logical or rational. The truth is that our decision-making process relies on a mixture of emotion and its partner, logic. However, we cannot rely entirely on emotion until our logical side has been engaged.

Spend whatever time you need to fully research the types of evidence you want to use to strengthen your

arguments. You already know that using the right evidence from the right sources greatly increases the credibility of your message. The more confidence the prospect has in a speaker, the less thinking and processing they will do about the message.

### **Emotion: Winning People's Hearts**

Whereas logic is the language of the conscious mind, emotion is the language of the subconscious mind. We know that emotions are reactions to perceived and imagined stimuli; they are based on one's own personal experiences, not on logic. Emotions often outweigh our logic.

When you are persuading someone, emotions provide the springboard for a successful execution of your argument. In fact, I would even say emotions are the energy and very fuel of the persuasion process. Logic is important, but emotion helps you catapult an otherwise dull or flat exchange to the next level.

### **Mood and Happiness**

There is evidence across the board that mood is a major factor in persuasion. Even simple mood-boosting methods like eating a sweet snack or listening to pleasant music have been shown to make people easier to persuade. Consumers who are in a good mood will be more aware of positive qualities in products or experiences they encounter. ●

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## The Law of Expectations

The Law of Expectations uses expectations to influence reality and create results. Individuals tend to make decisions based on how others expect them to behave or perform. As a result, people fulfill those expectations, whether they are positive or negative. When we know others expect something from us, we will try to satisfy them in order to gain respect, trust and likability.

By adding the Law of Expectations to your persuasive toolbox, you can change your audience's expectations of you — and their expectation to buy your product, service or idea — and you will be infinitely more persuasive.

### **Assumptions: Expect with Confidence**

Are the assumptions and expectations you have about yourself (or others) liberating or victimizing? There are countless examples of so-called self-fulfilling prophecies — or the Law of Expectations at work in everyday life. Did you ever notice how people who think they're going to be fired suddenly experience a drop in the quality and enthusiasm of their work? What happens next? They get fired!

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The expectations we create for others often become reality. This effect can have interesting consequences when applied in the real world. Honestly assess how you think you make others feel when they're around you. How you treat someone and what you expect from them will open or close the doors to persuasion and influence.

### Goal Setting: Creating Personal Expectations

Many people don't like the idea of goal setting; in fact, just the mere mention of the words makes them cringe. However, goal setting works. Goals must have the power to stretch and inspire, and they must be realistic in the mind of the person being persuaded. Research shows that goals dictate future performance. Conscious goals influence our overall performance.

It is a general rule of thumb that greater or more difficult goals actually increase performance. The reason is that lofty goals set a higher expectation, and, as explained, expectations strongly influence behavior. For goal setting to work effectively, individuals or the members of a group have to be able to visualize and see themselves achieving their goal and be committed to its success. The goal cannot be so hard, so complex or so overwhelming that it does not seem realistic. ●

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### The Law of Contrast

The Law of Contrast states that value will always trump price. Your goal is to have the value exceed the price or the benefit to exceed the prospect's time commitment. The Law of Contrast explains how we are affected when we are introduced to two different alternatives or options in succession. As a Power Persuader, you can use this contrast to navigate your audience toward the object of your persuasion.

Contrast is used for negotiations and is all about human perception. The human mind has to find a benchmark or comparison to make judgments, especially when we are talking about unfamiliar situations or new products. People need to make comparisons with their past experience and knowledge. The brain will always attempt to contrast your product or service.

### Door-in-the-Face (DITF)

Door-in-the-face (DITF) is one of the most common techniques for implementing the Law of Contrast. Basically, an initially large and almost unreasonable request is made, likely to be declined — hence the door is slammed in your face when the prospect rejects the proposal. Then, a second smaller and more reasonable request is made.

People accept the second request more readily than if they'd been asked for more the first time because the contrast between the two requests makes the second one seem so much better.

The person you are persuading will then feel obligated to agree with your smaller request. DITF is so effective because society and the Law of Obligation tells us that each concession must be responded to with a concession. When you give them a concession, they will be more inclined to give you a concession. ●

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### The Law of Social Validation

The Law of Social Validation recognizes and builds on our innate desire to be part of the group or part of the majority and that we tend to change our perceptions, opinions and behaviors in ways that are consistent with group norms. Even if we don't admit it, or maybe even realize it, we care about what others think. We seek to find out what others are doing as a way of validating our own actions. Social validation compels us to change our behaviors, our attitudes and our actions, even when what we observe doesn't really match our true desire or thoughts.

The Law of Social Validation is always happening, everywhere: publicly passing the donation plate to help with a community project, doing the wave at sporting events, going to popular dance clubs when you don't enjoy the surroundings, and so many other examples of going along with the crowd.

The more a brand is advertised, the more popular and familiar it is perceived to be. We as consumers somehow infer that something is popular simply because it is advertised. Many salespeople find great success in telling clients that a product is their best-selling or most popular because social validation increases their credibility of the product. When customers feel that something is a hot trend, they spend more money to acquire it, even if there is no proof other than the salesperson's word.

### Making Social Validation Work

The power of social validation can be used to your benefit in any persuasive situation. When your product or service is socially validated, people are likely to use it or switch to it. People are always looking around and comparing themselves to see whether they line up with everyone else. If they feel a discrepancy between where they are and where everyone else is, they will most likely conform to the group standard. ●

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## The Law of Scarcity

The Law of Scarcity states that the more scarce an item becomes, the more the item increases in value, and the greater the urge is to own it. Scarcity drives people to action, making us act quickly for fear of missing out on an opportunity. The law plays a large role in the persuasion process. Opportunities are always more valuable and exciting when they are scarce and less available.

Whenever choice is limited or threatened, we humans need to get a piece of the limited commodity, making us want it and crave it all the more. Scarcity increases the value of any product or service.

### How to Use the Law of Scarcity

Scarcity helps us make decisions. Most of us fear making a decision, so we naturally put it off to allow ourselves time to think and ponder. As a persuader, however, be aware that when your prospects put off the decision, chances are they won't ever make one. Creating scarcity helps your prospects make their decision.

When you want to increase the impact of your scarcity and adapt it to different personalities, make sure you buffer your scarcity with some type of reward. For example, "This offer ends today (scarcity), but when you re-enroll today, I will give you an extra six months of support (reward)." ●

## The Inside Secrets of Maximum Influence

To be an effective persuader, you cannot use the same techniques for all people all the time. You have to customize your message to fit the demographics, interests and values of your audience. Prepare yourself by knowing as much about your audience as possible. Feeling competent and prepared increases your motivation, reduces fear and enhances your ability to influence. Just remember the three Ds:

- **Discover** what your prospects want and need to hear.
- **Design** and structure a powerful persuasive presentation.
- **Deliver** the message with passion, compassion and purpose.

As a Power Persuader, you must be able to create and motivate change. Understanding human nature is knowing that most people will resist change and burrow into their comfort zones. However, change is the only thing that can lift us up from where we currently lie.

## Your Listening Skills: Crack the Code

Dale Carnegie asserted many years ago that listening is one of the most crucial human relations skills. Listening is how we find out people's code, preferences, desires and needs. Of all the skills one can master, listening is probably the one that will pay you back the most.

Follow these proven keys for effective listening:

1. Give them your undivided attention.
2. Look them directly in the face while they are talking.
3. Show sincere interest in them.
4. Keep the conversation going by asking questions.
5. Use silence to encourage them to talk.
6. Pause before replying or continuing.

## Creating Your Call to Action

The call to action is the most important part of your presentation. This is where your audience understands exactly what you want them to do. Throughout your presentation, you should have gently led them to the same conclusion that you are now giving them.

You should create your call to action before creating the rest of the presentation. Your entire presentation should be built around the call to action but should be no more than 5 percent of your total presentation.

## Preparation Is the Key to Influence

Pre-persuasion is everything. Prepare your mind, know your audience, know their code and structure a winning persuasive argument accordingly. Know who, what, when, where and why about your message and your audience. Power Persuaders know that information and structure are the seeds for perfect persuasion. ●

### MORE SV CONTENT ON INFLUENCE

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**Summary: *360 Degrees of Influence* by Harrison Monarth.** Harrison Monarth provides advice on how to gain the trust and respect of those around you and how to expand your influence well beyond your immediate environment.

**Webinar: *How You and I Can See It My Way* by Mark Rodgers.** In this Soundview Live webinar, Mark Rodgers merges research and real-world application to reveal what really drives decisions and introduces listeners to the "persuasion equation" to speed agreement.